

# The Nexus Between Acquitted Remandees' Personal Characteristics and Their Reintegration in Kakamega County, Kenya

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## Abstract

Remandee characteristics play a major role in reintegration back into the community. Some of these characteristics are either dynamic or static and these include; gender, age when the individual was arrested, educational level, religious affiliations, history of involvement in crime, social environment and the set of skills that the individual possesses. According to Nelson Mandela Rules, treatment programmes that are domiciled in carceral institutions are only effective when based on proper diagnosis and individual assessment of the offender and his or her situation. This study sought to investigate the nexus between Acquitted remandees' personal characteristics and their reintegration in Kakamega County, Kenya. The study was underpinned in the Labelling theory and Social Learning theory. The study adopted a descriptive survey design employing a mixed methods of data collection. Stratified random sampling technique was used to obtain acquitted remandees while purposive sampling was used to obtain Prison Officers, Probation 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, 5 Senior Prison Officers responsible for remandee containment at Kakamega Main and Kakamega women Prisons, 4 officers in charge of Probation stations in 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 Discussions for community members and Assistant Chiefs. Statistically quantitative data was analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 28 for windows. Findings of the study revealed that remandee personal characteristics were significantly related to the reintegration of acquitted remandees in Kakamega county, Kenya ( $r=0.525$ ;  $P<0.05$ ). A recommendation was made based on the study findings that an inventory of the released remandees' training level, skills, abilities, and preferences be prepared, periodically updated, and shared with potential support organizations to facilitate successful reintegration upon release from remand. Linear regression between personal characteristics and reintegration of acquitted remandees revealed a coefficient of determination ( $R^2$ ) of 0.285 implying that 28.5% of the variance in the reintegration of acquitted remandees in Kakamega County was a result of their personal characteristics.

**Keywords:** Acquitted Remandees, Personal Characteristics. Reintegration

**DOI:** 10.7176/JLPG/124-06

**Publication date:** September 30<sup>th</sup> 2022

## 1.1 Background to the Study

A study by Fazel and Baillargeon (2019) in Florida USA revealed that prison diminishes the well-being of individuals during and after incarceration. Close relatives especially spouses and children of the incarcerated persons are also impacted (Clear, 2016), and so are job prospects and lifetime earnings (Clear, 2016). Severe psychiatric morbidities such as post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) are also reported to be common in acquitted remandees (White, 2018). Experiences of anxiety, loneliness, powerlessness, trauma, violence, and uncertainty have been identified as general difficulties common among people in prison (Liebling & Arnold, 2016).

Lara Millan and Van Cleve. (2017) observed a high incidence of debilitating forms of anxiety among remandees held in a detention jail in the USA. These anxieties were explained to possibly arise from the uncertain expectation of the outcome of inmates' court hearings or prison conditions or even the welfare of one's close relatives or dependents while incarcerated.

Loeffler (2018) found that pre-trial prisoners tend to be depressed, especially during early periods of incarceration in the US. Freeman and Seymour (2020) found significant psychiatric morbidities in 46% of remandees in the US and physical illnesses in 18% of remandees in prisons in the US. Specific psychiatric morbidities such as PTSD have also been reported to be significantly high in pre-trial/remand prisoners (Laidlaw, Fairley, & Malcolm, 2018). These empirical studies suggest that remandees share in the negative experiences of containment.

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 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 examine the nexus between remandee personal characteristics and reintegration in Kakamega County, Kenya.

## 1.2 Statement of the Problem

In developed countries such as the USA, Britain, Canada Ireland, Sweden, and Norway, the state facilitates the successful reentry of remandees back into the community after their release and provides counseling and empowerment programmes that make reintegration successful. Such assistance programmes for remandees include psychological and emotional support provision, employment referrals, and healthcare support (Quirouette, 2019). In Kenya, as is the case in many other underdeveloped countries, acquitted suspects 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 (Turnbull, 2017). 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 (Turnbull, 2017). 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, remandees 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). A report on correctional sector reforms (2020) regarding congestion, violence, and remandee-offender interactions in prisons in Kakamega County and empirical studies in the criminal justice sector have largely neglected aspects of remand personal characteristics and their effect on the reintegration of acquitted remandees. It is in light of this that this study was conceived.

### **1.3 Research Objective**

To establish the interplay between acquitted remandees' personal characteristics and their reintegration in Kakamega County

### **1.4 Research Question**

What is the interplay between acquitted remandees' personal characteristics and their reintegration in Kakamega County?

### **1.5 Significance of the Study**

The study stretches the frontiers of knowledge by providing essential data on how daily life remand experiences and community social support structures influence the reintegration of acquitted remandees in Kakamega County. Most of the empirical studies on people in prison by lawyers, Psychologists, Criminologists, and sociologists look at felony convictions and sentenced offenders and not so much at remanded individuals (Kohler-Hausmann, 2018).

This study provides useful information in terms of suggestions on how remand experience is important not only to remandees during their court cases but also at the point of reintegration back into the community at the end of their cases. Findings from this study create awareness of the necessary ingredients for effective reintegration of acquitted remandees back into the community.

In addition to its contribution to knowledge, the findings from the study are useful to the State Department for Correctional Services and the Kenya Prison Service in evaluating their performance in complying with international best practices in pre-trial detainee management. Further, the study benefits policymakers, planners, and implementers in formulating appropriate policies and programs to ameliorate the reintegration challenges inherent among acquitted remandees in Kenya.

### **1.6 Review of related Literature**

Empirical and theoretical literature are presented in this section.

#### **1.6.1 Remandees' Personal Characteristics and Reintegration of Acquitted Remandees**

Inmate characteristics play a major role in reintegration back into the community. Some of these characteristics are either dynamic or static and these include; gender, the age when the individual was arrested, history of involvement in crime, social environment, peer pressure, educational level, and the set of skills that the individual possesses. According to Nelson Mandela Rules, treatment programmes that are domiciled in carceral institutions are only effective when based on proper diagnosis and individual assessment of the offender and his or her situation (McKinnon & Grubin, 2020). Unfortunately, remandees do not undergo any rehabilitation while in prison since such programmes are meant for convicted prisoners.

This assessment should be done as soon as the offenders are admitted to a prison institution hence serves as a basis for individualized treatment plans and approaches that would ultimately make reintegration easier. It is, therefore, important to assess the basic skills, education, and other factors associated with remandees during admission to plan future interventions once they are acquitted or convicted (UNODC, 2020). This is lacking in most prison institutions, for instance, in Kenya, suspects are not rehabilitated and inmates are placed into rehabilitation programmes without prior assessments.

