Relationship between Social Support and Psychological Well-Being among Prisoners: A Case of Kamiti Maximum Security Prison, Nairobi County, Kenya.

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DECLARATION

I, the undersigned, state that this piece of work is the artefact of my personal work which was not done in collaboration with any other person. This research work has not been presented before for any academic award. All foundations supporting this work have been well acknowledged and appropriately cited to meet the academic standards as established in higher learning institutions.

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DEDICATION

To my dear and loving parents, Michael Mutua Mbiti and Philomena Mwikali Mutua whose assistance, reassurance and supplications have enabled me to achieve this much.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

More than anything else, I am indebted to thank the Lord for His blessings upon me and my family. His divine providence, care and protection surpass all. I wish also to register my gratitude to Dr. Henry Tucholski and Dr. Phyllis Muraya for accepting to supervise this study.

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ABSTRACT

Imprisonment is widely regarded as a method of deterring individuals from committing further offences. However, life in prison often exposes inmates to a range of psychological challenges that require targeted interventions to promote mental well-being. This study examined the relationship between social support and psychological well-being among inmates at Kamiti Maximum Security Prison in Nairobi County, Kenya. Guided by four objectives, the study assessed the level of social support, the level of psychological well-being, the relationship between demographic characteristics on psychological well-being, and the relationship between social support and psychological well-being. The research was based on Don Drennon-Gala and Cullen's Social Support Theory and Ryff's Six-Factor Model. A positivist correlational survey design was employed. Data were collected using the Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support and the Psychological Well-Being Scale. A simple random sampling technique was applied to select the participants. The findings showed that 73.3% of the respondents reported moderate social support, 17.4% experienced high support, while 9.3% had low support. Regarding psychological well-being, 90.4% fell within the moderate range, 6.7% scored high, and 2.9% were in the low range. A chi-square test showed that age, marital status, level of education, and years served in prison had no significant difference on psychological well-being. Marital status also showed no significant effect ($p = .666$). Pearson's correlation analysis indicated a positive and statistically significant relationship between social support and psychological well-being ($r = .193$, $p = .001$). Regression analysis confirmed that social support significantly predicted psychological well-being ($F (1, 311) = 11.97$, $p = .001$). These findings emphasize the need to strengthen support systems for inmates, particularly through family visits, peer connections, friends and support from significant others. Encouraging self-reflection and healthy relationships within prison settings can enhance the psychological resilience of inmates.

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

APA: The American Psychological Association.

ANOVA: Analysis of Variance

BC: British Columbia

BI: Borstal Institution

CAP 90: Chapter 90 of the constitution of Kenya.

CGP: The Commissioner General of Prisons

GHQ: General Health Questionnaire

HIV: Human Immunodeficiency Virus

IYS: The Institute of Youth Studies

JST: Jail Screening Tool

MV: Moderating Variables

NACEO: The Nairobi County Educational Office

NACOSTI: The National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation.

MSPSS: The Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support

PEDI: Perceived Emotional Distress Inventory

PWBS: Psychological Well-Being Scale

PTSD: Post Traumatic Stress Disorder

QoL: Quality of Life

SD: Standard Deviation

SS: Social Support

SPSS: Statistical Package for social sciences

TUREC: Tangaza University Research Ethics Committee

USA: The United States of America

V: Variable

WHO: The World Health Organization

YCTC: Young Correctional Training Centre

OPERATIONAL DEFINITION OF TERMS

Social support: The availability of resources like people, material things or conducive environment that can basically offer comfort especially on occasions when the individual experiences stress or any life difficulties. This availability of resources makes an individual feel important, valued and cared.

Psychological well-being: This concept is basically an understanding of the innate atmosphere of an individual. It's said to be the presence of positive feelings. It's also a feeling of being sensible and competent, positive self-image and self-regard. It is basically Self-acceptance, building strong relationships, personal growth, purpose in life, autonomy, and environmental mastery (Ryff, 1989). Psychological wellbeing is not an absence of negative feelings per se but it's the ability for an individual to be able to relate their thinking, feeling and actions in reference to their life situation.

Maximum security prison: In the categorization of Prisons under the Kenyan penal system, we have open prison which contains the petty offenders serving sentences below 6 months and below (CAP 90). A medium prison which is also known as an annex Prison, would then contain prisoners serving more than six months and below three years. A maximum security Prison contains long term prisoners that are charged with capital offenses like murder, treason, defilement, robbery with violence, terrorism etc. and are serving more than three years. Long term sentence can also mean prisoners serving death sentence of life (Mbatha, 2019).

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

This chapter provides an account of the study, including the problem under investigation, the objectives and research questions. The chapter also presents the research questions, the justification, and the significance of the study, the scope, limitations, and underlying assumptions of the study.

1.2. Background to the Study

The rise in global crime rates has become a pressing issue, particularly in countries where moral and social wellness are emphasized (Lui, 2011). According to Fazel et al. (2016), more than 10 million people are incarcerated worldwide, with the United States leading at approximately 2.2 million inmates, followed by China with 1.64 million. A study by Haywood (2024) on the mental health of prisoners showed that nearly 50% of incarcerated individuals experience some form of psychological distress, a figure significantly higher than that of the general population. The prevalence of mental illness among incarcerated prisoners is alarming, and it is nondiscriminatory in that it affects both men and women.

Life in prison is associated with a variety of psychological challenges. Exposure to confinement, isolation, and separation from loved ones increases the risk of emotional issues such as depression, suicidal ideation, self-harm, and aggression (Gooch & Sheldon, 2019). If these challenges are not addressed early, they can evolve into long-term behavioral problems and may contribute to recidivism after release.

The subject of mental well-being has received increased attention in recent years due to its visible effects in contemporary society. Research has consistently shown that imprisonment can lead to emotional and psychological strain, often exacerbated by the loss of social contact and

community ties (Nagy, 2025). While the legal system emphasizes incarceration based on evidence, it rarely considers the long-term psychological consequences of imprisonment. Practices such as administrative segregation, where inmates are placed in isolation, have been shown to intensify mental health issues, especially for those already exhibiting aggressive behavior (Morgan et al., 2016).

Social support plays a crucial role in mitigating the negative effects of incarceration. Gottlieb (2015) emphasized the importance of understanding how social support whether perceived or received impacts prisoners' mental health. Although the concept is widely acknowledged in psychology and sociology, its specific application in correctional settings remains underexplored. This study aims to investigate how social support relates to the psychological well-being of inmates.

Research by Skowronski (2020) points out that while social support is valuable, it is not the only factor affecting prisoners' well-being. Elements such as prison infrastructure, visitation policies, and individual perceptions of life also play significant roles. The physical environment, administrative practices, and opportunities for rehabilitation all influence how social support is received and how well inmates adapt.

Ajduković (2018) noted that supportive relationships with family members can enhance an inmate's psychological well-being. However, not all inmates enjoy positive familial relationships prior to incarceration, making social support inconsistent and complex. This variability presents a significant limitation in designing interventions based solely on family involvement.

Psychological well-being (PWB) itself has become a key area of academic interest. Yiğit and Çakmak (2024) reviewed over 16,000 studies published between 1980 and 2022, observing a surge in research, particularly from the United States. Carol Ryff emerged as the most frequently

cited scholar in this field. PWB, as defined by Ryff, includes autonomy, self-acceptance, personal growth, positive relationships, life purpose, and environmental mastery. It reflects not merely the absence of mental illness but the presence of meaningful, competent living (Ryff, 1989; Ilijić et al., 2024).

