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## Relationship between Sexual Abuse and Juvenile Delinquency among Girls in Kirigiti Girls Rehabilitation and Training Center, Kiambu County, Kenya

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### **Abstract:**

*Juvenile delinquency, which has partly been attributed to family violence, has been on the increase all over the world. This study sought to find out the extent of juvenile delinquency at Kirigiti Girls Rehabilitation and Training Center (KGRTC):*

- *To determine the prevalence of sexual abuse among girls at KGRTC, and*
- *To examine the relationship between sexual abuse and juvenile delinquency among girls in KGRTC Kiambu County, Kenya*

*The study was conceptualized by Attachment Theory. The study used an ex-post facto research design that largely employed quantitative techniques. The population study comprised 61 girl child offenders at KGRTC. The research used a census inquiry that included all 61 girl delinquents in the study, and data for the study were collected using questionnaires that were administered to the girls. The validity of the tools was established with the assistance of experts from Pan Africa Christian University (PACU), while the reliability was determined using Cronbach Coefficient Alpha through data collected in a pilot study conducted at the Kamae Girls Borstal Institution. A reliability coefficient of 0.855 was attained, which was considered an appropriate threshold. The quantitative data were analyzed by means of inferential and descriptive statistics with the assistance of the computer software Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) Version 26. The results from the prevalence of sexual abuse showed that sexual abuse had a global mean score ( $\bar{x}=2.16$ ) for all the 12 items used to rate the prevalence of sexual abuse. This indicated that on a general scale, the girls had experienced a moderate level of various forms of sexual abuse, thus establishing that sexual abuse was a significant contributor to the development of juvenile delinquency. The study further revealed the existence of a strong, positive correlation between the sexual abuse and juvenile delinquency variables ( $r = +.708$ ,  $n = 59$ ,  $p < .01$ ). The implications of this research suggest the need to invest heavily in psychotherapy of the girls' inner hurts and childhood trauma as well as advocacy of appropriate approaches of parenting the girl child. The findings of this study imply that Attachment Theory may serve as an effective guiding principle for studying juvenile delinquency. This study identifies areas where difficulties exist with regard to juvenile delinquency among girls and suggests benefits for the treatment of girls from a systemic and multidimensional aspect.*

**Keywords:** *Juvenile delinquency, sexual abuse, attachment, juvenile offender, family violence*

### **1. Introduction**

Research indicates that juvenile delinquency is increasing rather than decreasing, and it is now emerging as a novel global problem (Nilsson et al., 2017). Any criminal behavior committed by an adolescent person that is under the age of 18 is described too as delinquency. Therefore, an adolescent who has committed a criminal offense or disobeyed a court of law is described as a juvenile offender. Juvenile delinquency is defined as the criminal activity and behavior of an immature person (Walsh et al., 2020). The World Health Organization (WHO, 2022) describes family violence as a phenomenon that applies to all forms of abuse that occur in familial relationships (i.e., physical, sexual, verbal, spiritual, and neglect of a child's needs) by primary caregivers, parents, and other figures of authority most often in the home setting but also in surroundings such as orphanages and schools. More specifically Penttinen et al. (2019) assert that the most prevalent forms of family violence against children consist of physical, psychological, and sexual abuse. One of the worst types of victimization is when children are exposed to familial violence, both in terms of occurrence and severity (Sacks et

al., 2017). According to self-report surveys, the prevalence of sexual maltreatment is estimated to be 7.6% for boy-child and 18% for girl-child.

Sexual abuse includes unwanted touching of private parts or sexual contact, pregnancy prevention, forced pregnancies or abortions, exposure to pornography, threatening sexual experience, attempted intercourse, forced to touch sexual organs of others, enticement for sexual intercourse, unwanted kissing, rape or attempted rape, indecent exposure of private parts by an adult, being forcibly undressed by another person(s), being given presents to have sexual intercourse, as well as the development of STDs (Rosmarin et al., 2018). Childhood negative experiences, also referred to as adverse childhood experiences (ACE), are linked to a range of undesirable behavioral outcomes, with childhood sexual abuse (CSA) being particularly detrimental (Drury et al., 2019; Murray et al., 2014). Goulet and Tardif (2018) found out that among a cohort of penitentiary clients on supervised release in the Midwest, CSA was strongly related to official charges for sexual assault/rape, regardless of controls for age, total adverse childhood experiences, onset arrest, sexual sadism, race, sex, total arrest charges, pedophilia, and anti-social behavior.

