

The Relationship Between Type of Offense and Reintegration of Acquitted Remandees in Kakamega County, Kenya

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Abstract

On any given day in the Republic of Kenya, there are more remandees in Prisons than there are convicted offenders. Little is known about the experiences of these remandees and the challenges they pose for effective reintegration upon release. Remanded persons do not benefit from rehabilitation and empowerment and are released with no support, yet leave remand expected to reintegrate successfully back into the community. This study investigated the relationship between the type of offense and reintegration of acquitted remandees in Kakamega County, Kenya. The study was underpinned in the Labelling theory and Social Learning theory and adopted a descriptive survey design employing a mixed method of data collection. The study used a stratified random sampling technique to obtain acquitted remandees and purposive sampling to get Correctional Officers, Assistant Chiefs and community members who took part in the study as key informants. A sample of 400 acquitted remandees was selected from a population of 1,427 using Yamane's sample apportionment formula. In addition, 9 Correctional Officers working within Kakamega County, 8 community members and 8 assistant chiefs from Sub-Locations with the highest number of returning remandees in Kakamega County were included in the study as key informants. Study data were collected using a questionnaire for acquitted remandees, interviews schedule for Prison Officers and Probation Officers, and Focus Group Discussion guide for community members and Assistant Chiefs. Validity of the data collection instrument was ascertained through expert review and reliability of the study questionnaire was ascertained using the internal consistency method where Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient of Reliability of 0.874 was achieved. Quantitative data was analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 28 for windows. Both descriptive and inferential statistics were used in the study. Qualitative data were analyzed thematically where identified themes informed discussion lines. All statistical measurements with regards to quantitative data were performed within 95% confidence interval. Findings revealed that offense type and reintegration of acquitted remandees were significantly related ($r=0.625$; $P<0.01$) with a coefficient of determination (R^2) of 0.295. Given the findings of the study, a conclusion was made that offence type had a significant influence on reintegration of acquitted remandees in Kakamega County, Kenya. Based on the findings and conclusions of the study, a recommendation was made that local administration in the community carries out sensitization to assist community members to understand the difference between a remandee and an offender and the consequences of labelling acquitted remandees explained to community members to avert the likely outcome of forcing acquitted remandees into actualizing the criminal label.

Keywords: Offence Type, Reintegration, Acquitted Remandees

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1.1 Background to the Study

In developed countries such as the USA, Canada, Japan, Australia, Sweden, Netherlands, Denmark, and Norway, remandees are held in separate containment facilities away from convicted prisoners (Deshman & Myers, 2018). This is in the realization that the two categories of individuals are held in custody for different reasons, convicts for punishment and rehabilitation and remandees to facilitate appearance in court as and when required to do so where it is not possible to admit them to bail (Human Rights Watch, 2017). The separate confinement for remandees and convicts ensures that they do not mix at any point during custodial confinement. Most convicted offenders, particularly those serving capital sentences complicate life experiences for remanded suspects, especially concerning new remandees who are bullied and made more miserable (Harvey, 2016).

In developed countries such as the USA, Canada, and Australia, criminal cases are tried and determined within 8 months so that decisions on acquittal or conviction are made and this helps to reduce congestion and unnecessary confinement (Liebling & Maruna, 2019). With meager resources available to prison systems in sub-Saharan Africa, remandee conditions may be worse compared to convicted persons as prison systems have very limited resources budgeted for them (Penal Reform International, 2019). Like most prison facilities in the third world and developing world, reasons such as delays in the criminal justice system include delays in the investigation by the police, lack of cooperation by the criminal justice system agencies, and cumbersome processes in the criminal justice system fuel the increasing number of remandees. Systems of this nature are also

likely to be characterized by overuse of pre-trial detention, making use of arbitrary arrests, a lack of access to legal counsel, and corruption are identified as reasons for the poor system (UNODC, 2020). The Nigerian prison system is notorious for the overwhelming number of remandees held within it with 77.1% of inmates in Nigerian prisons classified as remandees (Institute for Criminal Policy Research, 2017). As of March 2019, the World Prison Brief (2019) reported that 73,991 persons were reportedly held in 240 facilities with an official capacity of 50,153, a 127% occupancy rate. Some reports put the occupancy rates at slightly over 800% in other regions of Nigeria (Penal Reforms International, 2019).

In Kenya, the total prison population as at 21st March 2022 was 52,979 persons contained in 134 prisons around the country, majority of who are remandees (Institute of Crime & Justice Policy Research, 2022). The official capacity of all the 134 prisons in Kenya is 30,000 and the current population of 52,979 represents an occupancy level of 176.6% (World Prison Brief, 2022). In Kenya, remandees and convicted prisoners are held within the same prison facilities, only separated in wards of residence but sharing all basic amenities such as toilets, bathrooms, catering points, recreational facilities, and dispensaries according to the United Nations Office on Drug and Crime (UNODC, 2020). Such a mix between convicted offenders and remanded suspects may facilitate the exchange of ideas regarding criminality and may be a recipe for bullying and violent confrontations that further impact negatively the ability of remandees to effectively reintegrate after release from custody (Kamakil, 2017). Kakamega County has got four prison facilities and they are Kakamega Main Prison, Kakamega Women Prison, Shikusa Farm Prison, and Shikusa Borstal Institution (Kenya Law Report, 2021). Of these four penal institutions, only Kakamega Main Prison and Kakamega Women Prison have remand facilities. Prison facilities are congested and interactions between remandees and convicts are inevitable (Legal Resources Foundation (LRF) 2020). There have been reports of violent confrontations between new remandees and convicted prisoners arising from the bullying of remandees and convicted prisoners (Penal Reforms International, 2019).