Studies by Hammond and Glorney (2024) showed that inmates with psychological difficulties often engage in maladaptive behaviors. Healthy prison environments offering sports, education, and art can promote better mental health outcomes. External and internal influences such as support networks and personal coping abilities together shape an inmate's psychological adjustment.

In England and Wales, Stürup, O'Moore, and Plugge (2018) reported increasing deaths in prisons, linked to both physical and psychological conditions. Notably, suicide remains a leading cause of inmate mortality. These authors argued that imprisonment, while intended to deter crime, often leads to psychological harm, prompting inmates to adopt survival mechanisms that further complicate rehabilitation.

In Indonesia, Moedak (2024) found that family support contributed 17.1% to prisoners' psychological well-being, while 82.9% of the influence came from other sources. Similarly, Rogers and Esterhuyse (2024) discovered that inmates who received regular visits adjusted more easily to prison life, while those with limited social support exhibited aggression and difficulty coping.

Favril and van Ginneken (2023), in a study of 15 Belgian prisons involving 1,296 inmates, observed that women displayed more psychological distress than men, especially during the early stages of incarceration. Their findings emphasized the importance of prison conditions in shaping inmates' mental health.

In an investigation piloted by Rogers and Esterhuyse (2024) in South Africa which looked at coping, aggression and perceived social support among prisoners as variables that predict the adjustment of offenders into prison life among 418 respondents. The findings of this research indicated that prisoners who were constantly visited by friends and family members adjusted swiftly to prisons life more than members who were hardly visited. In addition, those reported to have difficulties in coping turned aggressive and were repellant.

In Kenya, although several studies have focused on rehabilitation programs such as vocational training and religious support, there is limited empirical research on the psychological well-being of inmates or on how social support mitigates the impact of incarceration (Kipkemboi, 2024; Museve et al., 2020).

The stressful realities of prison life, if left unaddressed, can lead to emotional instability, heightened aggression, and poor inmate-staff relations undermining rehabilitation and posing a broader security risk. This study addresses the gap in Kenyan research by examining how social support relates to psychological well-being among inmates at Kamiti Maximum Security Prison.

1.3 Statement of the Problem

Imprisonment is widely practiced as a strategy for deterring individuals from committing crimes, primarily by isolating offenders from the public and thereby promoting public safety and rehabilitation (Akwaji et al., 2024). While incarceration may serve these purposes, it often exposes prisoners to psychological distress stemming from the harsh realities of prison life.

Burns et al. (2024) conducted research in United States of America whereby it was observed that incarcerated individuals frequently exhibit psychological problems such as antisocial behavior, depression, aggression, and suicidal ideation. These issues are often linked to the difficulty many inmates face in processing their imprisonment and adapting to life behind bars.

The absence or inconsistency of visits from family, friends, or significant others has also been associated with feelings of abandonment and social exclusion among inmates. Without adequate emotional connection, prisoners may begin to perceive themselves as outcasts, leading to further psychological deterioration.

Morgan and Leeson (2024), in their study on women's correctional facilities in England, found that the stigma surrounding incarceration extends beyond the prison walls. Not only do prisoners internalize a sense of rejection, but family members and the broader society often reinforce this alienation through negative perceptions of inmates. This social rejection compounds inmates' emotional distress and limits opportunities for reintegration.

Rogers and Esterhuyse (2024) in South Africa contacted a study which looked at coping, aggression and perceived social support among prisoners as variables that predict the adjustment of offenders into prison life among 418 respondents. The findings indicated that prisoners who were constantly visited by friends and family members adjusted swiftly to prisons life more than members who were hardly visited. In addition, those reported to have difficulties in coping turned aggressive and were repellant.

In the Kenyan context, Museve et al. (2020) found that 63.4% of inmates in a sampled population ($n = 364$) showed signs of mental disorders, including general anxiety and psychotic symptoms. The study also revealed a statistically significant relationship between marital status and psychological well-being ($p = .017$), emphasizing the importance of social bonds in maintaining mental stability during incarceration.

Despite these findings, there remains a gap in research that directly links social support to psychological well-being among prisoners in Kenya. Without empirical evidence to guide intervention, the psychological needs of inmates risk being overlooked. To address this gap, the

present study employed a quantitative approach to examine the relationship between social support and psychological well-being among inmates at Kamiti Maximum Security Prison in Nairobi County, Kenya.

1.4 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this quantitative study was to examine the relationship between social support and psychological well-being among Prisoners. A case of Kamiti Maximum Security Prison in Nairobi County, Kenya.

1.5 Objectives of the Study

The main objective of this study was to examine the relationship between social support and psychological well-being among inmates. A case of Kamiti Maximum Security Prison in Nairobi County, Kenya.

1.5.1 General Objective

The general objective of this study was to investigate the relationship between social support and psychological well-being among inmates at Kamiti Maximum Security Prison in Nairobi County, Kenya.

1.5.2 Specific Objectives

The specific objectives of the study were to:

i. Examine the levels of social support among inmates at Kamiti Maximum Security Prison in Nairobi County, Kenya.
ii. Assess the levels of psychological well-being among inmates at Kamiti Maximum Security Prison in Nairobi County, Kenya.
iii. Examine the relationship between demographic characteristics and psychological well-being among inmates in Kamiti Maximum Security Prison in Nairobi County, Kenya.

iv. Investigate the relationship between social support and psychological well-being among inmates at Kamiti Maximum Security Prison in Nairobi County, Kenya.

1.6 Research Questions

Based on the specific objectives of this study, the research was guided by the following key questions:

i. Are there any available social support systems to inmates at Kamiti Maximum Security Prison in Nairobi County, Kenya, and what are their levels?
ii. What is the levels of psychological well-being among inmates at Kamiti Maximum Security Prison, and how is it distributed across the prison population?
iii. Is there any relationship between demographic characteristics and psychological well-being among inmates at Kamiti Maximum Security Prison in Nairobi County, Kenya?
iv. What is the relationship between social support and psychological well-being among inmates at Kamiti Maximum Security Prison in Nairobi County, Kenya?

1.7. Significance of the Study

According to Kothari and Garg (2019), the significance of a study lies in the value it offers to its intended beneficiaries through the knowledge it generates. The outcomes of this research will be particularly useful to various stakeholders within the prison system in Kenya.

Prisoners at Kamiti Maximum Security Prison. As the primary subjects of this study, inmates at Kamiti Maximum Security Prison stand to benefit directly from the findings. The study aims to generate data that can inform practical strategies to enhance psychological well-being through strengthened social support systems. While the research is focused on Kamiti, its findings may serve as a blueprint for policy and practice in other maximum-security prisons across Kenya.

Recommendations drawn from the study can contribute to evidence-based reforms targeting the mental wellness of inmates.

The Directorate of Rehabilitation Programs. The study provides valuable insights for the Kenya Prisons Service, particularly the directorate responsible for rehabilitation and correctional services. It emphasizes the importance of integrating social support mechanisms within prison programs as part of a broader mental health strategy. The researcher intends to initiate awareness campaigns through staff forums, including social media platforms, workshops, team-building sessions, and seminars. Further, the study encourages prisons department to empower prison officers with basic counselling skills during their initial training at Prisons Staff Training College. The findings also support the recommendation for establishing mental health screening protocols upon entry into the prison system, supported either by in-house clinics or partnerships with nearby health facilities.

Counseling Psychology Practitioners. For counselors working within correctional institutions, the study offers an evidence-based foundation for improving therapeutic interventions aimed at inmates. It underscores the psychological challenges associated with incarceration and the need for targeted support to help inmates cope with prison life and prepare for reintegration upon release.