A study was conducted over a 13–40-year period to better understand the long-term connection between CSA and criminal behavior. Papalia et al. (2018) looked into gender-specific impacts, the role of index sexual violence traits, revictimization, and acute mental health issues. The findings of this long-term study revealed that those respondents who had experienced CSA were, to a greater extent, susceptible to participating in aggressive behavior, sexual misconduct, and other abuses. Additionally, it has been reported that some attributes of the sexual abuse index modulated the connection between CSA and criminal behavior, with higher relationships being identified among females and males who were generally violently offending and violent in behavior (Papalia et al., 2018; Ratkoceri & Ibis, 2021). According to current studies on childhood adversities, sexually abused females were most likely to reveal occurrences of CSA, misuse/addiction of substances, sexual molestation, and membership in criminal gangs (Beal et al., 2019). Thus, sexually assaulted girls were also much more likely to flee the treatment center and be designated as "unsuccessful discharged" (Hickle & Roe-Sepowitz, 2018). Despite these troubling trends on a global, regional, national, and local level, there are concerns that the family institution has abandoned its noble role of guiding and mentoring youth in the acquisition of appropriate values and attitudes, resulting in a high prevalence of delinquent behavior that may have been caused by sexual abuse (Nilsson et al., 2017). For instance, several studies within the Kenyan context demonstrate that sexual abuse has resulted in the inadequacy of parents and caregivers in guiding and mentoring the youth; hence, failure in empowering them in the acquisition of appropriate values and attitudes leading to a high prevalence of delinquent activities (Omonya, 2020; Smetana, 2017; Warnasuriya, 2018).

### 1.1. Statement of the Problem

The family is the child's first socialization institution (Alakwe & Ogbu, 2018). In fact, the family is the most central environmental component in promoting the learning of attitudes, behavioral mannerisms, norms, and values of the family (Alakwe & Ogbu, 2018; Warnasuriya, 2018). Furthermore, the family is responsible for teaching societal values to children in addition to constructing a barrier against the effect of aberrant behavioral patterns through the provision of guidance, socialization, and identity formation (Zara & Farrington, 2016). However, the UN-Habitat (2017) pointed out that juvenile delinquency has increased dramatically in Kenya in recent years. This premise is affirmed by the Kenya National Bureau of Statistics (2019), which reported a steady increase in juvenile delinquents from 41.6% in 2013 to 58.7% in 2019 in rehabilitation centers. This increased incidence of child offenders across the country is becoming a matter of grave distress to security agencies and the general public. In Kiambu County, particularly, juvenile delinquency is becoming an issue of serious concern. It was further observed that if this situation is allowed to continue, there would be an escalation of school dropout rates, insecurity, poverty, and incapacitation of the future generation to participate in productive family, economic and social activities (Omonya, 2020).

Sandberg (2018) suggested the need to prioritize the security of adolescent girls from harmful influences and ill-treatment from the family and adults in their lives, thereby allowing them to fully engage in healthy living. Studies have shown that sexual abuse is a possible causal factor in juvenile delinquency. However, this relationship has largely evaded scholarly attention and consequently the scarcity of literature on the same (Alakwe & Ogbu, 2018; Garbarino & Plantz, 2017). Against this background, this research sought to investigate the relationship that exists between sexual abuse and juvenile delinquency among girls at the Kirigiti Girls Rehabilitation and Training Centre in Kiambu County, Kenya.

### 1.2. Research Objectives

- To find out the extent of juvenile delinquency among girls at KGRTC
- To determine the prevalence of sexual abuse among girls at KGRTC
- To assess the relationship between sexual abuse and juvenile delinquency among Girls in KGRTC, Kiambu County, Kenya.