This in turn affects their ability to cope and acquire skills and competencies that can help them lead lawful livelihoods upon release. The majority of acquitted suspects are confronted by a myriad of social, economic, and personal challenges that tend to become obstacles to their social integration. Some of them have serious skill deficits making it difficult for them to compete and succeed in the community, coupled with poor interpersonal skills, low levels of literacy or innumeracy, poor cognitive or emotional functioning, and lack of planning and financial management (UNODC, 2020). There is a need, therefore, to have tailor-made programmes to suit every released suspect's needs as this will go a long way in ensuring that the skills and competencies that they have acquired can help them get gainful employment after release from prison. Various studies have reported that certain characteristics are instrumental in the successful reintegration of persons released from prison, including education, employment, and personal characteristics (Myers, 2019; Sared & Nartok, 2019, Page, 2017 & Fox, 2016).

Some studies have recommended an expansion of programmes to include; vocational rehabilitation, formal education, individual work programme, religious rehabilitation programmes, peer counseling services, and medical care in response among others to the challenges related to likely recidivism that may be a result of

labeling (Cove & Bowes, 2015). Reviews of the research literature found that 48 to 86 percent of the studies analyzing rehabilitation programmes report evidence of treatment effectiveness.

Interventions meant to avert possible offending as a result of labeling must directly address characteristics that can be changed (dynamic factors) and that are directly associated with an individual's criminal behavior (criminogenic factors). Numerous risk factors are associated with criminal activity, such as age, gender, and early criminal involvement, and social-environmental factors such as labeling.

In comparison with others, males who began criminal activities at a young age are at higher risk for future criminal activities (Mackenzie, 2014). A Study by Doob and Cesarean (2014) and Varma (2015) revealed that prison institutions around the world prefer rehabilitating young offenders as compared to adults because of less deterrence among young offenders. Inmates with a higher level of education, cognitive stability, and higher economic status benefit a lot from the rehabilitation programmes.

The socio-economic background (religion, education, age, income, gender) of inmates informs the interventions that may be employed to bring about effective reintegration. On the other hand, prison work programmes allow inmates the opportunity of getting work after release. Besides, physical and mental wellness brings clarity and purpose to many inmates during their sentences (Human Rights Watch, 2017). The majority of the suspects in many petty crimes come from the disadvantaged segments of society. They include the minority of young men below 40 years, drug and alcohol addicts, poorly educated, lack work experience or preparation for work, and are mentally and physically ill. It is fair to say that they are both socially and economically "marginalized".

In the US for example, more than 50% of the remand population are Hispanic or African-American (National Research Council, 2017). Religious affiliation has been considered to facilitate positive reintegration outcomes through several mechanisms including; redemption, collective prayers, and collective business activities which effectively constitute social capital. It has also been acknowledged that religion is one of the oldest and the most common form of reintegration strategy in contemporary correction institutions (Tukwariba 2020, Kittrell 2018).

In African societies, religion was regarded as one of the best ways of controlling criminal and deviant behavior, and religion created opportunities for strong community ties with fewer criminal activities (Ayuk, 2012). Durkheim (1961) viewed religion as a unified system of beliefs and practices, which unite a community. A study conducted by Kayode and Alemika (1984) on the socio-economic demographic characteristics of returnees from prison in Nigeria revealed that the majority of them were from lower socio-economic strata of the society, had low education attainments, and had lower income and occupations which made their reintegration difficult resulting into recidivism.

Additionally, Wikoff et al., (2018) indicated that there are risk factors that increase the likelihood of offending and return to prisons by released suspects. Some of the risk factors include; antisocial behavior from community members directed at releasees, negative peer influence, socio-economic status, criminal associations while still in prison, and length of stay in remand. More so, most of the released suspects were arrested and taken to remand when they had limited education, job skills, and vocational training and lacked employment (Alexander, 2016).

Fleisher (1966) and Gould et al. (1998), in their analysis of the impact of unemployment, income level, and income disparity on crime, reported that a strong fall in the wages of women (without qualifications) increases the probability of committing crimes and property crimes. Impoverished women were specifically criminalized as poor women. Women who live in poverty and have no access to productive resources were often charged with property offenses and criminalized for activities regarded as necessary for their economic survival, including sex work.

The Kenya National Bureau of Statistics (KNBS) in its 2019 Economic Survey revealed that there are approximately 2,644 women remanded in Kenyan prisons compared to the male remandees whose population was about 23,552 women prisoners were considered the minority as far as the criminal justice system of Kenya is concerned. However, the offenses allegedly committed by women remandees were very different compared to those of male remandees, according to the just-concluded audit of Kenya's criminal justice system.

The majority of men were suspected of having committed property offenses like an offense against the state, burglary, and theft as well as violent offenses, for example, assault. Various crime reports demonstrate that the number of women suspected of involvement in crimes that were once a specialty of men is increasing every year. The studies show that most of the female suspects are of low social status and are from poor backgrounds (WPB, 2020; KNCSJ, 2017).

Additionally, the majority of the suspects come from broken families and are mainly illiterate. Women who reside in urban centers with an abusive past are more likely to be arrested for having committed crimes as compared to women from rural areas with no past traces of abuse in their lives. It is also important to note that female crimes in Kenya are completely different from crimes committed by their male counterparts. In the past, some of the offenses committed by female offenders included brewing and selling illicit alcohol, hawking,

littering, and loitering as well as assault among others (NCAJ, 2016).

Today, women are arrested for crimes like child neglect, homicide, economic fraud, drug and child trafficking, and prostitution. Despite the offenses of their arrest, the destination of these female offenders is in remand in one of the 18 women's prisons spread across the country (NCAJ, 2016).

According to the Kenya National Bureau of Statistics (2017), the composition of remandees in Kenya ranges from 18 to 35 years was at 75%. The majority of these remanded individuals are petty offenders. The socio-economic status of the remanded inmates played a crucial role in the composition of acquitted suspects. For instance, 80% of those from the low socio-economic class were in remand as compared to their counterparts from higher socio-economic status. Recently, there has been a rise in how monetary or financial bail adds to the unnecessary and disproportionate remanding of suspects with no money for bail, 70% of whom are poor people.