Researchers and Academics. This study contributes to the growing body of literature on psychological well-being in correctional settings, particularly within the Kenyan context. The researcher, being a uniformed prison officer, brings a unique practitioner perspective that bridges theoretical knowledge with field experience. The findings are expected to guide future academic inquiries and professional practices aimed at improving psychological well-being outcomes for incarcerated individuals.

1.8. Scope and Delimitations

Scope in research refers to the disciplinary boundaries within which an investigation is conducted, while delimitations are the conscious choices made by the researcher to define the parameters of the study (Selvam, 2017). According to Kothari (2011), delimitations involve the geographical location, population characteristics, and inclusion or exclusion criteria guiding the research. Simon and Goes (2013) emphasize that scope and delimitations reflect what the researcher intends to include or exclude in order to maintain focus and manageability within the study.

This study was limited to examining the relationship between social support and psychological well-being among inmates at Kamiti Maximum Security Prison in Nairobi County, Kenya. The research aimed to address an identified gap by exploring how social support enhances to the psychological well-being of long-term incarcerated individuals. The study population consisted exclusively of inmates serving long-term sentences at the prison. This focus was informed by observations from Ross et al. (2024), who note that prisoners serving longer sentences often face greater difficulty adjusting to incarceration compared to those in medium-security facilities, who maintain greater hope of early release.

The delimitations of this study included the exclusion of several categories of inmates: those serving short-term sentences (six months or less), civil debtors, lodgers, mentally ill inmates, and prisoners held in segregation or isolation units. Short-term prisoners were excluded because they retain relatively high expectations of release and interact with the outside world more frequently, such as through supervised work programs. Mentally ill inmates were not included due to concerns about their capacity to provide reliable responses. Prisoners in isolation units were

excluded because their limited interaction with staff and other inmates, often due to the nature of their offenses (e.g., terrorism), made their inclusion impractical and ethically sensitive.

A quantitative research approach was adopted, allowing for the collection of data that could be statistically analyzed and generalized to the broader prison population. Data were gathered using standardized instruments: the Social Support Scale and the Psychological Well-Being Scale. A demographic questionnaire was also administered to capture the background characteristics of respondents. Other psychometric tools were not used, as they were not aligned with the specific focus and objectives of this study.

1.9 Assumptions of the Study

Assumptions form a fundamental component of empirical research, providing the basis upon which a study is developed and guiding the formulation of research questions and hypotheses. According to Kuckartz (2014), assumptions are the elements that a researcher accepts as true without empirical evidence at the outset, yet they must be clearly stated to establish the study's context and credibility.

This study was based on several key assumptions. It was assumed that the psychological well-being of inmates is influenced by their experience of imprisonment, including social isolation and the loss of personal autonomy. The study also assumed that the selected sample of inmates from Kamiti Maximum Security Prison would be representative of the broader prison population within the Kenya Prisons Service, particularly those serving long-term sentences.

It was further assumed that respondents would participate in the study with genuine interest and commitment, recognizing the importance of the research. Finally, the study relied on the assumption that participants would respond to the questionnaire items honestly and thoughtfully,

providing accurate reflections of their experiences and perceptions regarding social support and psychological well-being.

1.10 Chapter Summary

This chapter provided an overview of the study by presenting the background to the research problem from global, regional, and local perspectives, with a focus on social support and psychological well-being among prisoners. Relevant empirical studies were cited and examined to establish the foundation and relevance of the research topic.

The statement of the problem highlighted key knowledge gaps that the study seeks to address, while the purpose and objectives of the study were clearly articulated. The research questions, significance, scope, and delimitations of the study were also discussed, along with the assumptions that underpin the research process.

The next chapter presents a review of related literature, focusing on existing theoretical and empirical contributions to the subject of social support and psychological well-being in correctional settings.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter presents a review of empirical and theoretical literature related to the topic of study. It explores existing scholarly work on the key variables social support and psychological well-being within the context of prison settings. The chapter also outlines relevant theoretical frameworks that inform the study and provides an analysis of how the variables interact.

In addition, the literature review identifies patterns, trends, and gaps in previous studies that justify the need for the current investigation. The purpose of this section is to situate the study within the broader academic discourse and to highlight the unique contribution this research makes to the existing body of knowledge.

2.2 Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework provides the foundational principles guiding this study and outlines the conceptual relationship between the key variables under investigation. According to Kerlinger (1986), a theory is a set of interrelated constructs, definitions, and propositions that presents a systematic view of phenomena by specifying relationships among variables. Mvumbi and Ngumbi (2015) further explain that a framework consists of guiding ideas that assist researchers in making informed decisions and judgments about the phenomenon being studied. This study was guided by two key theories: Social Support Theory and Ryff's Six-Factor Model of Psychological Well-Being.

2.2.1 Social Support Theory

Social Support Theory offers a comprehensive lens for understanding the influence of friends, family and significant others relationships on individual well-being, particularly in

stressful or adverse conditions. According to Chouhy and Lee (2020), the theory integrates both macro-level and micro-level dynamics of social support, emphasizing how affirming relationships and supportive associations can mitigate criminal behavior and reduce specific patterns of offending. The theory posits that social resources act as protective buffers against the psychological effects of stressful life events, which shape individuals' emotions, perceptions, and behaviors. Circumstances such as incarceration, diagnosis with chronic illness, or other life-altering events often leave individuals with long-term emotional and psychological scars.

Developed by Don Drennon-Gala and Francis T. Cullen in 1994, Social Support Theory has since been applied as a life-course perspective by both governmental and non-governmental organizations. It underscores the importance of stable social bonds in adult life as a catalyst for behavioral change. Cullen (1994) further emphasized that social support serves as a powerful mechanism for promoting mental well-being, noting that punitive approaches to rehabilitation, devoid of emotional or practical support, may exacerbate criminal tendencies rather than reduce them. In contrast, supportive interventions can help incarcerated individuals navigate prison stressors and facilitate a smoother reintegration process upon release.

In the context of this study, social support is understood through Cullen (1994) four core dimensions: emotional, instrumental, informational, and appraisal support. Emotional support refers to the empathy, acceptance, and care prisoners receive, which helps them feel valued and heard. Instrumental support involves the provision of tangible resources, such as food, clothing, or other physical necessities. Informational support entails guidance and advice on practical matters, such as legal aid or appeal processes. Appraisal support includes the provision of feedback and skills both soft and hard that build confidence and self-efficacy in handling life's challenges.

Within this framework, social support is explored to determine its relationship with the psychological well-being of inmates at Kamiti Maximum Security Prison. A recent study by Curley (2025) validated a multidimensional conceptualization of social support among incarcerated individuals. The study found that support systems providing companionship, empathy, material assistance, and guidance were critical for helping prisoners cope with the emotional demands of prison life. However, while Social Support Theory provides a strong foundation for examining social relationships, it does not fully address the concept of psychological well-being. To bridge this gap, Ryff's Six-Factor Model of Psychological Well-Being is integrated into the current study to provide a more holistic understanding of inmates' mental wellness.

2.2.2 Six Factor Model Theory.

This study also draws on Carol Ryff's Psychological Well-Being (PWB) model, commonly referred to as the Six-Factor Model. This model has been widely tested and validated across diverse cultural settings, including non-Anglo-Saxon populations, and has been found to be suitable for empirical application (van Dierendonck, 2008). Ryff's framework outlines six core dimensions that are fundamental to an individual's psychological well-being: self-acceptance, positive relations with others, personal growth, purpose in life, autonomy, and environmental mastery.