### 1.3. Hypothesis

- **H0:** There is no statistically significant relationship between sexual abuse and juvenile delinquency among girls in Kirigiti Girls Rehabilitation and Training Centre, Kiambu County, Kenya.

## 2. Methodology

The study used an *ex-post facto* research design, given its underlying philosophy that reflects the diversity of the sample and population for this investigative research. The study was conducted at Kirigiti Girls Rehabilitation and

Training Center (KGRTC) in Kiambu County, Kenya, which happens to be the only public girls' rehabilitation and training center in Kenya. The rehab also serves as a reception and assessment center in the Ministry of Labour, Social Security Services, and the Department of Children's Services. The target population of KGRTC comprised 61 juvenile girls. According to Kothari (2014), a sample survey is ineffective when the target population is small. Instead, a census enquiry can be used to conduct a thorough enumeration of all subjects within the population. In this regard, all 61 girls enrolled at KGRTC were included in the study. The study used one instrument to collect data: a questionnaire administered to the delinquent girls. A pilot study was conducted among young girls involving the age group of 11 and 17 at Kamae Girls Borstal institution after the questionnaire was contextualized to include items about sexual abuse. Content validity was ensured by having the survey items designed to capture the indicators of the specific objectives. This helped to guarantee that the tool had all of the necessary information to answer the research questions. The instrument was also provided to experts at PAC University's Department of Psychology for verification. All confusing and ambiguous directions, as well as extraneous items, were rewritten. Cronbach Coefficient Alpha was used to evaluate the instrument's reliability. A reliability coefficient of 0.855 was achieved, indicating that the instrument met the stipulated threshold of 0.7 recommended for studies in social sciences. Consequently, the instrument was deemed trustworthy and hence suitable for collecting data for the study. Quantitative data were used in the research. To establish the relationship between the independent variable (sexual abuse) in the study and the dependent variable (juvenile delinquency), inferential statistics, Pearson correlation coefficient were employed. In this regard, the study tested the null hypotheses.

### 3. Findings and Discussion

This section comprises findings and discussions of the variables involved in the study. The analysis was done in accordance with the stated objectives of the study. Further, the researcher computed a variable 'juvenile delinquency' that was correlated with sexual abuse using Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient to establish the relationship between the two variables: sexual abuse and juvenile delinquency.

#### 3.1. Rating of the Extent of Juvenile Delinquency

The first research objective sought to find out the extent of juvenile delinquency among girls at KGRTC. To achieve this, the researcher rated juvenile delinquency using 12 items on a Likert scale. The responses obtained were used to compute a mean score and standard deviation for each statement and a global mean score for all 12 items. From the responses obtained, the researcher computed a mean score and standard deviation for each statement which was used to rate the magnitude of juvenile delinquency on a scale of one to five. The minimum score was 1, which indicated 'None' or complete absence of juvenile delinquency. Scores ranging from one to two indicated a very small extent, scores from two to three indicated a moderate extent, scores from three to four indicated a high extent, and scores from four to five indicated an extremely high extent. The rating of the 12 items measuring juvenile delinquency is presented in table 1.

	Delinquent Behaviors of Girls	n	$\bar{x}$	s
1.	Robbery	61	2.40	1.70
2.	Sexual assault	60	2.50	1.50
3.	Insulting other people	61	3.20	1.30
4.	Physical assault	61	3.10	1.50
5.	Substance abuse	61	2.90	1.70
6.	Running away from home	61	3.60	1.60
7.	Harassing somebody in the street	61	2.30	1.70
8.	Theft in the school/home	61	3.00	1.50
9.	Arson	61	1.50	1.00
10.	Vandalism	61	2.10	1.50
11.	Truancy	61	3.00	1.60
12.	Breaking into car/home	61	2.10	1.50
	Aggregate Mean Score ( $\bar{x}$ )=2.57, s=1.06			

Table 1: Rating of Juvenile Delinquency

Analyzed data presented in table 1 on delinquent behaviors of girls committed to KGRTC indicated that the mean score ( $\bar{x}$ ) of this category of girls that committed the offence of robbery was 2.4 with a standard deviation(s) of 1.7 which indicated that on a general scale, the girls that committed the offence of robbery was moderate. Concerning girls that committed the offence of sexual assault the mean score of this category of offence was ( $\bar{x}$ =2.50, s=1.50), which showed that on average this form of offence was moderate. On whether the girls committed to KGRTC committed the offence of insulting other people the mean score of ( $\bar{x}$ = 3.20, s= 1.30) for this statement showed that on average this form of offence of insulting other people was high.