Generally referred to as 'prisoners of poverty and the 'criminalization of poverty, a study conducted in the Republic of South Africa demonstrated that nearly 76% of detainees could not afford monetary bail of R 1,000 (USD 72) or less. Additionally, in Sri Lanka, a woman who was accused of having drugs spent a whole year in prison because she could not pay the 15,000 Rupee (USD 134) as a bailout (WPB, 2018). Similarly, in India, pre-trial detainees spent a long time in prison because they could not afford bail amounts. The main challenges that confront acquitted remandees that attempt to reintegrate after release revolve around addiction, strained family relationships, and poverty. Most of the acquitted remandees have limited education, job skills, vocational training, and vulnerable employments (working poor) with strained family relationships. This makes reintegration difficult after release from remand custody following an acquittal decision.

### **1.6.2 Reintegration of Acquitted Remandees**

According to McKinnon and Grubin (2020), reintegration is the process of returning and reentry into the community by a person that had been held in custodial confinement. Reintegration is defined as the process of transitioning from prison to the free society, adjusting to life out of prison and maintaining a crime-free lifestyle (Laub & Sampson, 2013).

Reintegration is a significantly complex process that happens over time and not much is known about the process (Healy & O'Donnell, 2018). Remandees that are released from prison frequently have limited employment experience and have not finished high school. These individuals also have physical and mental health problems at rates greater than the general population. Of those released from US prisons in 2016, 93% of incarcerated individuals were men, 37% African American, 20% Hispanic, and the remainder were white or of other ethnicities (McKinnon & Grubin, 2020). Three to 5% of the released remandees have never been employed and one-third were unemployed 1 month before their arrest. Forty-one percent of all state and federal inmates in the US have not completed high school or its equivalent compared with 18% of the general population aged 18 and older. Rates of substance use disorders for this population are also high. Seventy-four percent of all suspects entering state prisons in the US have a substance use disorder, and 11% are dually diagnosed with a mental illness and addiction disorder.

Remandees' health problems are often related to risky behaviors, for example, drug use, as well as social determinants such as limited education and poverty. Research also suggests that the remand experience itself poses a risk to a person's physical and mental well-being. Prison remand threatens health both directly via exposure to violence and infectious disease and indirectly via the deprivations inherent within correctional facilities (Walker, 2016).

In Kenya, most released suspects re-enter their communities having spent at least 2 to 4 years in prison with limited or no pre-release preparation for life on the outside and less assistance with community reintegration once there. In the US, only 35% of all state releasees participate in educational, vocational, or pre-release programmes, and only 6% of all prison expenditures are for such programs. Limiting expenditures on pre-release preparation, substance abuse treatment, job training, and skill-building programmes in prison decreases the chances of an individual successfully reintegrating into the community upon release from remand (Comfort, 2016).

In Kenya, nearly three-quarters of all released suspects were arrested for petty crimes such as stealing farm produce, prostitution, trespass, or similar or related charges (UNODC, 2017). Remandees are released to their home communities or neighborhoods of the origin with little or no money and without the necessary identification needed to access substance abuse treatment, employment opportunities, or public assistance. Because the public stigmatizes persons with a perceived criminal record, individuals released from remand custody are likely to experience disenfranchisement from employment opportunities, housing, and family and community support networks (Sapers, 2017).

Looking at literature on returning remandees and their reintegration challenges, it emerges that remandees frequently returned to communities where they are re-exposed to high rates of criminal activity, substance abuse, and thereby increasing their risk of offending. In addition to reentering society with multiple problems and few resources, many remandees have grown accustomed to life associated with crime (Freeman & Seymour, 2020). Therefore, a seamless transition from prison to the free world is often not possible. Released remandees leave



prison having spent time in a highly structured, closely monitored environment in a non-private environment of prison to enter a socially isolated world that requires self-regulation, self-control, and independent decision-making skills. This can be disorienting for newly acquitted remandees, causing stress, fear, and destructive behavior frequently leading to rearrest and reincarceration as a result of unsuccessful reintegration. This calls for continuous support to acquitted remandees to facilitate successful resettlement and reintegration.

### **1.6.3 Theoretical Framework**

This study combined labeling and social-learning theories to analyze, explain and predict reintegration among acquitted remandees.

#### **1.6.3.1 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 as 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).

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).

#### **1.6.3.2 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).

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).

### **1.7 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 prison experience and their 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 1<sup>st</sup> March 2021 and 30<sup>th</sup> 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.

### **1.8 Findings**

Findings of the study are presented in this section.

#### **1.8.1 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.

### 1.8.2 Pre-Analysis Data testing

The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy was used to establish whether the study sample was adequate. According to Vogt (2005), KMO values between 0.8 and 1 indicate that the sample is adequate while values less than 0.6 indicate that the sample is not adequate and that remedial action should be taken. This study revealed a KMO value of 0.848, which confirmed that the data collected for this study was adequate (Table 1).

**Table 1: Test of Sampling Adequacy**

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy	.848	
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	29551.943
	Df	1931
	Sig.	.000

Source: Research Data, 2022.

Due to the nature of this study where personal characteristics of acquitted remandees and their reintegration was investigated, assumed univariate and multivariate normality were analysed. Typically, there are two ways of analyzing normality. First, graphical tests plot data of empirical observations and their distribution in comparison to a theoretical distribution to identify mismatches. Second, numerical tests can be used to derive the skewness and kurtosis statistics. Although graphical tests are more intuitive and potentially easier to interpret and apply, numerical tests are more objective (Johnson & Wichern, 2007) and therefore numerical method was used. Univariate normality was analyzed by merging responses from the study respondents using Shapiro-Wilk D statistic on the total factor scores as distributed across the items (table 2). The statistical procedure determined the extent to which the distribution deviated from the normal distribution. Findings are presented in table 2.

**Table 2: Shapiro Wilk Test for Normality in data distribution**

Variables	Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	Df	Sig.
Remandee Personal Characteristics	.819	45	.003

Test statistic is normal

Test statistic is uniform

N =357 listwise

Source: Research Data, 2022.

Normality test findings in table 2 show significant results, indicating that the quantitative data for this study were normally distributed. This is evident in all the four coefficients being above 0.5 with p values less than 0.05 across all the four independent variables. Such normal distribution made it appropriate to use statistical procedures that assume normality in data distribution such as regression analysis.