Reintegration is defined as the process of transitioning from incarceration to the community, adjusting to life outside of prison or jail, and attempting to maintain a crime-free lifestyle. It is a complex process that occurs over time and there is much we do not know about the process (Healy & O'Donnell, 2020). Researchers and correctional practitioners hence continue to stress the need to continuously probe into the daily experiences of remanded suspects and how it impacts their return back to the community (Harvey, 2016). Findings from the experiences of remandees will be vital in understanding the progress of acquitted suspects through reintegration upon release from remand and can inform routine activities (assessment, implementing, and evaluating interventions) geared towards better coping and overall wellbeing of remandees after release from custody as they re-enter the community. It is upon this background that this study sought to investigate the influence of prison experience on reintegration of acquitted remandees in Kakamega County, Kenya.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

In Kenya, as is the case in many other underdeveloped countries, acquitted remandees are left on their own to somehow pull through the negative effects of the remand experience. Remandees come back from prison jobless, stressed, sick, and in most cases without anything to fall back to. This makes effective reintegration difficult, especially where religious and other non-governmental organizations do not come up and volunteer to assist released remandees. Stigmatization and labeling that arise from remandees' stay in prison can be overwhelming and sometimes life-threatening. Remandees have ended up with depression and even suicide arising from labeling and stigmatization after their release from prison remand. This is because, upon release from prison, the community looks at remandees as offenders forgetting that their release was a result of a finding of not guilty before a court of law. In Kenya, remand prisoners are ineligible for correctional programming and treatment programmes while in custody since such programmes are designed for convicted offenders. This leaves remandees unprepared for the realities of life after release from remand. Most of the empirical studies on people in prison by lawyers, Psychologists, Criminologists, and sociologists have largely focused on convicted offenders and not so much on remanded individuals (Kohler-Hausmann, 2018). This study sought to investigate the relationship between type of offense and reintegration of acquitted remandees in Kakamega County, Kenya.

1.3 Objective of the Study

The study sought to meet the following specific objective:

To examine the relationship between type of offense and reintegration of acquitted remandees in Kakamega County

1.4 Research Questions

What is the relationship between the type of offense and reintegration of acquitted remandees in Kakamega County?

1.5 Literature Review

A review of empirical literature from other studies on the relationship between the type of offense and reintegration of acquitted is presented in this section. In addition, theoretical underpinnings of the study are also presented.

1.5.1 Nature of Offence Committed and Reintegration of Acquitted Remandees

Within the general prison remand population, some specific suspects face unique social reintegration challenges to which reintegration programming has to be adapted (Myers, 2019). In the case of violent or sexual offenders, whose remand period may be generally longer compared to people suspected of having committed petty crimes, their alleged criminal record can become an almost insurmountable obstacle to their reintegration, including employment and accommodation (Skinns, 2018).

According to Kohler (2017 and Miller (2018) sexual offenders may further have to face the specific difficulties created by the fact that they may have been registered as such in a publicly available registry as having been arrested and charged for a sex-related offense. A survey by the Human Rights Watch (2017) revealed that remandees who have served particularly long remand periods in custody face very different challenges than do those who are released after a short period of confinement. Usually, capital offense suspects stay longer in remand custody compared to petty crime suspects (Saper, 2017). In extreme cases, some are much older individuals who have to face challenges associated with aging and a severely diminished ability to lead independent and self-supporting lives (Appleman, 2009). Through a process of institutionalization, they may have come to accept and integrate the culture, values, and social life of prison society and may have lost contact with family and community. Elderly remandees who have been in prison for a long time need practical assistance upon release to help them cope with life outside of prison and to relearn various basic life skills (Skinns, 2018).

Meeting the needs of specific groups of reintegrating returnees from prison remand presents some difficult challenges for authorities, in particular in low-income countries like Kenya where community resources are scarce and where the costs of offering many of the specialized programmes may be prohibitive. Moreover, it is difficult to offer additional services to acquitted remandees when these services are not generally available to members of the general public in the community.

1.5.2 Theoretical Framework

This study combined labeling and social-learning theories to analyze, explain and predict reintegration among acquitted remandees. The labeling theory was used to explain the behavior of a remandee during reintegration after release from prison while social learning theory looked at the interactions and experiences of the remandee before release and how those experiences influenced reintegration upon release.

1.5.2.1 Labeling Theory

Labeling theory in criminology stems from a sociological perspective known as "symbolic interactionism," a school of thought based on the ideas of George Herbert Mead, John Dewey, W.I. Thomas, Charles Horton Cooley, and Herbert Blumer. The first and one of the most prominent labeling theorists was Howard Becker, who published his groundbreaking work "Outsiders" in 1963. A question became popular with criminologists during the mid-1960s: What makes some acts and some people deviant or criminal? During this time, scholars tried to shift the focus of criminology toward the effects of individuals in power responding to behavior in society in a negative way; they became known as "labeling theorists" or "social reaction theorists" (Simon, 2017).

In 1969 Blumer emphasized the way that meaning arises in social interaction through communication, using language and symbols. The focus of this perspective is the interaction between individuals in society, which is the basis for meanings within that society. These theorists suggested that powerful individuals and the state create a crime by labeling some behavior as inappropriate (Turnbull & Hannah, 2019). The focus of these theorists is on the reactions of members of society to crime and deviance or perceive crime and deviance, a focus that separated them from other scholars of the time. These theorists shaped their argument around the notion that even though some criminological efforts to reduce crime are meant to help the offender (such as rehabilitation efforts) they may move offenders closer to lives of crime because of the label they assign the individuals engaging in criminal behavior (Simon, 2017). This is the case when a remandee is released from prison back to the community and ignorant members of the society look at him as one who has come from prison as an offender.

As members of society begin to treat these individuals based on their labels, the individuals begin to accept the labels themselves. In other words, if an individual engages in a behavior that is deemed by others as inappropriate, others label that person to be deviant, and eventually, the individual internalizes and accepts this label (Sparks, Bottoms & Hay, 2016). This notion of social reaction, reaction, or response by others to the behaviour or individual, is central to labeling theory. Critical to this theory is the understanding that the negative reaction of others to a particular behaviour or perceived behaviour in the case of suspects of crime is what causes that behaviour to be labeled as "criminal" or "deviant." Furthermore, it is the negative reaction of others to an individual engaged in a particular behaviour that causes that individual to be labeled as "criminal," "deviant," or "not normal" (Simon, 2017).

According to available literature, several reactions to deviance have been identified, including collective rulemaking, organizational processing, and interpersonal reaction (Wacquant, 2018). Becker defined deviance as a social creation in which "social groups create deviance by making the rules whose infraction constitutes unwanted behaviour, and by applying those rules to particular people and labeling them as outsiders." Becker grouped behaviour into four categories: falsely accused, conforming, pure deviant, and secret deviant. Falsely accused represents those individuals who have engaged in obedient behaviour but have been perceived as deviant; therefore, they would be falsely labeled as deviant (Sparks, Bottoms & Hay, 2016).

The result of this stigmatization is a self-fulfilling prophecy in which the offenders come to view themselves in the same ways that society looks at them (Goffman, 2017). Primary deviance refers to initial acts of deviance by an individual that have only minor consequences for that individual's status or relationships in society. The notion behind this concept is that the majority of people violate laws or commit deviant acts in their lifetime. However, these acts are not serious enough and do not result in the individual being classified as a criminal by society or by themselves, as it is viewed as "normal" to engage in these types of behaviour (Gustafson, 2016).