The girls' responses on physical assault showed that the mean score of ( $\bar{x}$  = 3.10, s= 1.50) for this statement showed that, on average, the number of girls that committed this offence was high. Regarding whether the girls had abused substances, the responses showed that the mean score of ( $\bar{x}$ = 2.90, s= 1.70) for this statement indicated that, on average, this form of abuse was moderate. Of the girls who had run away from home, the responses indicated a mean score of ( $\bar{x}$ =3.60, s=1.60) for this statement showed that on average this form of offence was high. When the girls were asked about

the level of harassing somebody in the street, the mean score of ( $\bar{x}$ = 2.30,  $s$ = 1.70) for this statement showed that, on average, this form of abuse was moderate. Concerning girls that committed the offence of theft in the school/home, the mean score of this category of offence was ( $\bar{x}$ =3.00,  $s$ =1.50), showing that, on average, this form of offence was moderate.

In reference to the girls who had committed the offence of arson, the responses indicated a mean score of ( $\bar{x}$ =1.50,  $s$ =1.00) for this statement, showing that, on average, this form of offence from girls committed to KGRTC was rare. On whether the girls committed to KGRTC committed the offence of vandalism, the mean score was ( $\bar{x}$ = 2.10,  $s$ = 1.50) for this statement, showing that, on average, this form of offence was moderate. The girls' responses on truancy posted a mean score of ( $\bar{x}$  = 3.00,  $s$ = 1.60 for this statement, showing that, on average, the number of girls that committed this offence was high. When girls committed at KGRTC were asked whether they committed the offence of breaking into a car/home, the mean score was ( $\bar{x}$ = 2.10,  $s$ = 1.50) for this statement, showing that, on average, this form of offence was moderate.

From the findings of all the 12 forms of juvenile delinquency, running away from home ( $\bar{x}$  = 3.60), truancy ( $\bar{x}$ =3.00), Physical assault ( $\bar{x}$  = 3.10), and insulting other people ( $\bar{x}$  = 3.20) were the most common forms of juvenile delinquency among girls committed to KGRTC as their mean score ranging from a mean score from ( $\bar{x}$  =3.00 and  $\bar{x}$  = 3.6) that was interpreted as a high form of abuse. This agrees with the works of Agarwal (2018), who states that Juvenile delinquency is a major crime that is bad for the social order in any nation of the world. According to our current study's findings, truancy, running away from home, rape, murder, and physical abuse are the most common types of juvenile delinquency. Agarwal noted that juvenile crimes are on the rise worldwide. The youth are becoming more and more involved in violent crimes (Juvenile delinquency, 2021).

The second category of juvenile delinquency ranged from a mean score between ( $\bar{x}$  = 2.1 and  $\bar{x}$  = 2.9) interpreted as moderate extent. Arson, with a mean score ( $\bar{x}$  = 1.50), was interpreted as rare as far as juvenile delinquency is concerned and was also the least of all the 12 forms of juvenile delinquency. The finding of this study contrasts existing literature conducted by Roe-Sepowitz and Hickie (2011), who indicated that female juvenile arsonists more often reported a significant crisis within their family and that most of the female juvenile arson offenders attended school regularly. Roe-Sepowitz and Hickie (2011) noted that girl arsonists more often reported a history of childhood abuse, higher scores on a suicide ideation scale and that they were more likely to set fire at school due to other abuses like drug abuse which is less in our study population. Smith et al. (2020), on a review of literature, established that girls are increasingly becoming involved with the juvenile justice system because of the crimes they commit. The girl's involvement in criminality came out clearly from the findings represented in table 1, which revealed the crimes committed by the girls, including:

- Robbery,
- Sexual assault,
- Insulting other people,
- Physical assault,
- Substance abuse,
- Running away from home,
- Harassing somebody in the street,
- Theft in the school/home,
- Arson,
- Vandalism,
- Truancy, and
- Breaking into a car/home

This agrees with a study carried out by Ibrahim et al. (2020) which also added smoking as an act of children's offenses.