Remler and Van Ryzin (2021), stated that when interested in measuring relationships between variables and particularly multiple variable associations, the available data must pass the tests of normality and uniformity. One of the critical assumptions of regression analysis is that the study data is normally distributed.

### 1.8.3 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 3.



**Table 3 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
	<b>Total</b>	<b>357</b>	<b>100.0</b>
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
	<b>Total</b>	<b>357</b>	<b>100.0</b>
Marital status	Single	118	33.05
	Married	153	42.85
	Divorced/Separated	64	17.93
	Widowed	22	6.16
	<b>Total</b>	<b>357</b>	<b>100.0</b>
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
	<b>Total</b>	<b>357</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: Research Data, 2022.

Results in Table 3 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.

#### 1.8.4 Interplay between Acquitted Remandees' Personal Characteristics and their Reintegration

The objective of the study sought to establish the nexus between acquitted remandees' personal characteristics and their reintegration into the community in Kakamega County. The following research question was formulated to guide the study; What is the nexus between acquitted remandees' personal characteristics and their reintegration in Kakamega County? Research data on acquitted remandees' personal characteristics and data on the reintegration of acquitted remandees were subjected to descriptive and inferential statistics and findings presented in this section.

Respondents were asked to state how they considered their academic competencies and findings presented in Table 4.

**Table 4: Respondents views on how well they are educated**

Whether fairly well educated	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Strongly Agree	60	16.81
Agree	202	56.58
Neutral	41	11.48
Disagree	35	9.8
Strongly Disagree	19	5.32
<b>Total</b>	<b>357</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: Research Data, 2022.

Findings in Table 4 show that 56.58% (202) of the respondents agreed that they consider themselves well educated while 16.81% (60) strongly agreed that they are well educated. It was also found that 11.48% (41) of the respondents remained neutral on how they rated themselves in terms of adequacy of their education, 9.8% (35) disagreed on the question of whether they are well educated while 5.32% (19) strongly disagreed on the question whether they are well educated. A study by Myers (2019), revealed that well-educated people leaving prison custody always want to use their skills to secure employment and prove to those around them that they are of good character and can earn a legitimate income. Further still, a study by McKinnon and Grubin (2020), compared reintegration prospects for well-educated and less educated people leaving prison custody back to the community and concluded that the higher the education, the more likely it is that a returning individual will easily and effectively reintegrate. This success in reintegration was attributed to the ease of securing employment and benefitting from available social support structures in the community.

Respondents were asked to state whether their education was sufficient to secure them employment when released back home and the findings are presented in Table 5.

**Table 5: Whether Respondents' education is sufficient to secure them employment**

Sufficient Educated	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Strongly Agree	39	10.92
Agree	189	52.94
Neutral	60	16.81
Disagree	48	13.45
Strongly Disagree	21	5.88
<b>Total</b>	<b>357</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: Research Data, 2022.

Findings in Table 5 show that 52.94% (189) of the respondents agreed that their education was sufficient to secure them employment when they returned home from remand while 10.92% (39) strongly agreed that their education level was sufficient to secure them employment after release from remand. Findings also show that 16.81% (60) of the respondents were neutral on the question of whether their education was sufficient to secure them employment after release, 13.45% (48) disagreed while 5.88% (21) of the respondents strongly agreed. A study by Sared and Nartok (2019), found that incarcerated persons' belief in their knowledge, education, and skills were significant forces to enable them to become aggressive in pursuit of employment when released from custody. They further suggested that the zeal to secure employment and apply their knowledge and skills is a result of the realization that they have lost time while in custody and that those that they left behind deserve a better life going forward.

Respondents were asked to state the extent to which they believed that they were religiously inclined and the findings presented in Table 6.

**Table 6: Whether respondents were religious**

Religious	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Strongly Agree	69	19.33
Agree	111	31.09
Neutral	40	11.2
Disagree	83	23.25
Strongly Disagree	54	15.13
<b>Total</b>	<b>357</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: Research Data, 2022.

Results in Table 6 show that 31.09% (111) of the respondents strongly agreed that they were religious while 19.33% (69) strongly agreed that they were religious. Results further showed that 23.25% (83) of the respondents disagreed with being religious, 15.13% (54) strongly disagreed while 11.2% (40) of the respondents were neutral to the question of whether they are religious. This shows that majority of acquitted remandees tended to be inclined to religion while still in prison with a view to get support from religious organizations that have access to prison and in the community upon release. Studies that have looked at religion and its role in shaping the prison experience for people in custody have come up with mixed findings. A study by Rabinowitz (2019), found that inmates who are strongly affiliated with religion tend to seek solace in prayers as a way of restoring hope and reassurance that all is well. In yet another study by (McKay (2016), it was found that strong religious affiliations for people in custody may be a source of despair since such people may not get religious services from their denominations. This was in line with a study by Kruttschnitt, (2015), which asserted that 59.6% of respondents in his study were not able to worship as per their belief given that they did not have access to their parent denominations while in custody. Concerning reintegration, the study by Miller (2018), revealed that incarcerated individuals who spend time participating in religious activities such as prayers, singing, and bible study successfully reintegrate back into the community as compared to inmates who do not participate in religious activities.

Respondents were asked whether they actively participated in religious activities and the findings are presented in Table 7.

**Table 7: Whether respondents actively participated in religious activities**

Participation in Religious Activities	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Strongly Agree	53	14.85
Agree	104	29.13
Neutral	45	12.61
Disagree	91	25.49
Strongly Disagree	64	17.93
<b>Total</b>	<b>357</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: Research Data, 2022.

Findings in Table 7 reveal that 29.13% (104) of the respondents agreed that they actively participated in religious activities while 14.85% (53) strongly agreed. It was established further that 25.49% (91) of the respondents disagreed with the question of whether they actively participated in religious activities while in remand, 17.93% (64) strongly disagreed, and 12.61% (45) of the respondents were neutral to this item. This shows that most released remandees participated in religious activities while still in prison. Such participation was meant to keep them away from negative influence from convicts so as to facilitate smooth reintegration upon release from prison.

A study by Liebling, Hulley and Crewe (2019), revealed that active participation in religious activities while in custody helps inmates in passing time and getting their minds off the constant reminders of life in a carceral facility and this improves their life experience. The study further revealed that having a positive life experience while in prison made reintegration more successful.

Respondents were asked if they were in good health while in remand and the findings are presented in Table 8.