Self-acceptance refers to an individual's ability to acknowledge and embrace their strengths and weaknesses. Positive relations with others reflect the capacity to form meaningful and trusting interpersonal connections. Personal growth involves continuous self-evaluation and the drive for self-improvement. Purpose in life denotes having clear goals and a sense of direction. Autonomy reflects the ability to make independent choices and think critically, while

environmental mastery is the capacity to manage one's surroundings and respond effectively to life's demands.

Anggarwati and Thamrin (2019) emphasized that, for incarcerated individuals, psychological well-being can be understood as the ability to maintain a positive self-view, remain engaged in daily activities, and retain a sense of personal agency despite confinement. Ryff (1989) further noted that prisoners who receive social support from family and friends tend to show stronger internal motivation and greater emotional stability.

Yullan (2018) reinforced Ryff's model by describing PWB as a psychological profile whereby inmates who can acknowledge their strengths and limitations, maintain stable relationships, and adapt to environmental challenges are more likely to report positive mental health. Azani (2012) added that psychological well-being among prisoners is not uniform but varies significantly depending on factors such as age, gender, and educational level.

In summary, Ryff's Six-Factor Model provides a comprehensive framework for assessing the psychological wellness of inmates. In this study, the six dimensions of well-being are analyzed alongside the components of social support namely support from family members, close friends, and significant others. The integration of Social Support Theory and the Six-Factor Model enables the researcher to evaluate the relationship between social support and psychological well-being among inmates at Kamiti Maximum Security Prison in Nairobi County, Kenya.

2.3 Empirical Literature Review

This section presents a review of relevant empirical studies related to the variables under investigation social support and psychological well-being particularly within the context of prison populations. The purpose of the review is to highlight findings from original and current peer-

reviewed sources that provide detailed methodologies, analyses, and discussions relevant to the topic.

The review focuses on recent and methodologically robust studies that have contributed significantly to understanding how social support influences the mental health and psychological stability of incarcerated individuals. Special attention is given to literature that reflects diverse prison contexts, both globally and within Kenya, to establish the foundation for identifying existing knowledge gaps. These studies are analyzed to inform the present research and to justify the need for examining the relationship between social support and psychological well-being among inmates at Kamiti Maximum Security Prison in Nairobi County, Kenya.

2.3.1 Levels of Social Support among Prisoners at Kamiti Maximum Security Prison.

According to Galvan and Galvan (2017), social support refers to the perception and experience that one is cared for, valued, and consistently assisted by significant others. It functions as a vital resource embedded within a support system. In this study, the level of social support refers to the availability, accessibility, and intensity of support that inmates at Kamiti Maximum Security Prison receive during incarceration.

Globally, a significant proportion of incarcerated individuals face psychosocial challenges that may be compounded by inadequate social support. Pettus-Davis et al. (2015) reported that more than three-quarters of inmates in U.S. state and federal prisons have a history of substance use, with approximately 11% struggling to cope with imprisonment or reintegration post-release. Richie et al. (2021), in a study of 169 prisoners in Pakistan, found that although numerous risk factors contributed to suicidal ideation, the presence of social support had a significant difference with prisoners' psychological well-being.

Family has consistently been identified as a key source of emotional and psychological support. Bjørlykhaug (2022) asserted that families play a central role in helping individuals manage stress and in establishing lasting coping mechanisms. In Indonesia, Pamungkas (2024) explored the relationship between social support and coping strategies among prisoners. The study revealed that 51.5% of prisoners received general social support, while 67.8% received emotional support. Although the level of overall support was lower, emotional support significant difference of ($p = .004$) with improved coping among inmates.

Sari et al. (2022) conducted a systematic review of articles published between 2012 and 2021 on social support and resilience among prisoners. Their findings confirmed that social support is essential in promoting psychological well-being and easing the transition during and after incarceration. However, they also noted that the level of support in most prison systems remains low when compared to other forms of institutional interventions.

In Northern Ireland, McFadden, Davidson, and Butle (2024) used the Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support (MSPSS) to assess support levels among inmates. The average social support scores ranged between 56.0 and 60.0, indicating moderate support. However, 1.8% of respondents reported receiving no support at all. Low levels of social support were associated with increased stress, suicidal ideation, and aggressive behaviors.

Mehdi et al. (2021) examined perceived social support in Iranian prisons and found that it had a significant difference of ($\beta = .327$) on psychological well-being. The support received from friends, colleagues, and family members played a crucial role in creating a stable prison environment conducive to inmate rehabilitation.

Regionally, research in Nigeria has shown limited attention to social support within correctional facilities. Akwaji (2024) noted that many prison administrators have underinvested in

psychosocial research and often view social support as a Western concept. Despite this, the study found a strong correlation between family support and inmate well-being, positioning the family as a crucial unit in the mental health of prisoners.

In Cameroon, Ndengue et al. (2024) investigated the role of social support in mental health at Befia Prison. Their findings showed significant difference between emotional support ($p = .001$), informational support ($p < .001$), and material support ($p = .04$) with improved mental well-being among inmates. This supports the argument that various forms of social support play a direct role in enhancing prisoners' psychological stability.

In the Kenyan context, much of the available research has focused on rehabilitation through educational, vocational, and spiritual programs (Kipkemboi, 2024; Muriuki, 2023). However, limited attention has been paid to the role of social support as an intervention. Paul (2021), in a study of life-sentenced prisoners at Kamiti Maximum Security Prison, explored sociological coping strategies and their influence on psychological well-being. While the study acknowledged the importance of coping mechanisms, it did not include family or peer support as key variables.

Muring'u (2021) similarly focused on religious coping strategies among life-sentenced inmates in Kenyan prisons. While such studies have contributed to understanding rehabilitation pathways, they highlight a gap in research on social support as a determinant of psychological well-being. The current study therefore responds to this gap by examining the relationship between social support from family members, friends, and significant others and psychological well-being among inmates.

This investigation focuses specifically on how social support (family, friends and significant others) emotionally, instrumentally, and informationally support correspond with psychological indicators such as self-acceptance, positive relationships, autonomy, environmental

mastery, purpose in life, and personal growth. The goal is to determine whether the presence or absence of social support influences these dimensions of well-being among prisoners at Kamiti Maximum Security Prison in Nairobi County, Kenya.

2.3.2 The Levels of Psychological well-being among Prisoners at Kamiti Maximum Prison.

According to Ryff (2014), psychological well-being (PWB) refers to the pursuit of personal excellence and the realization of one's true potential. It is closely linked to mental stability and significantly influences an individual's overall wellness. The World Health Organization (WHO, 2014) further defines psychological well-being as a state that enables individuals to cope with the normal stresses of life, work productively, and contribute meaningfully to society. For prisoners, maintaining psychological well-being is particularly important, given the challenges of incarceration.

Globally, correctional institutions are often characterized as complex and restrictive environments that place inmates at high risk for mental health challenges. Gopinathan, Vijayshankar, and Roy (2024) note that prison environments can be psychologically daunting, with mental problems including suicidal ideation being more frequently reported among inmates than in the general population. In a recent study, Facer-Irwin (2023) examined the prevalence of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) among 221 incarcerated male and female inmates. The results indicated that among male prisoners, mental health issues ranged in prevalence from 0.1% to 27%, revealing the extent of psychological distress in correctional facilities.

Fovet et al. (2023) conducted a comparative study in France, aiming to assess the difference in mental health prevalence between the general population and the prison population. Their analysis, which involved 5,793 individuals from the general public and 630 inmates, revealed that mental disorders were significantly more common among prisoners. While only 0.6% of

individuals in the general population reported mental illness, the rate rose to 4.8% among incarcerated persons. These findings underscore the vulnerability of prisoners to psychological disorders.