The US National Center for Juvenile Offenders (USNCJO) (2014) found out that the rate of crime worldwide, particularly concerning juvenile delinquency, which threatens future prospects, has been increasing over the years (Sickmund & Puzzanchera, 2014). Because of its significance to the future of the nations and the condition of global security, a lot of research is being done in this field of study (Basto-Pereira & Maia, 2018). According to records filed by the USNCJO (2014), in comparison to adults, more juvenile offenders were arrested as far as criminal records are concerned (Jordan & McNeal, 2016). Muchai and Jefferson (2012) for example, opined that the number of adolescents engaging in crime and then sent to correctional and rehabilitation centers in Kenya is increasing. Equally, the rate of re-offense is high, probably because the intervention measures are not adequate enough to discourage children from delinquency.

The findings from the study bring more light on the magnitude of juvenile offending. The focus group discussions found out that numerous follow-ups must be scheduled to lower the rate of re-offense (relapse). Additionally, according to a study by Vitopoulos et al. (2019), maltreatment among female adolescents was the largest predictor of juvenile delinquency in a model that took into account criminogenic requirements, and as such, it should be given priority during follow-up sessions. Juvenile criminality has increased in practically every region of the world (United Nations: Report of the Secretary-General, 2003). Many of these crimes have been linked to drug misuse and excessive alcohol consumption. The study's results are supported by the fact that today's list of serious adolescent offenses includes computer and sexual offences (Interview Schedule with children officer).

### 3.2. Prevalence of Sexual Abuse among Girls at KGRTC

The second research objective sought to find out the prevalence of sexual abuse among girls committed to KGRTC. To assess the prevalence of sexual abuse, the girls were given 12 items in a Likert scale that rated their experiences

pertaining to the target subscale. From the responses obtained, the researcher computed a mean score and standard deviation for each statement which was used to rate the prevalence of sexual abuse on a scale of 1-5. The minimum score was 1, which indicated 'Never' or complete absence of abuse. Scores ranging from 1-2 indicated 'rare' or 'to a very small extent,' scores from 2-3 indicated 'sometimes' or 'to a moderate extent,' scores from 3-4 indicated 'often' or 'to a high extent' and scores from 4-5 indicated frequently or extremely high. The findings are presented in table 2.

S/No	Statement	n	$\bar{x}$	s
1.	Touched private parts	61	2.33	1.39
2.	Expose to pornography	61	2.61	1.48
3.	Threatening sexual experience	61	2.46	1.50
4.	Attempted intercourse	60	2.80	1.52
5.	Forced to touch the sexual organs of others	60	1.73	1.18
6.	Enticement for sexual intercourse	61	2.31	1.48
7.	Unwanted kissing or touching	61	2.51	1.47
8.	Rape or attempted rape	61	2.13	1.52
9.	Indecent exposure of private parts by an adult	61	2.00	1.38
10.	Being forcibly undressed by another person(s)	61	1.80	1.34
11.	Being given presents to have sexual intercourse	61	2.00	1.51
12.	Forced to have sexual activity with someone else	61	2.33	1.58
Global mean score ( $\bar{x}=2.16$ , $s = 1.14$ )				

Table 2: Prevalence of Different Forms of Sexual Abuse among Girls at KGRGTC

The analyzed data presented in table 2 indicates that the most prevalent forms of sexual abuse were attempted intercourse which the girls had experienced to a moderate extent ( $\bar{x}= 2.80$ ,  $s=1.39$ ). Other forms of sexual abuse with a mean score ranging from 2.00 to 2.61 were interpreted as occurring to a moderate extent and included:

- Being given presents to have sexual intercourse ( $\bar{x}=2.00$ ,  $s=1.51$ ),
- Indecent exposure of private parts by an adult ( $\bar{x}= 2.00$ ,  $s= 1.38$ ),
- Rape or attempted rape ( $\bar{x}= 2.13$ ,  $s= 1.52$ ),
- Enticement for sexual intercourse ( $\bar{x}=2.31$ ,  $s=1.48$ ),
- Forced to have sexual activity with someone else ( $\bar{x}= 2.33$ ,  $s= 1.58$ ),
- Touched their private parts ( $\bar{x}=2.33$ ,  $s=1.39$ ),
- Threatening sexual experience ( $\bar{x}= 2.46$ ,  $s= 1.50$ ),
- Unwanted kissing or touching ( $\bar{x}=2.51$ ,  $s=1.47$ ),
- Exposure to pornography ( $\bar{x}=2.61$ ,  $s=1.48$ )

The mean score of girls who were sexually abused through being given presents to have sexual intercourse ( $\bar{x}=2.00$ ) was consistent with other studies by Gerassi et al. (2021), whose purpose was to identify the prevalence and associated characteristics of adolescents who report sex trading for something of value (e.g., food, money, clothing, shelter) in a representative sample of high school students. Gerassi et al. (2021) showed that 2.47% (low proportion) of adolescents reported sex trading, which concurs with our study. Our study shows a low proportion of girls who indicated sexual abuse through being enticed with gifts to have sexual intercourse, probably due to the stigma involved, as our cultural beliefs label girls who accept gifts in exchange for sex as prostitutes. The study revealed that out of the 12 forms of sexual abuse investigated, four forms were most prevalent among girls committed to KGRGTC. These included:

- Attempted intercourse,
- Exposure to pornography,
- Unwanted kissing or touching, and
- Threatening sexual experience

This agrees with the work of Wijayanti and Fairus (2020), who studied Indonesian adolescents aged between 15 and 18 years who attended high school in East Lampung. Wijayanti and Fairus (2020) and Rostad et al. (2019) showed that there was a relationship between exposure to pornography, attempted intercourse, threatening sexual experience, and juvenile delinquency in adolescents in East Lampung.

Lastly, the least prevalent forms of sexual abuse experienced by the girls were; forced to touch the sexual organs of others ( $\bar{x}=1.73$ ,  $s=1.18$ ) and forcibly being undressed by another person(s) ( $\bar{x}=1.80$ ,  $s=1.34$ ). The findings of sexual abuse through being forced to touch the sexual organs of others had a mean score of  $\bar{x} = 1.7$  which was interpreted as rare or occurring to a small extent. These findings also reveal that this form of sexual abuse was the least indicated by girls committed at KGRGTC, which indicated that probably the girls, through the fear of being labeled as weak and shame, did not want to actually speak about the abuses they had been subjected to. A lifetime of thoughts, behaviors, and emotions can be changed by experiencing child sexual abuse (Joleby et al., 2020). Physical, mental, and behavioral health repercussions could be experienced in the short- and long-term due to sexual abuse. The study's findings support previous research by Finkelhor (2019) who noted that educating young people to recognize sexual abuse is the most important thing psychologists, therapists, and educators can do. Finkelhor also noted that most sexual abuse cases are still not diagnosed due to feelings of shame, fear, and secrecy. These results support a study by Agarwal (2018) that found that when sexual abuse is thoroughly detected, it is typically (and two-thirds of the time) a result of an explicit revelation by a child. The

child will disclose the abuse to a parent, sibling, friend, doctor, or official at school. The child may also make inquiries, discuss activities, or possess sexual knowledge that will unmistakably indicate their involvement. Sometimes an adult will witness the abuse taking place or deduce it from the way the child or perpetrator is acting. Children who are brought in to a professional for assessment for some medical or behavioral condition will frequently report abuse under interrogation, according to Winters et al. (2020), in addition to spontaneous disclosures.

This demonstrates how crucial it is to know how to inquire about instances of sexual abuse in children. The conclusions from the qualitative data from the FGD shed light on various factors that cause abuse victims to remain silent, as well as the identification of characteristics that may encourage a victim to tell others about their abuse. The study revealed that the girls who indicated sexual abuse through being forcibly undressed by another person(s) had a mean score of  $\bar{x}$  = 1.8, indicating that this form of abuse was rare. However, the FGD with teachers indicated a very high prevalence of sexual abuse which seemed to be at variance with the responses obtained from the girls. This was probably due to the revealed inability of the girls to self-disclose. This concurs with Guerra et al. (2021), who posited that CSA is a frequent phenomenon, but it is not often revealed by the injured party. Malloy et al. (2021) revealed that the lack of self-disclosure is more popular in the female populace, apparently due to cultural and social factors.