**Table 8: If Respondents were of good health while in prison**

Good Health while in Remand	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Strongly Agree	37	10.36
Agree	81	22.69
Neutral	53	14.85
Disagree	144	40.34
Strongly Disagree	42	11.76
<b>Total</b>	<b>357</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: Research Data, 2022.

Findings in Table 8 show that 40.34% (144) of the respondents disagreed with the question of whether they had good health while in remand while 11.76% (42) strongly disagreed. A further look at the findings reveals that 22.69% (81) of the respondents agreed, 10.36% (37) strongly agreed while 14.85% (53) were neutral to the question of whether they had good health while in remand. This finding shows that majority of acquitted remandees faced health challenges while in prison that may have later hampered their reintegration upon release from prison.

Prison experience differs for various individuals based on their health status with the sick having difficulty coping with life in remand (Kruttschnitt, 2015). With most respondents in the study indicating that they were not in good health while in prison, it points to difficult prison experiences for most remandees in Kakamega County. Saper (2017), found that released remandees who experience health challenges while in prison find challenges at the point of reentry after release given that they come to the community for treatment first before settling down to secure gainful employment.

Respondents were asked to state whether they developed health complications while in prison and the findings are presented in Table 9.

**Table 9: Whether respondents developed health complications while in prison**

Developed Health Complications	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Strongly Agree	45	12.61
Agree	139	38.94
Neutral	47	13.17
Disagree	76	21.29
Strongly Disagree	50	14.01
<b>Total</b>	<b>357</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: Research Data, 2022.

Results in table 9 reveal that 38.94% (139) of the respondents agreed while 12.61% (45) strongly agreed to have developed health complications while in remand. Results also show that 21.29% (76) disagreed, 14.01% (50) strongly disagreed while 13.17% (47) were neutral to the question of whether they developed health complications while in prison. This shows that the majority of the respondents developed health-related complications while in prison and this made their reintegration difficult. Several studies have looked at prison experience for individuals with and without health complications with varied reintegration outcomes outcome.

It has been demonstrated through research that sickness while in prison has a direct bearing on reintegration since the custodial containment may be prolonged due to missed court sessions as individuals seek treatment. They further aver that the longer one stays in prison, the more difficult it becomes for them to successfully reintegrate back into the community upon release.

A survey by Akhihero (2018), in 31 prisons in Nigeria revealed that remandees may develop health complications while in remand due to congestion and sharing of amenities and renders them susceptible to airborne diseases such as tuberculosis. Coming out of prison with health-related complications delays resettlement and reintegration since released remandees have to seek treatment before embarking on looking for employment to gain self-reliance.

A study by Leverentz, Chen, and Christian (2020), revealed that remandees who develop health-related complications while in remand experience particular difficulty while preparing for their defenses in court since some of them may miss court dates while admitted to hospital for treatment or while in a state that renders them unable to effectively defend themselves in court. A study by McCrank, Doob, Keefe, and Lang (2019), revealed that sickness while in prison has a direct bearing on reintegration since the custodial containment may be prolonged due to missed court sessions as individuals seek treatment. They further aver that the longer one stays in prison, the more difficult it becomes for them to successfully reintegrate back into the community upon release.

The study sought to find out whether respondents received medical assistance when they fell ill while in prison and the findings presented in Table 10.

**Table 10: Whether respondents received medical assistance when they had health complications in remand**

Received Medical Assistance	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Strongly Agree	80	22.41
Agree	137	38.38
Neutral	26	7.28
Disagree	65	18.21
Strongly Disagree	49	13.73
<b>Total</b>	<b>357</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: Research Data, 2022.

Findings in Table 10 reveal that 38.38% (137) of the respondents agreed, 22.41% (80) strongly agreed while 7.28% (26) of the respondents remained neutral on the question of whether they received medical assistance when they fell ill while in remand. It was also revealed based on the study findings that 18.21% (65) disagreed and 13.73% (49) strongly disagreed with the question of whether they received medical assistance when they fell sick while in remand. This shows that the prison department facilitates the treatment of remanded persons who fall sick. Such treatment goes a long way in facilitating successful reintegration upon release given that this study has already demonstrated that remandees released while healthy reintegrate more successfully compared to those released while sick. Criminology scholars have looked into the nexus between sickness, medical treatment, and reintegration after release from custody.

A survey by Binswanger, Krueger, and Steiner (2019), found that inmates who received medical assistance while in prison tend to cope well with remand experience and get back on course to complete their cases.

This was in their view, unlike situations where remanded individuals did not receive medical help while in custody since most of them deteriorate and even die while in prison. In the event of a release from prison while sick, reintegration back to the community is slow and often full of challenges since such individuals do not have the resource endowments to seek treatment. Saper (2017), suggested legal regress for remandees who go to prison healthy but return while sick due to the difficulties encountered while in prison. He further suggested that sickness from released remandees should be looked at both from the psychological and physical perspectives and all treatment sought at government expense.

Respondents for the study were asked to state whether prison prepared them in any way for release to the community. Findings reveal that most respondents (84.31%) were of the view that prison remand did not prepare them in any way for release. This finding presents a significant policy gap in so far as the treatment and preparation of remandees for release from prison is concerned. There is no clear policy guideline for the assistance of remandees following their release from prison. It was also established that 15.69% of respondents were of the view that prison prepared them for release. The inability of prisons to prepare remandees for release has posed challenges at the point of returning back to the community (Kamakil, 2017). Kellen, Freedman, Novac, Lapointe, Marranen, and Wong (2019), recommended in their study in Canada that there is a need for assessment and training of remandees to prepare them for release at the end of their cases.

They alluded to the fact that trained remandees reintegrate more successfully than those that are not prepared for release and that remandees who end up with convictions cope well with prison life when previously assessed and prepared for life in prison.

When respondents were asked to state whether their personal characteristics such as level of education before arrest made their experience easy in prison, findings show that 69.75% (247) of the respondents agreed that personal characteristics such as level of education made their prison experience easier. It was also noted that 30.25% of the respondents did not agree that personal characteristics such as level of education made the prison experience easy for them. When asked how personal characteristics such as level of education made their experience easy in prison, most respondents (55.06%) were of the view that more educated remandees were able to effectively communicate to prison authorities on various ways of getting help and they could also easily and effectively consult among other equally educated remandees and prisoners on ways of getting around their cases. Studies that have looked at the education of inmates and reintegration have focused on the prospects of getting employment after release from prison. A study by Sarre, King, and Bamford (2016), demonstrated that well-educated individuals leaving prison reintegrate more successfully due to the ability to easily secure employment and pick up from where they left. This was not the case for remandees who return home unskilled just like they went to prison.