Speeding would be a good example of an act that is technically criminal but does not result in labeling as such. Furthermore, many would view recreational marijuana use as another example. Goffman (2015) says that secondary deviance is deviance that occurs as a response to society's reaction and labeling of the individual engaging in the behaviour as deviant. This type of deviance, unlike primary deviance, has major implications for a person's status and relationships in society and is a direct result of the internalization of the deviant label. This pathway from primary deviance to secondary deviance is illustrated as follows:

Primary Deviance → others label act as deviant → actor internalizes deviant label → Secondary Deviance

There are three major theoretical directions to labeling theory. They are Bruce Link's modified labeling, John Braithwaite's reintegrative shaming, and Ross L. Matsueda and Karen Heimer's differential social control. This study used John Braithwaite's reintegrative shaming to show how acquitted remandees may face reintegration challenges following their release from prison as a result of misconceptions about returning from remand custody. In addition, the study interrogated how labeling may lead innocent released remandees into actualizing the label by engaging in criminal behaviour (Simon, 2017).

1.5.2.2 Social Learning Theory

Social learning theory (SLT) is a leading explanation of criminal behavior which maintains that crime is learned and more likely to occur when individuals differentially associate with people who are criminally involved, experience greater exposure to delinquent models, anticipate or receive more rewards and fewer punishments for crime, and have a greater number of definitions favorable to crime (Spivak & Howes, 2017). Empirical tests have garnered moderate to strong support for the theory. SLT serves as the foundation for many delinquency preventions and offender treatment programmes, and has recently been merged with social structural concepts into a social structure–social learning model. Social learning theories can be broadly understood as a social-behavioral approach that emphasizes the "reciprocal interaction between cognitive, behavioral and environmental determinants" of human behaviour (Bandura, 1977).

In the study of crime and criminality, social learning theory is generally applied and understood as it was conceptualized by Ronald L. Akers in 1973. Social learning theory is a general theory of crime and criminality and has been used in research to explain a diverse array of criminal behaviour. The theory as proposed by Akers is centered on the idea that "the same learning process in a context of social structure, interaction, and situation produces both conforming and deviant behavior. The difference lies in the direction of the balance of influences on the behavior" (Akers & Sellers, 2013). This goes in line with the objective of this study which seeks to investigate the influence of remandee-offender interactions on the reintegration of acquitted remandees in Kakamega County.

As the literature on reentry research suggests, there may be some positive interaction in the remand that may facilitate positive reentry outcomes (e.g., Martinez, 2018). However, other studies show that most offender-remandee interactions are independently related to negative reentry outcomes. Such negative reintegration outcomes make it difficult if not completely impossible for the suspects to effectively reintegrate, and such acquitted suspects join criminality (Akers & Sellers, 2014).

As a theory of criminality, social learning theory emerged from a combination of principles derived from behaviorist operant learning and other psychological theories stressing vicarious learning and imitation. Robert Burgess and Ronald Akers reformulated differential association theory in terms of operant learning theory in 1966, and Akers and colleagues elaborated a more general social learning theory in later works (1979). The social learning theory has been subjected to more empirical tests than any other theory of delinquency (Akers & Sellers, 2014).

1.6 Research Methodology

The study utilized a descriptive survey design where mixed methods of data collection were employed. The

descriptive survey design was found appropriate for the study because the researcher was interested in describing the existing realities of offence type and its influence on the reintegration of acquitted remandees in Kakamega County without any manipulation and from a phenomenological perspective. As stated by Remler and Van Ryzin (2021), “phenomenology is a data collection and reporting strategy that describes how people experience certain events or unique encounters in their lives and shows reactions to occurrences that are outside of the norm in a manner that paints the whole picture and not just facts and figures”. The study was conducted in Kakamega County of Kenya.

The target population comprised all the 1,427 acquitted remandees from Kakamega, Butali, Mumias, and Butere law courts released between 1st March 2021 and 30th May 2022 which is the period within which this study was conducted. This study used both probabilistic and non-probabilistic sampling techniques to collect data from respondents. Stratified random sampling and simple random sampling techniques were used to select acquitted remandees who were stratified according to acquitting court jurisdictions. Respondents were obtained equitably from Kakamega Central, Butali, Butere, and Mumias court jurisdictions. This ensured that every section of the study area was equitably represented in the study. According to Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill (2016), stratified random sampling is a type of probability sampling technique in which a researcher branches off the entire population into multiple non-overlapping, homogeneous groups (strata) and randomly chooses the final respondents of the study from the various strata for research which reduces cost and improves efficiency.

A sample of 400 primary respondents being acquitted remandees was selected for the study. The inclusion criterion for the acquitted remandees was that one had to have been a resident of Kakamega County prior to arrest, must not have been found guilty for the offence for which he/she was arrested and continued to stay within Kakamega County after release from custody. Besides, key informants being 5 Prison Officers, 4 Probation Officers, 8 community members and 8 Assistant Chiefs were included in the study to provide information that complemented data from the primary respondents. The study used questionnaire, interview, and focus group discussion methods for data collection.

The researcher carried out a pilot study among 40 acquitted remandees, 2 Prison Officers, 2 Probation Officers, 2 community members and 2 Assistant Chiefs in Busia County. This ensured that the characteristics of the respondents in the pilot study and actual study were as similar as possible. The questionnaire was administered to acquitted remandees equivalent to 10% of the actual sample (n=400) as recommended by Cooper & Schindler (2014) and also as alluded to by Mugenda & Mugenda (2012); hence 40 acquitted remandees were selected, 10 in Nambale Sub-County, 10 in Butula Sub-County, 10 in Teso North Sub - County and 10 in Teso South Sub-County of Busia County to participate in the pilot study.

Study data from the field was sorted and edited to ensure completeness and consistency, classified, and coded according to research questions and objectives for analysis. The study generated two types of data: quantitative data from the closed-ended items of the questionnaires and qualitative data from the open-ended items of the questionnaire, interview schedules, and FGDs. Quantitative data from the closed-ended items in the questionnaires were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics with the help of the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences version 28.0 for windows. Descriptive statistics such as frequencies, percentages, and cross-tabulations were used to determine the degree of centrality and variation of participants' opinions on rating scales and were presented in the form of tables, graphs, and charts. Inferential statistics such as linear regression and Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient were used to determine associations, relationships, and influences between and among variables. All quantitative measures were performed within a 95% confidence interval.

1.7 Findings

Findings of the study are presented in this section.