The global mean score and standard deviation for sexual abuse ( $\bar{x}$  = 2.16,  $s$  = 1.14) for all the 12 items used to rate the prevalence of sexual abuse revealed that, generally, the girls had experienced a moderate level of various forms of sexual abuse. So far, however, studies about the prevalence of sexually aggressive behavior in homes are generally lacking. The findings of the study concur with the work of Zeanah and Humphreys (2018), who posits that a lot of sexual abuse cases go on in homes and, due to the presence of psychopathology of parents, go on unreported. Such cases pose a lot of challenges to clinicians because of the many complex family and system forces that engulf these children and their families. In support of this view, Papalia et al. (2018), in the study that pursued to increase knowledge of the connection between the prevalence of child sexual abuse, juvenile delinquency and the position of index sexual abuse revictimization, characteristics, and juvenile delinquency established that child sexual abuse victims were more prone to engage in all categories of delinquent behaviors involving aggressive, sexual, and other offenses which agree with the findings of this research. Bensen et al. (2019) showed that childhood abuse can predict juvenile offending. The study revealed that sexual abuse through exposure to pornography had a mean score of  $\bar{x}$  = 2.60, which was interpreted as moderate abuse. Probably, the increased consumption of pornography could be due to the lack of effective enforcement of government legislation on the use of pornography, the failure of parents to censure what their children are consuming from the internet, and even the lack of church involvement in fighting this vice.

The finding of this study complements existing literature on pornography by Burton et al. (2010) that indicates that pornography use may result in sexually aggressive behavior. However, very little research has been reported on juvenile sexual abusers' exposure to pornography, a gap this study aims to fill. The study by Loutzenhiser (2021) reported that exposure to pornography causes sexual offenses and, ultimately, juvenile delinquency. The impact of pornography, particularly its potentially harmful impact on sexual offense, is a subject of intense dispute in the scientific literature, according to research by Paquette et al. (2022), who noted that watching pornography has an adverse impact on the minds of adolescents. Pornography is thought to have a catalytic effect among teenagers who are predisposed to sexual abuse due to the existence of other risk factors, even if studies do not directly link pornography consumption to sexual abuse.

### 3.3. Relationship between Sexual Abuse and Juvenile Delinquency among Girls in KGRTC

The third research objective sought to establish the relationship between sexual abuse and juvenile delinquency among girls in KGRTC. To achieve this, the researcher rated juvenile delinquency using 12 items on a Likert scale (Table 1). The variable 'juvenile delinquency' was correlated with sexual abuse using Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient to establish the relationship between the two variables.

### 3.4. Correlation Coefficient between Sexual Abuse and Juvenile Delinquency

The researcher calculated the Pearson correlation coefficient between sexual abuse and juvenile delinquency after ensuring the data set complied with the four requirements of the level of measurement, linear relationship, normality, linked pairings, and no outliers were violated. The null hypothesis, which is stated thus, was tested:

- H01: There is no statistically significant relationship between sexual abuse and juvenile delinquency among girls in Kirigiti Girls Rehabilitation and Training Centre, Kiambu County, Kenya.

The findings are presented in table 3.

Variable		Juvenile Delinquency	Sexual Abuse
Juvenile Delinquency	Pearson Correlation	1	.708**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	60	59
Sexual Abuse	Pearson Correlation	.708**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	59	59

Table 3: Correlation between Sexual Abuse and Juvenile Delinquency

\*\* Correlation Is Significant At the 0.01 Level (2-Tailed)

Source: Researcher, 2022

A Pearson correlation was computed to assess the linear relationship between sexual abuse and juvenile delinquency. The findings showed a positive correlation between the two variables  $r=.708$ ,  $p=.000$ . Table 3 indicates a strong, positive correlation between the two variables, sexual abuse and juvenile delinquency ( $r = +.708$ ,  $n = 59$ ,  $p < .01$ ).