On the question about religious inclination as a personal characteristic and how it affected the prison experience, 53.5% (191) of the respondents indicated that released remandees who actively took part in prayer sessions, bible study, praise and worship got social support from fellow believers in prison including prison officers.

In addition, other visiting religious organizations came to the prison to pray with them. When asked further how this was beneficial, most respondents said that through prayers, 52.38% (187) of the respondents said that remandees had their hope restored, and the belief that they would one day be set free reaffirmed.

Scholars have looked at religion and the reintegration of individuals after release from prison. A study by Kellough and Wortley (2018), found that respondents who agreed to have actively participated in religious activities such as bible study, praise and worship while in prison and continued participating in religious activities after release custody reintegrated more successfully given the support provided to them by faith-based organizations. Such individuals received referrals and guarantees for good behavior and were easily absorbed into aftercare programs and empowered to carry on with their lives.

The study also sought to know what other personal characteristics made the difference for released remandees between good and bad prison experiences and majority of respondents (50.14%) were of the view that personal traits such as being sociable, tolerant to divergent opinion and having good interpersonal skills made



them get along well with fellow remandees, convicts and prison officers. This made it easy for these released remandees to access help such as getting access to the welfare office to seek assistance while they were still in prison. It also emerged that good interpersonal skills as a personal characteristic made remandees receive favors such as getting sufficient food ratio when it was served and this was stated by 19.05% of the respondents. Binswanger, Krueger, and Steiner (2019), while investigating health issues for inmates in the United States found that personal characteristics of inmates such as being sociable and having good interpersonal skills made it easy for them to seek assistance when sick.

Looking at the trends in the descriptive statistics when remandee personal characteristics were considered against reintegration and also considering discussions that ensued, it became necessary to investigate how personal characteristics of remandees affected their reintegration. Cross tabulations were done to compare responses to questions on education, health, and religion and responses to questions about whether respondents received a hostile reception from family members and relatives at the point of return from prison, how easy it was to secure employment after release and whether they were labeled criminal by family and community members upon release from prison. Cross-tabulation findings are presented in Table 11.

**Table 11: Remandee education, reception, employment and labelling cross-tabulation**

<b>Well educated, education can help secure employment after release</b>	<b>SA</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>SD</b>
Received hostile reception	18 (6.87%)	46 (17.56%)	15 (5.73%)	142 (54.2%)	41 (15.65%)
Easy securing employment after returning	37 (14.12%)	160 (61.07%)	12 (4.58%)	38 (14.5%)	15 (5.73%)
Labelled criminal when you returned	26 (9.92%)	44 (16.79%)	20 (7.63%)	136 (51.91%)	36 (13.74%)

Source: Research Data, 2022.

Respondents who strongly agreed or agreed to consider themselves as well educated and who strongly agreed or agreed to the question of whether their education was sufficient to enable them secure employment after release from remand had their responses to questions on whether they received a hostile reception from family and community members upon return from prison cross-tabulation. Findings in Table 11 reveal that 54.2% (142) disagreed, 15.65% (41) strongly disagreed, 5.73% (15) were neutral, 17.56% (46) agreed and 6.87% (18) strongly agreed. This shows that most respondents who were well educated and those who felt that their education was sufficient to help them secure employment after release did not receive hostile reception when they returned home from prison and this made their reintegration successful.

Respondents who strongly agreed or agreed to being well educated and who strongly agreed or agreed to the question of whether their education was sufficient to enable them secure employment after release from prison had their responses to the question on whether they found it easy securing employment after returning from remand cross-tabulated. Findings in Table 11 reveal that 61.07% (160) of the respondents agreed, 14.12% (37) strongly agreed, 4.58% (12) were neutral, 14.5% (38) disagreed and 5.73% (15) strongly disagreed to have found it easy securing employment after release from prison. In light of this finding, it is evident that the majority of the respondents who were well educated and who felt that their education was sufficient to secure employment found it easy to secure employment after release from prison.

Respondents who strongly agreed or agreed to consider themselves well educated and who strongly agreed or agreed to the question of whether their education was sufficient to enable them secure employment after release from prison had their responses to the question of whether they were labeled criminal when they returned from remand cross-tabulated. Findings in Table 11 show that 51.91% (136) of the respondents disagreed, 13.74% (36) strongly disagreed, 7.63% (20) were neutral, 16.79% (44) agreed and 9.92% (26) of the respondents strongly agreed to have been labeled criminals when they returned home from prison. This is a clear indication that the majority of the respondents who were well educated and who believed that their education would help them secure employment after release were not labeled criminals when they returned home from prison.

Cross-tabulations were done for responses from respondents who agreed or strongly agreed to be religious and those who agreed or strongly agreed to have actively participated in religious activities while in remand to determine their responses to questions about whether they received a hostile reception when they returned from prison, ease of securing employment after release from prison and whether they were labeled criminal when they returned from prison. Findings are presented in Table 12.

**Table 12: Religion, reception, employment and labelling cross-tabulation**

Religious, actively participated in religious activities while in remand	SA	A	N	D	SD
Received hostile reception	24 (13.33%)	37 (20.56%)	15 (8.33%)	81 (45.0%)	23 (12.78%)
Easy securing employment after returning	29 (16.11%)	79 (43.89%)	19 (10.56%)	26 (14.44%)	27 (15.0%)
Labelled criminal when you returned	19 (10.56%)	35 (19.44%)	22 (12.22%)	83 (46.11%)	21 (11.67%)

Source: Research Data, 2022.

Results in Table 12 show that 45% (81) of the respondents who agreed or strongly agreed to participate in religious activities and who agreed or strongly agreed to have actively participated in religious activities while in remand disagreed with receiving a hostile reception from family and relatives. It was also established based on findings in table 12 that 12.78% (23) of the respondents strongly disagreed, 8.33% (15) were neutral, 20.56% (37) agreed while 13.33% (24) of the respondents strongly agreed. This shows that respondents who actively participated in religious activities while in prison did not receive a hostile reception from family and relatives when they returned home from prison and this made their reintegration successful as compared to remandees who did not participate in religious activities who received negative reception from family members and relatives that negatively affected the success of their reintegration.