1.7.1 Response rate and characteristics of the respondents

The study targeted a sample of 400 respondents being acquitted remandees drawn from the four court jurisdictions of Kakamega County namely Kakamega Central, Butere, Mumias, and Butali. Out of the targeted sample, a total of 357 respondents took part in the study. This resulted in a response rate of 89.25% for the study. Such a response rate was sufficiently adequate for the study in line with the recommendation by Remler and Van Ryzin (2021) that when conducting a research study, getting data from 70% or more of the target sample is adequate for purposes of generalization of findings from the sample to the entire population from which such sample was drawn.

1.7.2 Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

In this section, respondents were asked to indicate their ages, level of education, marital status, if they had children before their arrest and occupation at the time of arrest. Findings are presented in Table 1.

Table 1 Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Variable		Frequency	Percentage (%)
Age	Less than 20 years	21	5.88
	20 – 29 years	131	36.69
	30 – 39 years	104	29.13
	40 – 49 years	69	19.33
	50 or more years	32	8.96
	Total	357	100.0
Level of education	Primary school	78	21.85
	Secondary School	205	57.42
	Tertiary institution	41	11.48
	University Undergraduate	30	8.40
	Postgraduate	3	0.84
	Total	357	100.0
Marital status	Single	118	33.05
	Married	153	42.85
	Divorced/Separated	64	17.93
	Widowed	22	6.16
	Total	357	100.0
Occupation at time of arrest	Formal employment	54	15.13
	Business (Juakali)	179	50.14
	Farmer	88	24.65
	Student	17	4.76
	Others	19	5.32
	Total	357	100.0

Source: Research Data, 2022.

Results in Table 1 show that 36.69% (131) of the respondents were in the age range of 20 to 29 years, 29.13% (104) of the respondents were in the age range of 30 to 39 years, 19.33% (69) were aged between 40 and 49, 8.96% (32) 50 years or more and 5.88% (21) were less than 20 years. This implies that the majority of the acquitted remandees were between 30 and 39 years of age.

As revealed in a study by Underwood, Beron, and Rosen (2019), having a high number of such youthful individuals leaving remand back into the community portends negative ramifications to the crime rates. This is because remandees return home unprepared for reentry into the community and some are compelled to commit crimes to make ends meet and this affected their successful reintegration and this sentiment is supported by the study of Underwood, Beron, and Rosen (2019). Such youthful individuals coming back from remand is not good for the economic development of the country since they are energetic and in their prime years where their contribution towards economic development should be felt. These youthful remandees leaving prison implies that those with wives and children had left them to fend for themselves and without full parental care and support and this leaves children raised by a single parent and without adequate parental guidance hence resulting in the children becoming delinquent (Withers, 2018).

Concerning respondents' level of education, findings revealed that 57.42% (205) of the respondents had Secondary School education, 21.85% (78) had Primary School education, and 8.4% (30) had University undergraduate degrees while 0.84% (3) had postgraduate qualifications. This was good for the study since Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill (2016), stated that having fairly well-educated respondents enriches since respondents understand the questions posed to them through data collection instruments and can provide more accurate responses. Concerning reintegration as noted by Veysey, Steadman, Morrissey, and Johnsen (2017), after release from remand, fairly well-educated individuals can easily secure employment in the community and reintegrate more successfully as compared to uneducated individuals.

In regards to the marital status of respondents, the study revealed that 42.85% (153) of the respondents were married, 33.05% (118) were single, 17.93% (64) were divorced or separated and 6.16% (22) were widowed. This suggests that the majority of the respondents were married. Having such a high number of married individuals leaving prisons after having spent time there is a clear sign of a situation where spouses were left alone to fend for their families and single-handedly raise their children. This is worrying given the findings in a study by Tanusree and Indrani (2017) that children raised by a single parent, when not closely supervised, tend to become more delinquent than those raised by both parents.

The study found that 50.14% (179) of the acquitted remandees were business persons before the arrest, 24.65% (88) were farmers, 15.13% (54) were in informal employment, 5.32% (19) were in other occupations that included touting and Boda boda transport and 4.76% (17) were students at the time of being arrested and

remanded. This shows that most acquitted remandees were in business at the time of their arrest. Such individuals may reintegrate more successfully if supported with start-up capital as alluded to by Wacquant (2017) that people returning to the community from carceral institutions who had prior entrepreneurial skills usually reintegrate successfully compared to returning individuals who did not have prior entrepreneurial skills.

1.7.3 The relationship between type of offense and reintegration of acquitted remandees

The objective sought to examine the nature of the relationship between the type of offense and reintegration of acquitted remandees in Kakamega County, Kenya. In light of this objective, the following research question was formulated; what is the nature of the relationship between the type of offense and reintegration of acquitted remandees in Kakamega County? Research data on the type of offense and data on the reintegration of acquitted remandees were subjected to descriptive and inferential statistics.

1.7.3.1 Descriptive Statistics on Offence Type and reintegration of Acquitted Remandees

Respondents were asked if they understood the difference between serious and petty offences and findings presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Whether Respondents understood nature of offence arrested for

If difference between serious and petty offences was understood	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Strongly Agree	57	15.97
Agree	241	67.51
Neutral	29	8.12
Disagree	19	5.32
Strongly Disagree	11	3.08
Total	357	100.0

Source: Research Data, 2022.

Findings in Table 2 show that 241 (67.51%) of the respondents agreed that they understood the difference between serious offences and petty offences. It was also revealed based on the study findings that 57 (15.97%) of the respondents strongly agreed that they knew the difference between serious offences and petty offences. To the same question 19 (5.32%) respondents disagreed while 11 (3.08%) strongly disagreed. This implies that majority of the study respondents understood the difference between serious and petty offences. This was useful when it came to instances where respondents were to respond appropriately to whether the offences they were charged with were serious or petty. Freeman and Seymour (2020) looked at reintegration for serious crime remandees and non-serious crime remandees given the differences in average remand durations for the two categories of remandees. They found out that reintegration is more successful for remandees who return back to the community after a shorter stay in remand, and these are usually the petty offenders.

Respondents were asked whether the offence for which they were arrested was a serious offence (capital offence) and findings presented in Table 3. A list of serious (capital) offences was attached to the questionnaire for ease of reference and appropriate response.

Table 3: Serious capital offence

If offence was serious (capital offence)	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Strongly Agree	17	4.76
Agree	33	9.24
Neutral	37	10.36
Disagree	169	47.34
Strongly Disagree	101	28.29
Total	357	100.0

Source: Research Data, 2022.