According to a study by Smith et al. (2020), juvenile justice involvement among girls is rising due to the crimes they commit. The data presented in table 3 showed that as sexual abuse increases, juvenile delinquency also increases positively. The relationship between the variable's family violence (sexual abuse) and juvenile delinquency shows a strong positive relationship ( $r=.708$ ). Unwanted touching or sexual activity that are examples of sexual abuse, according to Rosmarin et al. (2018), were found to contribute to juvenile delinquency. Adverse childhood experiences are linked to a range of poor behavioral outcomes, with (ACE) being particularly harmful (Drury et al., 2019). Although there is some evidence to support it, it is debatable if ACE affects subsequent sexual offenses. Despite controlling for age, sexual sadism, sex, and anti-social personality disorder, Drury et al. (2019) found out that ACE was strongly related to official charges for sexual abuse/rape in a group of penitentiary clients on supervised release in the Midwest. This can be ascribed to the lack of parental supervision and discipline, which led to the emergence of adolescent crime.

Branson et al. (2017) pointed out how abusers gain power and control over their victims, which include:

- Humiliation,
- Isolation,
- Manipulation,
- Terrorizing,
- Coercing,
- Threatening,
- Blaming,
- Injuring, and
- Intimidating

Branson et al. (2017) further observed that children, who witness domestic violence, either directly or indirectly, experience feelings of loss of power and control in their life. Lichter and McClosky (2004) and Alley et al. (2021) observed that adolescence often externalizes powerlessness through risky behaviors in an attempt to regain control. These behaviors can range anywhere from disruptive behavior in the academic setting to juvenile sexual offending.

The reason behind the increase in sexual abuse is the power and control of Abusers. Examples of ways abusers gain power and control over their victims include: humiliation, isolation, manipulation, terrorizing, coercing, threatening, blaming, injuring, and intimidating (Branson et al., 2017; Hynd, 2018). Branson et al. (2017) further observed that children, who witness domestic violence, either directly or indirectly, experience feelings of loss of power and control in their life. Lichter and McClosky (2004) and Alley et al. (2021) observed that adolescence often externalizes powerlessness through risky behaviors in an attempt to regain control. These behaviors can range anywhere from disruptive behavior in the academic setting to juvenile sexual offending.

#### 4. Conclusion

Based on the findings of this study, it is evident that sexual abuse has a significant influence on the development of juvenile delinquency among adolescents. As cited in this study, individuals are born with behavioral attachment machinery that drives them to seek lovingness with attachment symbols in stressful situations. Indeed, attachment proponents believe that human beings' connection requirements are present throughout their lives. Therefore, during times of adversity, the behavioral attachment system offers persons dependable help, a sense of attachment security, and protection. The findings of this study revealed that there was a strong positive correlation between sexual abuse and juvenile delinquency with Pearson correlation coefficient,  $r=+.708$ , indicating that an increase in sexual abuse results in an increase in juvenile delinquency. The research findings indicated that to address the impact of sexual abuse on juvenile delinquency, heavy investment in psychotherapy to treat the girls' inner hurts and childhood trauma, counseling measures, economic empowerment of parents, organizing conferences where serious discussions by managers, children's officers, teachers, and other shareholders need to be seriously considered.

#### 5. Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations, if implemented and sustained, would probably make a positive impact on the problem of juvenile delinquency among girls.

- Heavy investment in psychotherapy for the treatment of the inner hurts of girls and the trauma they experienced.
- The connection between family violence and the outcomes of children needs to be stressed in public settings, including church events and any other gathering where parents are present, like open days at schools and family get-togethers. This will significantly contribute to the decrease in juvenile delinquency.
- Develop programs where parents are extensively trained and educated to improve their capacity to monitor their children's activities, reward excellent behavior, and clearly define rules and behavior expectations.
- At the individual level, to prevent adolescents from falling into bad company, it is recommended that they should be offered assertive training to assist them in making decisions that are good and appropriate for themselves.

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