In Indonesia, Hidayati et al. (2021) assessed the level of psychological well-being among 90 inmates using Ryff's Psychological Well-Being Scale. The study found that PWB among prisoners was in decline and called for urgent interventions to restore inmates' mental stability. Similarly, Ghazanfari et al. (2023) conducted a cross-sectional study in Iranian prisons to evaluate PWB, family cohesion, and life purpose among long-term inmates. Out of 259 participants, 78% were aged between 20 and 40, and 59% were married. The findings indicated a significant relationship between family cohesion (mean score = 55.90 ± 11.90) and purpose in life (mean score = 10.68 ± 3.32), suggesting that family support contributes positively to the psychological well-being of inmates.

Regionally, in Nigeria, Amoke et al. (2020) highlighted the high levels of psychological distress among remand prisoners, particularly in Enugu Prison. Their report showed that the prevalence of psychological disorders varied across different African countries, with 70% of prisoners in Ghana suffering from some form of mental illness, followed by 63% in England and Wales, 63% in Zambia, and 57% in Nigeria. These statistics indicate the widespread nature of mental health challenges within African correctional facilities.

In the Kenyan context, considerable attention has been given to rehabilitation programs that focus on spiritual, educational, and vocational development (Kipkemboi, 2023; Museve et al., 2020). These programs are recognized for their role in transforming inmate behavior. However, there is limited empirical research that specifically evaluates the psychological well-being of inmates using validated instruments such as Ryff's PWB scale. The existing literature does not

provide comprehensive statistical evidence on the levels of psychological well-being among inmates at Kamiti Maximum Security Prison.

In response to this gap, the present study seeks to assess the levels of psychological well-being among inmates at Kamiti Maximum Security Prison in Nairobi County, Kenya. The findings are expected to contribute to a better understanding of inmate psychological well-being and guide the development of interventions aimed at enhancing psychological well-being in the prison context.

2.3.3 The Relationship between Demographic Characteristics and Psychological Well-Being among Prisoners at Kamiti Maximum Security Prison.

To understand the population under study, it is important to examine demographic variables such as age, marital status, educational level, and length of incarceration. These factors have been shown to influence psychological well-being across various contexts, including within correctional facilities. This section explores the relationship between these demographic characteristics and the psychological well-being of prisoners, with particular attention to the population of Kamiti Maximum Security Prison.

Globally, numerous studies have demonstrated how demographic attributes influence the mental health outcomes of incarcerated individuals. In India, Bevin (2024) examined the relationship between socio-demographic factors and mental well-being among prisoners by analyzing case records collected over a ten-month period. The study revealed that a majority of inmates were aged between 21 and 30 years, with 51% diagnosed with schizophrenia and 11.7% with substance use disorders. A statistically significant correlation ($p < .003$) was found between the age of inmates and the prevalence of mental disorders.

In Canada, Prost et al. (2021) explored the influence of age on physical and psychological well-being among prisoners from different age cohorts. Among 189 participants, older prisoners (aged 65 and above) reported a higher prevalence of chronic and psychological conditions compared to their younger counterparts. These findings confirmed that age plays a crucial role in shaping the psychological health of inmates ($p < .01$ for older inmates; $p < .05$ for younger inmates).

Similarly, in Australia, Baidawi (2020) conducted a study involving 173 elderly inmates and 60 younger inmates across two prisons. The findings indicated significantly higher stress levels among older inmates ($p < .001$), who were three times more likely to report psychological distress (12.3%) compared to younger inmates (3.7%). Both age and gender were found to have a strong relationship with psychological well-being.

In Uganda, Amoke (2020) assessed psychological instability among 280 prisoners aged between 18 and 35 who had no diagnosed psychiatric conditions. Using the Hopkins Symptom Checklist, the study linked mental instability to recidivism, substance abuse, and aggressive behaviors. The results indicated significant relationships between levels of education ($p = .005$), type of offense ($p = .000$), and the psychological well-being of inmates.

Regionally, Awopetu (2021) studied Nigerian prison conditions and reported that the psychological well-being of inmates was critically endangered, aligning with concerns raised in the Amnesty International Report (2008). The study found that male inmates exhibited significantly higher levels of psychological well-being than females ($t (916) = 3.00$, $p < .05$). Marital status also emerged as a key factor, with married inmates reporting better psychological well-being than unmarried ones ($\beta = –.14$, $p < .01$). Age, gender, education level, and marital status

were significantly associated with psychological well-being, while sentence length showed no strong correlation.

In South Africa, Rogers et al. (2024) investigated the relationship between demographic characteristics and psychological problems among 418 inmates aged between 21 and 58 (M = 33.73, SD = 6.42). Of the participants, 54.3% were first-time offenders while 45.7% had previously served time. The study revealed that the majority were serving long sentences (15 years and above), and that age and length of sentence had significant correlations with psychological well-being. Social support also emerged as a mediating factor in managing psychological symptoms such as aggression, anxiety, and depression.

Locally, Museve et al. (2020) conducted a study across Kenyan maximum-security prisons, involving 364 participants. The study established that mental disorders significantly affected inmates' psychological well-being ($p < .0001$). Conditions such as suicidal ideation, panic disorders, and post-traumatic stress disorder were statistically associated with diminished psychological well-being ($p = .001$, .015, .044, and .019 respectively). These findings confirm the presence and impact of psychological challenges among prisoners in Kenya.

Therefore, the reviewed literature indicates a significant relationship between demographic variables particularly age, gender, marital status, educational level, and sentence duration and psychological well-being. However, there is a noticeable gap in the Kenyan context regarding studies that comprehensively assess how these demographic characteristics affect psychological well-being among inmates. This study seeks to address that gap by investigating the relationship between selected demographic factors and psychological well-being among inmates at Kamiti Maximum Security Prison in Nairobi County, Kenya.

2.3.4 The relationship between Social Support and Psychological Well-Being among Prisoners

Globally, the rise of mental health disorders, particularly those linked to substance abuse, has become a significant concern in many prison systems. McCaughran-Contreras (2021) reports that correctional institutions such as those in British Columbia have experienced a surge in substance abuse-related disorders, which often contribute to deteriorating psychological health. In response to mental health challenges in prisons across Wales and England, Walton (2025) investigated the effectiveness of peer support initiatives among 225 inmates. The findings revealed that peer-based social support interventions had a statistically significant positive impact on psychological well-being ($p < .01$), underscoring the importance of interpersonal support within prison systems.

In Iran, Ghazanfari et al. (2023) examined the influence of family support on psychological well-being and sense of purpose among prisoners. A total of 262 inmates were randomly selected from a population of 4,500, with a 5% dropout adjustment. The majority of participants were between the ages of 20 and 40, and 58% were married. The results showed that family cohesion had a significant difference with improved psychological well-being, indicating the importance of familial support during incarceration.

Mefoh et al. (2016) explored the predictive power of social resources such as family support on the psychological well-being of pre-trial inmates at Enugu Prison Command. Of the 300 participants, 73.3% were male and 26.7% were female, with ages ranging from 18 to 69 years ($M = 43.5$, $SD = 5.21$). Using the Ryff Psychological Well-Being Scale and the Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support (MSPSS), the study found a significant positive correlation between social support and psychological well-being.