Findings in Table 3 shows that 47.34% (169) of the respondents disagreed to the statement about whether they had been arrested for serious offences that were capital in nature. Findings further revealed that 28.29% (101) of the respondents strongly disagreed to the statement whether they had been arrested for a serious offence that was capital in nature, 10.36% (37) of the respondents were not sure whether the offences they were arrested for were serious and capital in nature, 9.24% (33) of the respondents agreed to having been arrested for serious offences that were capital in nature while 4.76% (17) strongly agreed that they had been arrested for serious offences that were capital in nature. White and Fine (2015) looked at offence type and reintegration of releasees and found that inmates that are charged with serious offences usually take long in the criminal justice system. This makes their reintegration more challenging compared to remandees who leave remand after having been remanded for a shorter period of time for petty crimes.

Respondents were asked to state whether the offences for which they were arrested were serious but non-capital in nature and findings presented in Table 4. A list of serious (non-capital) offences was attached to the questionnaire for ease of reference and appropriate response.

Table 4: Serious but Non-Capital Offence

If offence was serious (non-capital)	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Strongly Agree	49	13.73
Agree	66	18.49
Neutral	43	12.04
Disagree	125	35.01
Strongly Disagree	74	20.73
Total	357	100.0

Source: Research Data, 2022.

From Table 4, findings show that 35.01% (125) disagreed that the offences they had been arrested for were serious non-capital offences while 20.73% (74) strongly disagreed that the offences they had been arrested for were serious non-capital offences. Further still, 18.49% (66) of the respondents agreed they had been arrested for serious non-capital offences, 13.73% (49) strongly agreed that they had been arrested for serious non-capital offences while 12.04% (43) were not sure whether the offences they had been arrested for were serious non-capital offences. As noted in the study by Freeman and Seymour (2020) efforts need to be made by the criminal justice sector to avert long stay of remandees in custody since prolonged stay affects successful reintegration. They study looked into differences in reintegration success for serious and non-serious offences having established a significant relationship between offence type, length of remand duration and reintegration success. Respondents were asked whether the offences for which they were arrested were minor offences and findings presented in Table 5. A list of minor offences was attached to the questionnaire for ease of reference and appropriate response.

Table 5: Arrested for minor offences

If arrested for minor offences	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Strongly Agree	99	27.73
Agree	162	45.38
Neutral	36	10.08
Disagree	39	10.92
Strongly Disagree	21	5.88
Total	357	100.0

Source: Research Data, 2022.

Results in Table 5 reveal that 45.38% (162) of the respondents agreed that they had been arrested for minor offences, 27.73% (99) of the respondents strongly agreed that they had been arrested for minor offences, 10.92% (39) of the respondents disagreed to the question whether they had been arrested for minor offences. In addition, 10.08% (36) of the respondents were not sure whether the offences for which they were arrested were minor offences while 5.88% strongly disagreed that they had been arrested for minor offences. A study by Sarre, King and Bamford (2016) revealed that organizations working with released persons in jurisdictions where released remandees as supported in reintegration prefer to work with remandees who had been charged with petty crimes given the ease with which they reintegrate back into the community. Their study revealed that petty crimes are associated with relatively brief periods of stay in remand and remandees do not get enough time to acquire negative learning and this makes reintegration more successful.

Respondents were asked to state whether their attachment to the community was influenced by feelings of suspicion of having committed a criminal offense and the findings are presented in Table 6.

Table 6: Attachment to the Community influenced by feelings of suspicion for having committed a criminal offence

Whether attachment to the community was influenced the suspicion for having committed a criminal offence	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Strongly Agree	89	24.93
Agree	183	51.26
Neutral	14	3.92
Disagree	60	16.81
Strongly Disagree	11	3.08
Total	357	100.0

Source: Research Data, 2022.

Based on findings in Table 6, it is evident that 51.26% (183) of the respondents agreed that their attachment to the community after return from remand was influenced by the fact that they had been suspected of having committed a criminal offense. To the same question about whether respondents' attachment to the community was affected by community members' suspicion of the returnees having committed criminal offenses, 24.93% (89) strongly agreed, 16.81% (60) disagreed, 3.92% (14) were not sure and 3.08% (11) strongly disagreed.

Empirical evidence exists to the effect that individuals leaving carceral institutions feel low on self-esteem and sometimes spend a lot of energy pondering the circumstances under which they were arrested and charged. For instance, a survey by Deshman and Myers (2018) revealed that individuals released from remand custody are usually low on self-esteem having lost time in remand, and are not able to immediately keep pace with the economic circumstances of community life and are usually slow to fully engage in community life following unending suspicion that they are likely to commit crimes since they had been earlier arrested for criminal offences.

They further said that suffering low self-esteem brings challenges to the reintegration process of released remandees since they are usually under pressure to gain and retain self-sustenance.

Respondents were asked to state whether perception of close friends and relatives negatively changed towards them as a result of the offense for which they had been arrested and the results are recorded in Table 7.

Table 7: Negative change in perception by close friends and relatives

If perception by close friends and relatives negatively changed towards respondents due to offences for which they had been arrested	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Strongly Agree	95	26.61
Agree	136	38.10
Neutral	47	13.17
Disagree	61	17.09
Strongly Disagree	18	5.04
Total	357	100.0

Source: Research Data, 2022.

Findings in Table 7 show that 38.10% (136) of the respondents agreed to experiencing a negative change in perception from close friends and relatives following their arrest on suspicion of having committed a criminal offense while 26.61% (95) strongly agreed. It was also revealed based on the study findings that 17.09% (61) of the respondents disagreed, 13.17% (47) of the respondents were neutral while 5.04% (18) of the respondents strongly disagreed with experiencing negative perceptions from close friends and relatives following their arrest on suspicion of having committed criminal offenses. A study by Beattie (2016) revealed that negative perceptions, stigmatization, and labeling of individuals released from custody negatively affect their reintegration as releasees may be pushed into actualizing the label and justify the negative perceptions. It is worth noting that other studies such as Comfort (2016) and Lowenkamp, VanNostrand, and Holsinger (2013) revealed that not all releasees labeled by community members end up in crime as values and personal drive play a significant role in the decision to or not to engage in crime.

Respondents were asked if they were visited by close family members while in remand and the findings are presented in Figure 1.