It was also found that 43.89% (79) of the respondents who agreed or strongly agreed to be religious and who agreed or strongly agreed to have actively participated in religious activities while in prison agreed to receive a hostile reception from family and relatives. In addition, 16.11% (29) of the respondents strongly agreed, 10.56% (19) were neutral, 14.44% (26) disagreed and 15% (27) of the respondents strongly disagreed. This implies that most respondents who actively participated in religious activities while in remand found it easy to secure employment when they returned home from prison. Ease of securing employment was a significant factor in guaranteeing successful reintegration as revealed by this study.

It was also established that 46.11% (79) of the respondents who agreed or strongly agreed to be religious and who agreed or strongly agreed to have actively participated in religious activities while in prison disagreed with having been labeled as criminals by family and community members when they returned home from prison. It was also revealed from findings that 11.67% (21) of the respondents strongly disagreed, 12.22% (22) were neutral, 19.44% (35) agreed, and 10.56% (19) of the respondents who agreed or strongly agreed to be religious and who agreed or strongly agreed to have actively participated in religious activities while in prison strongly agreed to have been labeled as criminals by family and community members when they returned home from prison. This implied that the majority of the respondents who actively participated in religious activities while in prison were not labeled as criminals by family and community members when they returned home from prison and had successful reintegration during reentry into the community.

Responses from respondents who agreed or strongly agreed to have had health problems while in prison were cross-tabulated with their responses to reintegration items including their reception by family and relatives back home, how easy it was for them to secure employment, and whether they were labeled as criminals when they returned home from prison. Findings are presented in Table 13.

**Table 13: Remandee health, reception, employment and labelling cross-tabulation**

Health status while in prison	SA	A	N	D	SD
Received hostile reception	39 (20.97%)	87 (46.77%)	17 (9.14%)	23 (12.37%)	20 (10.75%)
Easy securing employment after returning	25 (13.44%)	42 (22.58%)	13 (6.99%)	78 (41.94%)	28 (15.05%)
Labelled criminal when you returned	40 (21.51%)	68 (36.56%)	20 (10.75%)	32 (17.2%)	26 (13.98%)

Source: Research Data, 2022.

Findings in Table 13 show that 46.77% (87) of the respondents who agreed or strongly agreed to have been unwell in prison agreed to receive a hostile reception from family and relatives when they returned home following their release from prison. It was also found that 20.97% (39) of the respondents strongly agreed, 9.14% (17) were neutral, 12.37% (23) disagreed while 10.75% (20) of the respondents strongly disagreed with the question of whether they received a hostile reception from family members and relatives when they returned home from prison. The implication of this finding is that majority of the respondents who reported being unwell while in prison received a hostile reception from family and relatives when they returned home following their release from prison. This was partly due to inability to immediately get out and actively look for employment

and also due to the financial burden shifted to the family to fund treatment since acquitted remandees are usually poor people with no resources of their own.

It was further found that 41.94% (78) of the respondents who agreed or strongly agreed to have been unwell in prison disagreed with having found it easy to secure employment after release from prison. It was also found that 215.05% (28) of the respondents strongly disagreed, 6.99% (13) were neutral, 22.58% (42) agreed and 13.44% (25) of the respondents strongly agreed with the question of whether they found it easy to secure employment after release from prison. This means that majority of the respondents reported being unwell while in prison and experienced difficulty securing employment after release from prison.

Regarding the question of whether respondents who agreed or strongly agreed to have been unwell in prison were labeled as criminals by family and community members when they returned home from prison, it was found that 36.56% (68) of the respondents agreed while 21.51% (40) of the respondents strongly agreed. Results in Table 13 further show that 17.2% (32) disagreed, 13.98% (26) strongly disagreed and 10.75% (20) were neutral to the question of whether they were labeled as criminals by family and community members when they returned home from prison. This implies that respondents who reported being unwell while in prison were labeled as criminals by family and community members when they returned home from prison. This label was mainly towards the acquitted remandees due to the financial burden shifted to the family to assist them in treatment. The label was also in the form of a blame to the acquitted remandees for having found themselves in circumstances that exposed them to sickness. The label is further aggravated by the fact that the returning remandee was depending on family members for financial support towards treatment. Conversely, acquitted remandees who were healthy while in remand were not labelled criminals given that they were able to settle down and secure employment hence becoming self-reliant. This shows that the burden posed to family members by sick acquitted remandees was the likely cause for their negative perception and profiling.

Findings on cross-tabulation between released remandee personal characteristics and reintegration of acquitted remandees pointed towards the need to test for the existence of a relationship between their personal characteristics and their reintegration. Consequently, research data on personal characteristics 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 acquitted remandees' personal characteristics and reintegration, there were no extreme scores (outliers) and cross-tabulation suggested that released remandee personal characteristics and reintegration were related pairs. Findings are presented in Table 14.

**Table 14: Pearson product moment correlation coefficient for Acquitted remandee personal characteristics and reintegration of acquitted released remandees (n=357)**

		Acquitted remandee	
		Personal Characteristics	Reintegration
Acquitted Personal Characteristics	Pearson Correlation	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)		
	N	357	
Reintegration	Pearson Correlation	.525**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001	
	N	357	357

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

Source: Research Data, 2022.

Findings in Table 14 show the correlation between acquitted remandee personal characteristics and reintegration of acquitted remandees where a significant relationship was revealed ( $r=0.525$ ;  $P<0.05$ ). This showed that released remandee personal characteristics significantly affected their reintegration when they were released from prison to return to the community. This was evident when this study found out that the education level of released remandees, their active participation in religious activities and their health status affected their reintegration upon release from prison.

Researchers such as a study by McKinnon and Grubin (2020), and Myers (2019), revealed that well-educated people leaving prison custody always want to use their skills to secure employment and prove to those around them that they are of good character and can earn a legitimate income. Further, still, comparisons between reintegration prospects for well-educated and less educated acquitted remandees revealed that the higher the education, the more likely it is that a returning individual will easily and effectively reintegrate (McKinnon & Grubin, 2020).

Studies that have looked at religion and reintegration for people returning from custody have come up with mixed findings. For instance, findings from a study by Taekema (2015), established that people who are in custodial confinement who take some time to participate in religious activities such as prayers, singing, and bible study successfully reintegrate back into the community as compared to inmates who do not participate in religious activities. Sered and Norton-Hawk (2019), found that active participation in religious activities while in

prison helps inmates in passing time and getting their minds off the constant reminders of life in prison and this improved both their life experience in prison and reintegration success after release.