Regionally, Ibrahim (2025) investigated the influence of dispositional factors and perceived social support on the psychological well-being of 251 Nigerian inmates. Of the participants, 80.87% were male and 19.12% were female, with an average age of 25.6 years (SD = 4.21). The study found that perceived social support from family, friends, and significant others significantly predicted psychological well-being ($p < .01$). The findings emphasized that both personal attributes and external support systems play vital roles in determining an inmate's psychological well-being.

In Ethiopia, Dadi et al. (2019) conducted a large-scale study in the Amhara region to assess the level of social support and its effect on psychological well-being among 29,140 prisoners. A sample of 662 was selected, showing that 98% of participants from rural prisons reported receiving social support. Inmates serving life sentences constituted 21.3% of the sample, while 59.9% engaged in spiritual practices. The study revealed that social support from family, friends, and significant others had a statistically significant difference with psychological well-being.

Similarly, Omaku, Dahiru, and Godiya (2024) examined the impact of loneliness on psychological well-being among 243 inmates at Lafia Correctional Centre in Nigeria. Of the participants, 87.7% were male and 12.3% were female. The findings demonstrated that loneliness defined as a lack of support from family, friends, and significant others had a statistically significant negative effect on psychological well-being ($p = .000$).

In the Kenyan context, existing studies have largely concentrated on the impact of technical (Alila, 2023), vocational (Mburu, 2021), and spiritual programs (Osina & Omboto, 2024) on inmate rehabilitation. Other research has explored environmental factors affecting prisoners' psychological well-being (Kasau, 2024). However, there remains a noticeable gap regarding the

role of interpersonal social support particularly from family, friends, and significant others on the psychological well-being of inmates.

To address this gap, the current study investigates the relationship between social support and psychological well-being among inmates at Kamiti Maximum Security Prison in Nairobi County, Kenya. It specifically focuses on emotional, instrumental, and informational support and their relationship with dimensions of psychological well-being such as self-acceptance, autonomy, personal growth, and life purpose. The study seeks to contribute empirical evidence to inform correctional psychological well-being interventions in Kenya.

2.4 Conceptual Framework

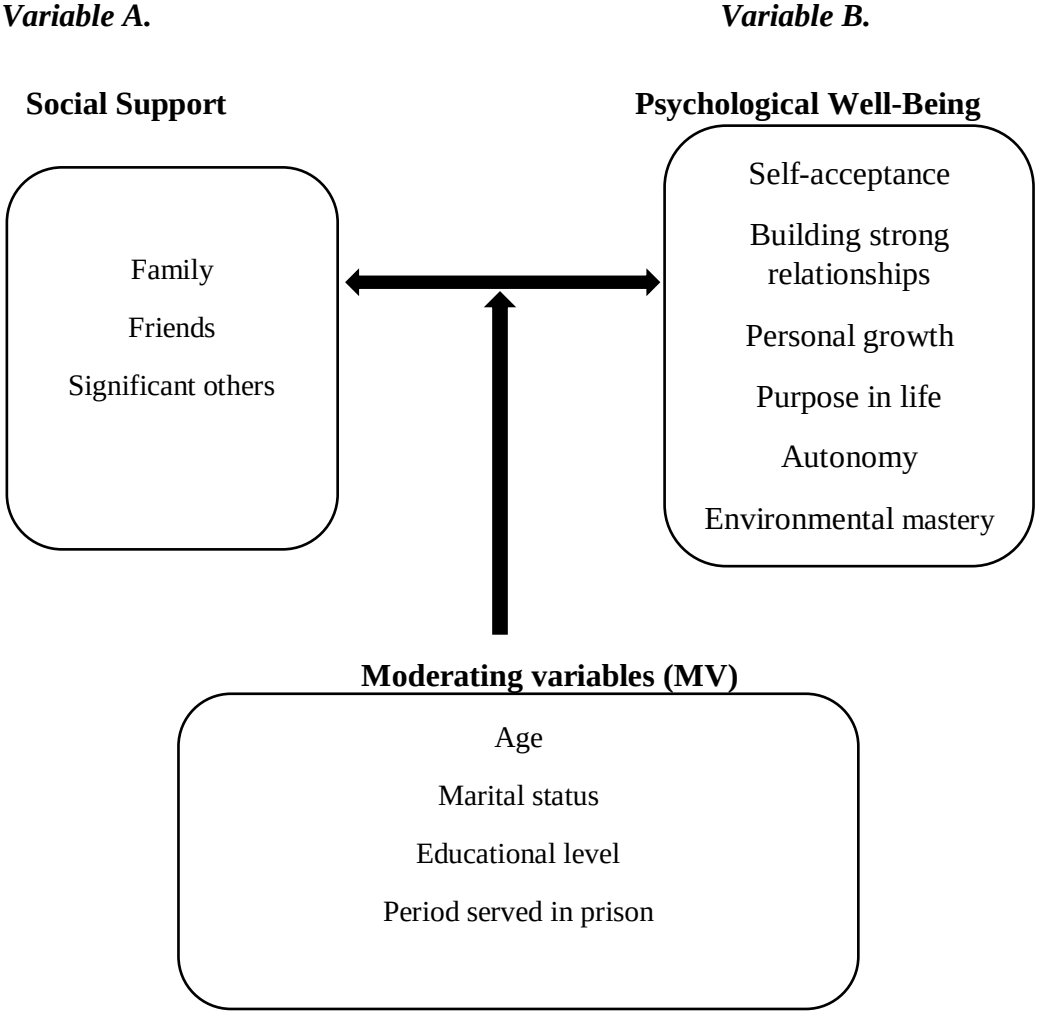
According to McGaghie et al. (2001), a conceptual framework is a structured representation of the major concepts or variables under study and the presumed relationships between them. It serves as a guide to the research by illustrating how the key constructs are expected to interact. Shikalepo (2020) adds that a conceptual framework provides a clear and precise explanation of the phenomenon being investigated, thereby helping to organize ideas, guide data collection, and interpret findings.

This study focuses on two main variables: Social Support (variable A) and Psychological Well-Being (variable B). Social Support is broken down into its key components: Family, Friends and Significant Others each derived from Cullen (1994) Social Support Theory. These components are expected to demonstrate a relationship between various dimensions of Psychological Well-Being as articulated in Ryff's Six-Factor Model, namely: self-acceptance, positive relations with others, autonomy, environmental mastery, personal growth, and purpose in life.

The conceptual framework assumes that the availability and quality of social support received by inmates from family, friends, and significant others play a significant role in shaping

their psychological well-being. In addition, demographic characteristics such as age, marital status, educational level, and sentence duration are considered as moderating variables that may have a relationship over the variables on study.

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework



Sources: Taylor, S.E. (2011) and Ryff, C. D. (1989).

The conceptual framework presented in Figure 1 illustrates the relationship between the Social Support and Psychological Well-Being. The horizontal arrow connecting the two variables signifies a bidirectional relationship, suggesting that while social support influences psychological well-being, psychological well-being may also affect the perception and reception of social

support. The vertical arrow, pointing from the moderating variables toward the interaction between the two main variables, indicates that the relationship between social support and psychological well-being may be having a correlational effect on specific demographic factors.

These moderating variables age, gender, marital status, education level, and period served in prison to contextualize the behavior and experiences of the study population. In this research, the focus is on male inmates aged 18 years and above, serving sentences of one year or more, including those sentenced to life imprisonment (lifers). The moderating variables help describe how characteristics of this population might shape or alter the nature and strength of the relationship between social support and psychological well-being.

2.5 Chapter Summary

The reviewed literature has highlighted the critical roles that social support and psychological well-being (PWB) play in the lives of incarcerated individuals. Empirical studies from global, regional, and local contexts consistently demonstrate that prisoners experience elevated rates of mental health challenges, including depression, anxiety, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), and suicidal ideation, often exacerbated by the isolating and restrictive prison environment.