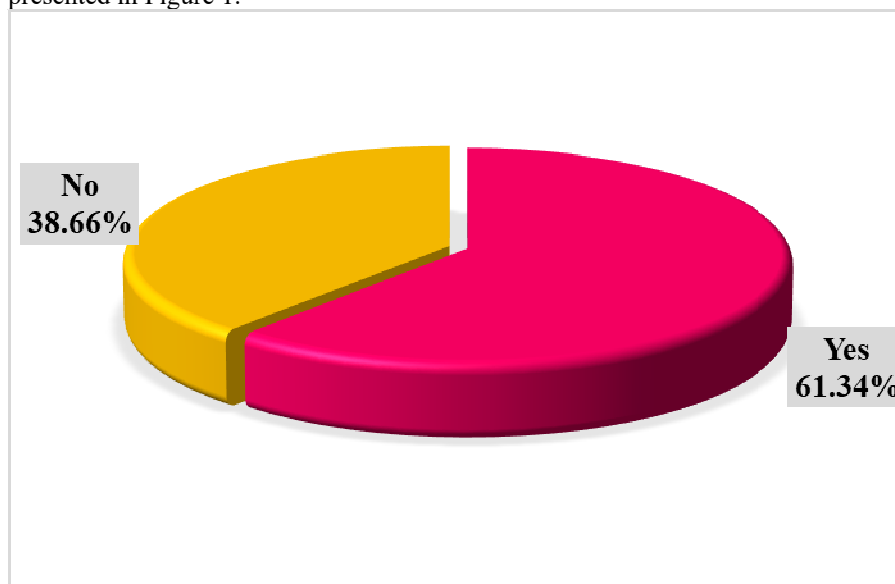


Figure 1: Whether respondents were visited while in Remand

Source: Research Data, 2022.

Findings in Figure 1 show that 61.34% (219) of the respondents were visited by close family members while in remand while 38.66% (138) were not visited. Respondents who were visited while in remand were asked to state the close family members that had visited them 49.32% (108) mentioned spouses, 21.0% (46)

mentioned parents, 13.24% (29) mentioned a siblings and guardians, 10.05% (22) mentioned grandparents while 6.39% (14) mentioned friends and distant relatives. As revealed in the study by Jiang and Winfree (2018) visiting detained family members helps them to keep tabs on the outside work and may reintegrate successfully after release from custody.

Respondents who were not visited while in remand were asked why they were not visited 31.16% (43) were of the view that their relatives were not willing to associate with them due to the nature of the offense for which they had been arrested while 28.26% (39) were of the view that their parents, siblings and spouses did not care about them. It is worth noting that 40.58% (56) of the respondents did not know why they had not been visited by close family members while in remand. This finding goes against findings in the Canadian study by Cesaroni and Pelvin (2016) who revealed that close family members and relatives continue to feel a sense of responsibility for incarcerated family members regardless of community perceptions and would still visit them in custody and associate with them after release from custody.

Respondents were asked to state whether the nature of the offense for which they were charged affected their prospects for release on bond and 66.39% (237) of the respondents denied, 19.05% (68) agreed while 14.57% (52) of the respondents were not sure whether there was any connection between the nature of offense they had been arrested for and their inability to be released on bond. Empirical evidence exists indicating that serious offenses attract stringent bond terms which pose difficulty to remanded persons as compared to petty crimes (Leverentz, Chen, & Christian, 2020).

The study sought to investigate whether respondents who strongly agreed or agreed to have been arrested for serious offenses also strongly agreed or agreed to receiving a hostile reception from family members and relatives at the point of return from remand, how easy it was to secure employment after release and whether they were labeled criminal by family and community members upon release from prison. To this end, cross-tabulation was done and the findings are presented in Table 8.

Table 8: Serious offence, employment and labelling cross-tabulation

Arrested for a serious offence	SA	A	N	D	SD
Received hostile reception	44 (26.61%)	57 (34.34%)	9 (5.42%)	29 (17.47%)	27 (16.27%)
Easy securing employment after returning	17 (10.24%)	31 (34.34%)	14 (8.43%)	61 (36.75%)	43 (25.9%)
Labelled criminal when you returned	34 (20.48%)	68 (40.96%)	20 (12.05%)	28 (16.87%)	16 (9.64%)

Source: Research Data, 2022.

Respondents who were arrested on suspicion of committing serious offenses were asked if they received a hostile reception from family and community members upon return from remand and findings in Table 8 reveal that 34.34% (57) agreed and these were the majority, while 26.61% (44) strongly agreed that they received hostile reception upon return from remand.

This suggests that the nature of the offense committed affected the kind of reception that acquitted remandees received as they returned to the community from remand. As shown in the study by Kohler (2017) community members tend to reject community members who commit or are suspected of committing serious crimes. Such rejection makes it difficult for released remandees to successfully reintegrate back into the community due to a lack of support in their reentry and resettlement (Miller, 2018).

Respondents who had been arrested for serious offenses were asked to state how easy it was to secure employment after returning from prison. Findings show that 36.75% (61) of the respondents disagreed and these were the majority followed by 25.9% (43) who strongly disagreed. This shows that suspects who were arrested on suspicion of committing serious offenses found it difficult to secure employment after release from remand. The study by Lara Millan and Van Cleve (2017) found that community members were skeptical about offering such support to released individuals including support to secure employment after release from custody, particularly those charged with serious offenses.

In addition, respondents who were arrested for serious offenses were asked to state whether they were labeled as criminals by family or community members after release from remand findings in Table 8 show that 40.96% (68) of the respondents agreed while 20.48% (34) of the respondents strongly agreed. This suggests that most of the respondents who were arrested on suspicion of committing serious offenses were labeled criminals by members of their families and communities when they returned home from remand. A study by Beattie (2016) found that labeling was a significant factor that led to recidivism and reintegration challenges.

For released remandees who were not found guilty of the offenses, being labeled criminal by community members may push them into committing criminal offenses as justification for the community (Kamakil, 2017).

Another cross-tabulation was done for acquitted remandees who indicated that they had been arrested for petty crimes to establish how they responded to reintegration questions of being received by family after release from remand, how easy it was for them to secure employment after release, and whether they were labeled as

criminals by community members. Findings are presented in Table 9.

Table 9: Arrested for petty offence, receipt by family, ease of securing employment and labelling cross-tabulation

Arrested for a petty Offence	SA	A	N	D	SD
Received hostile reception	36 (13.79%)	39 (14.94%)	23 (8.81%)	102 (39.08%)	61 (23.37%)
Easy securing employment after returning	55 (21.07%)	121 (46.36%)	30 (11.49%)	34 (13.03%)	21 (8.05%)
Labelled criminal when you returned	32 (12.26%)	52 (19.92%)	24 (9.2%)	96 (36.78%)	57 (21.83%)

Source: Research Data, 2022.