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 acquitted remandees' personal characteristics and their reintegration in Kakamega County. Findings are presented in Table 15.

**Table 15: Linear regression model for Acquitted remandee personal characteristics and reintegration (n=357)**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted Square	R Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.419	.285	.274	.60113	1.795

a. Predictors: (Constant), Released remandee Personal Characteristics

b. Dependent Variable: Reintegration of Acquitted Released remandees

Source: Research Data, 2022.

Results in Table 15 for linear regression between personal characteristics and reintegration of acquitted remandees revealed a coefficient of determination ( $R^2$ ) of 0.285 implying that 28.5% of the variance in the reintegration of acquitted remandees in Kakamega County was a result of released remandee personal characteristics. Research that has looked into personal characteristics and reintegration of acquitted remandees such as Miller (2018), and Schonteich (2014), revealed that the skills level of returning individuals, their personality traits, social support structures, and health status at the time of release significantly affect the success of their reintegration back into the community.

Correctional officers (5 prison officers and 4 probation officers) were interviewed to find out whether released remandee personal characteristics such as their level of education, religion, and health status while in prison affected their reintegration upon release. Out of 9 correctional officers, 6 correctional officers (majority) were of the view that released remandee personal characteristics affected their reintegration upon released from custody.

A probation officer had this to say about education level of remandees and their reintegration:

*Remandees enter prison with varying levels of education and this almost certainly has an effect on their reintegration at the end of their remand period. Remandees who were highly educated and skilled reintegrate more successfully after release from prison due to the ease with which they resettle and put their skills to use back in the community. This is not the case for illiterate acquitted remandees who get back and start looking for manual jobs that are usually not easy to come by due to labeling and unwillingness of community members to interact with them (Field data, 2022).*

This demonstrates that education and skills level of acquitted remandees play a role in their reintegration with skilled and educated remandees reintegrating more successfully than the less educated and less skilled remandees.

It also emerged from interviews with correctional officers that education level and skills of remandees also affected their lives while still in remand and also shaped their remand experiences. Remand experiences in turn affected reintegration of the acquitted remandees.

This is what a probation officer had to say about level of education of acquitted remandees and their reintegration:

*Most community-based organizations prefer to work with educated remandees than the uneducated ones since educated remandees tend to reintegrated faster and more successfully. Given that most donors peg their funding for community-based organizations on successful implementation of programmes, they support those community-based organizations that provide evidence of successful reintegration of acquitted remandees under their support (Field data, 2022).*

With most community-based organizations supporting acquitted remandees reintegration depending on donor support, it is clear that they would prefer to work with acquitted remandees who are educated and skilled so as to add on their statistics of successful interventions into the lives of acquitted remandees. Findings from this study disagree with findings from a study Julien (2017), found out that education of acquitted remandees was not a necessary factor in their resettlement and reintegration in Austria. The study found that all acquitted remandees regardless of their level of education and skills were entitled to support through programmes that would guarantee their successful reintegration. Such programmes included counselling, empowerment and referrals to potential jobs that best suited acquitted remandees skills. On religious affiliations, correctional officers were of the view that released remandees who are more inclined to religion got favours from religious

correctional officers and had successful reintegration after release from prison as was stated by 6 of the 9 correctional officers.

A prison officer observed that:

*Prison officers that actively participate in religious activities involving remandees tend to offer assistance to remandees who also actively participate in religious activities while in prison. The assistance entails helping remandees to secure better accommodation and allowing remandees to spend more hours outdoor as compared to remandees who are not actively involved in religious activities. This assistance goes a long way in creating networks that link remandees to supporting community-based organizations that visit prison to preach the gospel. Such networks extend into the community and assist released remandees that are identified and supported to reintegrate more successfully (Field data, 2022).*

This observation further highlighted the link between successful reintegration of acquitted remandees who actively participated in religious activities while still in remand. It emerged that successful reintegration of this category of acquitted remandees was as a result of follow up and support from community-based religious organizations that operate in prison and also have roots extending into the community where acquitted remandees are released.

A Focus Group Discussion conducted with 8 community members on 3<sup>rd</sup> May 2022 revealed that acquitted remandees who actively participated in religious activities, who were well-educated or healthy at the time of arrest reintegrated more successfully after release from remand than those that were not and this was confirmed by all the 8 community members. Issues of acceptability for acquitted remandees who actively participated in religious activities while in prison, ease of securing employment for those who are well educated and skilled and ease of settling back into the community and starting to look for employment openings for the health releaseses were given as the reasons why it was easy for this category of acquitted remandees to successfully reintegrate upon release from prison.

A retail trader had this to say:

*When a person comes back from prison while healthy and of good behaviour due to active participation in religious activities, they tend to settle back into the community faster and successfully after release from prison as compared to those that come and engage in bad behaviour, those without skills and those that come while sick (Filed data, 2022).*

This shows that from the community members perspective, individual characteristics of acquitted remandees play an important role in their reintegration after release from custody with those acquitted remandees who actively participated in religious activities, the educated and skilled and the health successfully reintegrating as compared to those acquitted remandees who come ready to exhibit negative behaviour, those that were not skilled and those that came back sick. Studies such as McKinnon and Grubin (2020) demonstrated the role of personal characteristics of remandees and their influence on reintegration upon release from custody with the educated remandees reintegrating successfully due to their ability to secure employment faster and put their skills to use in earning a living.

## 1.9 Conclusion

The third objective of the study sought to establish the interplay between acquitted remandees' personal characteristics and their reintegration into the community in Kakamega County. Findings from the correlation between released remandee personal characteristics and reintegration of acquitted remandees revealed a significant relationship. Linear regression between released remandee personal characteristics and reintegration of acquitted remandees revealed a statistically significant influence of released remandee personal characteristics on their reintegration in Kakamega County. In light of this finding, a conclusion is made that acquitted remandees' personal characteristics significantly influenced their reintegration in Kakamega County.

## 1.10 Recommendation

Treatment programmes are most effective when they are based on the full diagnostic and individual assessment of the inmates to determine their personal characteristics and interests. This study recommends the introduction of pre-release training programmes for remandees and involving released remandees in the selection of programmes that suit their skill set, interests, and adaptation. It is also recommended that an inventory of the released remandees' training level, skills, abilities, and preferences be prepared, periodically updated, and shared with potential support organizations to facilitate successful reintegration upon release from prison.

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