The literature also confirms that social support particularly from family, friends, and significant others has a positive and significant relationship with psychological well-being. However, the Kenyan context reveals a noticeable gap in empirical studies examining the direct relationship between social support and psychological well-being among prisoners, particularly within maximum-security settings such as Kamiti. Therefore, this study seeks to bridge this gap by exploring the relationship between social support and psychological well-being among male

inmates aged 18 years and above, serving long-term or life sentences at Kamiti Maximum Security Prison in Nairobi County, Kenya.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the methodology adopted to guide the conduct of the study. Research design refers to a structured plan or blueprint that outlines the procedures and norms for conducting systematic inquiry and analyzing data. It provides a framework within which research is executed, ensuring logical coherence and methodological rigor.

This chapter offers a detailed account of how the study was conducted. It includes the research design employed, the geographical location of the study, the target population, sampling strategy, sampling frame, and sample size. Additionally, the chapter outlines the instruments used for data collection, the procedures for conducting a pilot study, and how the validity and reliability of the research instruments were ensured. Further, the chapter explains the data collection process, data analysis techniques, and ethical considerations observed during the study. Finally, it highlights the anticipated contribution of the research to knowledge and practice in the field of correctional psychology and prisoner rehabilitation.

3.2 Epistemology

Epistemology refers to the philosophical foundation of knowledge how it is acquired, validated, and interpreted in a research context. As explained by O'Gorman and MacIntosh (2015), epistemology addresses the nature, sources, and limits of knowledge, guiding researchers in their approach to inquiry and truth-seeking.

This study adopted a positivist epistemological stance, which is grounded in the belief that reality is objective and can be measured through observation, reasoning, and empirical evidence. The central aim of the research was to measure the relationship between social support and

psychological well-being among prisoners, a task best suited to a positivist paradigm due to its reliance on quantifiable data and systematic analysis.

Positivism allows for the application of structured methodologies that emphasize statistical measurement and minimize subjective interpretation. According to Park et al. (2020), a positivist approach expresses the relationship between variables in numerical terms, ensuring objectivity, reliability, and replicability of findings. In this study, the use of standardized tools and statistical techniques allowed the researcher to test hypotheses, evaluate patterns, and draw conclusions based on observable and measurable phenomena.

By grounding the study in positivism, the researcher-maintained objectivity and minimized bias, thereby ensuring the integrity of the findings related to social support and psychological well-being among inmates at Kamiti Maximum Security Prison.

3.3 Research Design

Mugenda and Mugenda (2012) define research design as a structured framework that outlines how a study is to be conducted. It acts as a roadmap that guides the entire research process by specifying the key components, procedures, and strategies employed in the investigation. Similarly, O'Dwyer and Bernauer (2014) emphasize that research design serves as the blueprint for the logical and coherent organization of a study.

This research adopted a correlational survey design, which was appropriate for examining the relationship between social support and psychological well-being among prisoners, as depicted in Figure 1 of the conceptual framework. Correlational design enables the researcher to assess the direction and strength of relationships between variables without manipulating them. It is especially useful in identifying patterns of association across large populations, which aligns with the objectives of this study.

A survey approach was employed to collect quantitative data using structured questionnaires. In this context, a survey refers to a systematic method of gathering information from respondents by presenting a set of logically arranged questions with predefined response options. This method allowed the researcher to efficiently collect data from a sizeable prison population.

In addition, the study utilized a cross-sectional design, which involves collecting data at a single point in time. This approach is well-suited for studies aiming to determine the prevalence of specific attributes, behaviors, or conditions within a population. In the context of this study, the cross-sectional design helped to measure the levels of social support and psychological well-being among inmates at a specific moment, without requiring longitudinal follow-up.

3.4 Location of the study

The location of a study, as described by Kumar (2014), refers to the specific geographical area where research is conducted. For this particular investigation, the chosen setting was Nairobi County, situated within the Republic of Kenya in the eastern region of Africa. Kenya is bordered by South Sudan and Ethiopia to the north, Somalia to the east, Tanzania to the south, Uganda to the west, and the Indian Ocean to the southeast. The country is largely characterized by a mix of arid and semi-arid landscapes in its northern and eastern territories, which are sparsely populated due to the harsh climatic conditions (LatLong.net, 2023). Spanning an approximate land area of 229,960 square miles, Kenya is uniquely divided by the equator, giving it a diverse geographical and ecological profile.

Beyond Nairobi, the capital and largest urban hub, other significant cities in the country include Mombasa, Kisumu, Nakuru, and Eldoret. Kenya’s economy is anchored in several key sectors such as agriculture, manufacturing, energy, transport, construction, and tourism (Nairobi

City County, 2023). Within the justice system, correctional facilities are managed by the Kenya Prisons Service (KPS), an institution that gained autonomy as a government department in 1911. As of 2023, the KPS oversees a total of 118 facilities across the country. Among these are three dedicated juvenile institutions two Borstal establishments and one Young Correctional Training Centre (YCTC) alongside eighteen women's prisons (Correctional Department, 2023).

Kenya's correctional institutions are categorized based on the level of security and the profile of inmates they accommodate. These include closed or maximum-security prisons designed for high-risk, long-term inmates; semi-closed or medium-security prisons for those serving moderate sentences; and open prisons, which house minor offenders and typically lack perimeter walls. Juvenile offenders are placed in Borstal institutions if male, or the YCTC if female or mixed-gender.

At present, Kenya has nine designated maximum-security prisons: Kamiti Maximum Security Prison in Nairobi; Shimo La Tewa Main Prison in Mombasa; Naivasha Maximum Prison; King'ong'o Prison in Nyeri; Nairobi Remand and Allocation Prison; Lang'ata Women's Prison in Nairobi; Manyani Prison in Taita Taveta County; and Kibos and Kodiaga Prisons, both located in Kisumu (Kenya Prisons Service, Statistics Office, 2020).

This study was specifically undertaken at Kamiti Maximum Security Prison, located in Nairobi County. The choice of this facility was intentional due to its historical significance and reputation as one of the oldest and most secure correctional institutions in Kenya. Kamiti houses inmates serving lengthy sentences, including life imprisonment, and thus provided an ideal setting for investigating the subject matter of this research. The findings derived from this institution were expected to offer meaningful insights that could be extrapolated to other similar correctional environments across the country.

3.5 Target population

According to Mugenda (2003), a target population refers to the entire group of individuals or elements to which the researcher intends to generalize the findings of the study. It consists of those units that possess the necessary characteristics relevant to the objectives of the research.

Although several prisons exist within Nairobi County, only Kamiti Maximum Security Prison met the criteria established for this investigation. The study specifically targeted inmates serving long-term or life sentences, as these individuals are more likely to experience extended psychological and social effects of incarceration.

The total target population for this study consisted of 1,207 inmates housed at Kamiti Maximum Security Prison. This population included both Kenyan nationals and foreign nationals who met the eligibility criteria. The research focused exclusively on male prisoners, inclusive of both single individuals and those with families. Participants were required to be aged 18 years and above at the time of the study.

The study was inclusive in nature, involving respondents from diverse ethnic, religious, and socio-economic backgrounds. The selection did not discriminate based on the inmates' prior social class or economic status. This approach was adopted to ensure that the study captured a broad and representative understanding of the relationship between social support and psychological well-being among long-term inmates in a maximum-security context.