Respondents who were arrested on suspicion of committing petty offenses were asked if they received a hostile reception from family and community members upon return from remand and findings in Table 9 reveal that 39.08% (102) disagreed and these were the majority, while 23.37% (61) strongly disagreed that they received hostile reception upon return from remand. This suggests that the nature of the offense committed affected the kind of reception that acquitted remandees received as they returned to the community from prison. Research by Gaetz and O'Grady (2019) revealed that when reintegration of released persons is perceived from the perspective of acceptance, it was evident that individuals who were accepted back into the family and community reintegrated more successfully as compared to individuals that are met with rejection and resentment.

Respondents who had been arrested for petty offenses were also asked to state how easy it was to secure employment after returning from remand. Findings show that 46.36% (121) of the respondents agreed and these were the majority followed by 21.07% (55) who strongly agreed.

The implication of this is that suspects who were arrested on suspicion of committing petty offenses found it easy to secure employment after release from remand. Looking at the 2021 report by the Penal Reforms International, community members discriminate and label people that have been in contact with the criminal justice system and this is more damaging than is helpful to releasees. Such labeling, rejection, and discrimination undermine the prospects of securing and maintaining employment for acquitted remandees.

Additionally, respondents who were arrested for petty offenses were asked to state whether they were labeled criminals by family or community members after release from remand findings in Table 9 show that 36.78% (96) of the respondents disagreed while 21.83% (57) of the respondents strongly disagreed. This suggests that the majority of the respondents who were arrested on suspicion of committing petty offenses were not labeled criminals by members of their families and communities when they returned home from remand. A follow-up on the Penal Reforms International (2021) suggests that the absence of labeling and discrimination made it easier for releasees to successfully reintegrate into the community, secure employment, and avoid crime.

Findings on cross-tabulation between the type of offense and reintegration of acquitted remandees pointed towards the need to test for and establish the nature of relationships between type of offense and reintegration of acquitted remandees. In light of this, data on the nature of offense and data on the reintegration of acquitted remandees were subjected to Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient.

Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient was the ideal test statistic since cross-tabulations suggested linearity in the data between offense type and reintegration, there were no extreme scores (outliers) and cross-tabulation suggested that offense type and reintegration were related pairs. Findings are presented in Table 10.

Table 10: Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient for Offence Type and Reintegration of Acquitted remandees (n=357)

		Type of Offence	Reintegration
Type of Offence	Pearson Correlation	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)		
	N	357	
Reintegration	Pearson Correlation	.625**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	357	357

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Source: Research Data, 2022.

Findings in Table 10 for the correlation between the type of offense and reintegration showed that offense type and reintegration of acquitted remandees were significantly related ($r=0.625$; $P<0.01$). This showed that respondents who were arrested on suspicion of committing serious offenses faced increased reintegration challenges as compared to respondents who were arrested on suspicion of committing petty offenses. Findings from this study were compared with findings from previous empirical studies on the nexus between offense type

and reintegration. According to Kohler (2017) and Miller (2018) suspects arrested for serious offenses such as sexual offenses may have to face the specific difficulties created by the fact that they may have been registered as such in a publicly available registry as having been arrested and charged for a sex-related offense and this negatively affected their reintegration.

A survey by the Human Rights Watch (2017) revealed that remandees who have served particularly long remand periods in custody, mostly those charged with serious offenses, face very different challenges at the time of returning than those who are released after a short period of confinement. Usually, capital offense suspects stay longer in remand custody compared to petty crime suspects and they return home to nothing since nobody wants to associate with them or help them secure employment (Saper, 2017).

Since Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient revealed the presence of a relationship between offense type and reintegration of acquitted remandees in Kakamega County, it was necessary to establish how much variation in reintegration was brought about by the type of offense for which acquitted remandees had been arrested. To this end, linear regression analysis was conducted between offense type and reintegration of acquitted remandees in Kakamega County. Linear regression was the ideal test statistic since data for this study was normally and uniformly distributed, there was a uniform distribution of the error term across the independent variables (homoscedasticity) the research data was quantitative in nature, and cross-tabulations suggested linearity in the association between offense type and reintegration of acquitted remandees. Findings are presented in Table 11.

Table 11: Linear regression model for offence type and reintegration of acquitted remandees (n=357)

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted Square	R Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.311 ^a	.295	.286	.58994	1.807

a. Predictors: (Constant) Type of Offence

b. Dependent Variable: Reintegration of Acquitted Remandees

Source: Research Data, 2022.

Research findings in Table 11 for linear regression between offense type and reintegration of acquitted remandees revealed a coefficient of determination (R^2) of 0.295. This implied that 29.5% of the variance witnessed in the reintegration of acquitted remandees in Kakamega County was a result of the type of offense for which they were arrested.

This study compares with other empirical studies on remand experience and reintegration. A study by Myers (2019) found that within the general prison remand population, some specific suspects face unique social reintegration challenges to which reintegration programming has to be adapted. A survey by Skinn (2018) found that remandees suspected of violent or sexual offenses, whose remand period may be generally longer compared to people suspected of having committed petty crimes, their alleged criminal record can become an almost insurmountable obstacle to their reintegration, including employment and accommodation. In 1969 Blumer, in labelling theory emphasized how meaning arises in social interaction through communication, using language and symbols that results in labeling of persons released from prison. The focus of the labeling theory is the interaction between individuals in society, which is the basis for meanings within that society. This theory suggested that powerful individuals and the state create a crime by labeling some behavior as inappropriate hence denying them opportunities just because they have been released from prison hence hampering their successful reintegration (Turnbull & Hannah, 2019).

Interviews with correctional officers (5 prison officers and 4 probation officers) revealed that the nature of the offense committed influenced the reintegration of acquitted remandees in Kakamega County. Correctional officers explained that it is usually easy to implement rehabilitation programmes on petty offenders and first-time offenders as compared with people who have been arrested for serious offenses and those who have been arrested and rearrested severally.

A prison officer observed that:

Working with petty offenders towards their rehabilitation and empowerment is easier when the goal is to achieve rehabilitation since most of such petty offenders are not deeply rooted into crime and getting them out of crime is in most cases not challenging. It is also easier when it comes to reintegration of remandees that had been arrested for petty crimes to reenter the community and resettle as compared to those remandees who had been arrested for serious offences. Remandees arrested for serious offences usually stay in remand for a long time and get back to the community after they have lost a lot of time and this is the reason why their reintegration becomes cumbersome (Field data, 2022).

This observation highlights the differences in reintegration by remandees released following arrests for petty crimes and for serious crimes.

It emerges that the time taken for completion of a case in court may have some bearing on reintegration of

acquitted remandees with those who stayed in remand for a long time not succeeding at reintegration like their counterparts who were arrested for petty offences and stayed in remand for a shorter period of time.

It emerged from interviews with correctional officers that prolonged exposure to the prison environment exposed remandees to negative learning that makes reintegration difficult after release. Majority of correctional officers further said that remandees who stayed in prison for a shorter period had minimum exposure to negative learning as compared to remandees who stayed in prison for a long period of time.

A probation officer observed that:

Once we present bail assessment reports to court and the court finds that the accused person is not suitable for release on bond, depending on the offence type, some accused persons end up staying in prison for a long time with those facing charges for serious offences or public interest cases being remanded in custody for a long time. Such prolonged stay in remand has negative implications on reintegration of these remandees after release since exposure to negative learning follows prolonged stay in remand makes their reintegration difficult (Field data, 2022).

This verbal citation alludes to the nexus between offence type and reintegration of remandees upon release from prison. It emerges that remandees who stay in custody for a long time get more exposure to negative learning and as a result, find it difficult to reintegrate effectively back into the community following their acquittal. Correctional officers interviewed were of the view that remandees that were arrested for petty offences reintegrate more successfully compared to those arrested for serious offences and this was stated by 7 of the 9 correctional officers.

It was also amplified by 6 of the 9 correctional officers that individuals arrested for petty offences stay a shorter period of time in prison and do not get adversely affected by prison experience. Conversely, individuals arrested for serious offences usually stay in prison for prolonged periods of time and are adversely affected by prolonged periods of negative learning that makes their reintegration difficult upon release from prison.

Majority of the interviewed correctional officers were of the view that the criminal justice system was not doing enough to fast-track case completion rates to avert prolonged remanding of suspects.

This is what a prison officer had to say:

Due to many legal technicalities, many cases drag in courts for a long time and remandees suffer a lot due to prolonged detention. Remandees are escorted to court on every court day only to be returned back to remand for lack of witnesses, lack of police files or the court not sitting for one reason or another. The worst affected are remandees suspected of committing serious offences since such cases hardly take off. This trend is common in our courts and contributes enormously to delays in completion of court case, creating more misery to remandees after release from prison given the lost time (Field data, 2022).

What emerges from this verbal citation is that prolonged stay in prison contributes to a significant loss of touch with the outside world, job prospects and family in a manner that makes reintegration significantly difficult as stated by 7 of the 9 correctional officers. It also emerges very clearly that people arrested for serious offences stay in remand for a long time as compared to those arrested for petty crimes. As revealed in the study by Miller and Miller (2015) any extra day spent in prison makes successful reintegration a challenge due to lost opportunities in terms of job prospects, lifelong learning and relevance to the community. They further stated that most supporting organizations prefer to work with individuals that would be easily responsive to their programmes so as to gain and report positive impact of their programmes on the community, partly for self-gratification and also to attract additional funding. Wendell, Burton and Anthony (2020) conducted a study in Trinidad and Tobago where findings revealed that pretrial detention takes 3 to 8 years for most remandees charged with serious offences and this negatively impacts on their release from custody since reintegration is in most cases a challenge unless the released remandee has solid social structures in place such as a reliable family, close relatives or institutions that are able to guide the resettlement and reintegration.

The Nigerian prison system is notorious for the overwhelming number of remandees held within it with 77.1% of inmates in Nigerian prisons classified as remandees owing to delays in hearing and determination of cases (Institute for Criminal Policy Research, 2017). As of December 2021, the World Prison Brief (2021) reported that 79,006 persons were reportedly held in 243 facilities with an official capacity of 51,023 and this translated into a 154.84% occupancy rate. The same report suggested that the occupancy rates in Nigeria prisons at slightly over 800% in other regions of Nigeria following prevalence of more serious offences in those regions.

Focus Group Discussion conducted with 8 community members on 3rd May 2022 revealed that community members judge acquitted remandees on the basis of the type of offence for which they were arrested. It was noted by 6 out of 8 community members that acquitted remandees that were arrested for serious offences tended to be negatively perceived by community members when returning from remand and this made their

reintegration unsuccessful as compared to acquitted remandees that were arrested for petty crimes. Community members were of the view that acquitted remandees that had been arrested for petty offences tended to be perceived by community members as not posing a substantial security risk and usually more acceptable and supported by community members in the process of reintegration.

This is what one retired teacher had to say:

In the community, people are often apprehensive of released remandees who had been arrested for serious offences such as murder, robbery with violence, stealing stock or sexual offences since such offences result into unprecedented losses to community members. Community members usually feel that such acquitted remandees, even though not found guilty by court, they pose a threat to peace and stability in the community (Field data, 2022).

Clearly visible from this finding is that community members tended to positively or negatively perceive acquitted remandees returning back to the community in ways that took cognizance of the type of offence for which the acquitted remandee was arrested. It emerges that acquitted remandees that had been arrested for petty crimes tend to be perceived positively after release from remand as compared to acquitted remandees who had been arrested for serious crimes. This finding confirms the position that offence type and reintegration of remandees was a global phenomenon that affected many countries, particularly in the developing world (Penal Reforms International, 2019). It also emerges from the findings of this study and findings from other studies that offence type impacts on reintegration of remandees after release from prison with those with petty crimes who are normally remanded for a relatively shorter period of time reintegrating for successfully compared to those charged with serious offences who mostly stay in remand for a long period (Sarre, King, & Bamford, 2016; Rabinowitz, 2019).

1.8 Conclusion

The objective sought to examine the nature of the relationship between the type of offense and reintegration of acquitted remandees in Kakamega County. Findings from the correlation between the type of offense and reintegration showed that offense type and reintegration of acquitted remandees were significantly related. Linear regression between offense type and reintegration of acquitted remandees revealed that offense type had a significant effect on the reintegration of acquitted remandees in Kakamega County. Given the finding, a conclusion is made that offence type had a significant influence on the reintegration of acquitted remandees in Kakamega County, Kenya.

1.9 Recommendation

A recommendation is made that local administration in the community carries out sensitization to assist community members to understand the difference between a remandee and an offender and the consequences of labelling acquitted remandees explained to community members to avert the likely outcome of forcing acquitted remandees into actualizing the criminal label. It is recommended that a mindset change be initiated at the national level to create awareness of the fact that acquittal decisions by courts of law imply that the released person was not found guilty of the offense in question.

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