3.6 Sampling Design

According to Mvumbi and Ngumbi (2015), sampling design refers to the strategy or framework used to identify participants for inclusion in a study. It outlines the procedures through which a representative subset of the target population is selected to ensure that the findings can be generalized to the broader population.

This study adopted a probability sampling design, which ensures that every member of the target population had a known and non-zero chance of being selected. The use of randomization techniques allowed for the selection of a sample that is unbiased and representative of the larger population of inmates at Kamiti Maximum Security Prison.

This section also outlines the sampling framework, the techniques used to identify participants, and the procedure for determining sample size. The emphasis on probability sampling was informed by the need for objective, measurable, and statistically reliable findings. Specifically, the study utilized a simple random sampling. This approach was appropriate given the structured nature of the prison population and the need for logistical efficiency during data collection.

The sampling process ensured that various demographic characteristics such as age, marital status, sentence duration, and religious or socio-economic background were fairly represented. This strategy helped increase the validity and generalizability of the results regarding the relationship between social support and psychological well-being among prisoners.

3.6.1. Sampling Frame

According to Robinson (2014), a sampling frame refers to a list or structured representation of the elements within a target population from which a sample is selected. It serves as the operational tool for identifying potential respondents who meet the criteria for inclusion in a study. Selvam (2017) adds that a sampling frame offers a practical approximation of the accessible members of the population, especially when financial or logistical limitations make it impractical to engage the entire population.

For the purposes of this study, the sampling frame consisted of long-serving male inmates at Kamiti Maximum Security Prison. These inmates are either serving sentences of one year and

above or have been sentenced to life imprisonment. Kamiti was selected as the study site due to its status as one of Kenya's primary maximum-security prisons, with a relatively large and diverse inmate population. This setting provided an appropriate and accessible pool of participants for the investigation into the relationship between social support and psychological well-being.

The selection of this sampling frame ensured that the study focused on prisoners who have had extended exposure to the prison environment and are, therefore, more likely to experience the psychosocial effects under investigation.

Table 1: Population distribution of long serving prisoners at Kamiti Prison.

Participants	1-5years	6-10 years	11-20yrs	21-Lifers	Total	Percentage
BLOCK A	50	63	20	36	169	14.0%
BLOCK B	65	43	11	29	158	13.1%
BLOCK C	43	32	24	46	146	12.1%
BLOCK D	67	23	11	78	179	14.8%
BLOCK E	87	55	21	68	231	19.1%
BLOCK F	54	24	32	78	188	15.6%
BLOCK G	29	23	20	64	136	11.3%
TOTAL	**395**	**274**	**139**	**399**	**1207**	**100%**

Source: Kamiti documentation office, Nairobi County (2025).

The sampling frame Table 1 above shows the population distribution of 1207 male inmates serving in Kamiti Maximum Prison. This sampling frame helped in classifying the participants according to the length of service (No. of years) with exclusion of the offences committed. The blocks are distinct structures with numerous cells inside (living rooms).

3.6.2 Sampling Technique

Mugenda and Mugenda (2003) define sampling as the process through which a researcher selects a subset of individuals or elements from a larger population for the purpose of conducting a study. These selected units, referred to as samples, serve as representatives of the entire population and allow for the generalization of findings. Sampling can be executed through either probability or non-probability methods.

Given that this study employed a quantitative research approach, a probability sampling technique was adopted to ensure that every member of the population had an equal and known chance of being selected. This approach was essential for enhancing the validity, objectivity, and generalizability of the findings.

To obtain a representative sample from the inmate population at Kamiti Maximum Security Prison, the study employed a multi-stage sampling technique. This began with the division of the total population into strata based on sentence duration. The researcher applied a proportionate stratified sampling method to ensure that each subgroup contributed to the sample in proportion to its size in the overall population. In this case, inmates were stratified into categories such as those serving 1-5 years, 6 - 10 years, 11 – 20 years and 21 to life sentences, as guided by Kamiti prison documentation records (refer to Table 1).

Within each stratum, simple random sampling was employed to select participants. Guided by different sample sizes from every block or strata, the researcher used small papers of one color (white) with specific number of targeted sample size from every stratum. The researcher ensured that only the required sample size was obtained by assigning number (1) to some papers (45 in total) with the rest of the papers left empty. For instance, in Block A, there were 169 eligible participants and the desired sample size was 45, therefore, the researcher folded all the 169 papers

with only 45 bearing number (1), put them in a basin, shook vigorously and asked the participants to pick at random. Any member whose paper reflected number one formed part of the sample size.

It's worth noting that the eligibility for participation in the study was determined by the criteria of serving a period that exceeds one year, being a prisoner at Kamiti Maximum Security Prison, and falling within one of the identified categories of sentences. Every inmate who met these conditions had an equal opportunity to be selected and included in the sample.

3.6.3 Sample Size Determination

According to Kothari (2004), determining an appropriate sample size is essential for ensuring the accuracy, confidence, and generalizability of research findings. Robert and Hyatt (2019) further define sample size determination as the process of deriving a manageable number of participants from the target population who will be involved in data collection.

In this study, the Cochran-adjusted sample size formula as developed by Krejcie and Morgan (1979) was adopted to calculate the required sample size. The formula ensures a 95% confidence level and a margin of error of 5%, suitable for social science research. The formula is as follows:

$$S = \frac{x^2 NP(1-P)}{d^2(N-1)+x^2 P(1-P)}$$

Where:

S = stands for the needed test group.

X^2 = show the chi-square value table for 1 degree of freedom at the needed confidence level.

N = the size of population

P = the study population ratio (0.50 define total sample magnitude)

1-P = approximated ratio of shortcoming.

d^2 = stands for square of the highest leeway for slip between the real ratio and sample fraction (in this case it is set at 5%)

$$S = \frac{1.96^2 \times 1641 \times 0.5(1-0.5)}{0.05^2 \times 1640 + 1.96^2 \times 0.5(1-0.5)} = \frac{1207}{4.8666} = 291$$

To account for attrition, Mugenda and Mugenda (2013) recommend adjusting the calculated sample by adding 10%, which accounts for participants who may withdraw or fail to complete the process. Therefore:

- 10% of 291 = 29
- Final sample size = 291 + 29 = 320 respondents

Thus, the total sample size for this study was set at 320 inmates.

Proportionate Sampling Application

To maintain proportionate representation across the prison blocks (strata), the following formulas were applied:

1. **To determine each block's sample size (S):**

$$S = \frac{p}{100} \times (s1)$$

Where:

S = Sample from every block or strata.

P = Percentile as it reflects on the sample frame on every stratum

S1 = (Sample size (291) + Attrition (29)

Formula on Percentile

$$P1 = \frac{SP}{TP}(100)$$

Where:

P1 = Percentile

SP= Study Population

TP = Target Population

Table 2: Sample size determination

Block	Target Population	Sample Size	Percentile
BLOCK A	169	45	14.0%
BLOCK B	158	42	13.1%
BLOCK C	146	39	12.1%
BLOCK D	179	47	14.8%
BLOCK E	231	61	19.1%
BLOCK F	188	50	15.6%
BLOCK G	136	36	11.3%
TOTAL	**1207**	**320**	**100%**

Source: Kamiti documentation office, Nairobi County (2025).

The stratified sampling process employed in this study was based on the structural organization of Kamiti Maximum Security Prison, where inmates are distributed across various cell blocks according to the length of their sentences. Each block served as a strata within the sampling frame, allowing the researcher to draw a proportionate sample from each block to achieve a total of 320 respondents. To begin, the population of each block was expressed as a percentage of the total inmate population of the prison. For instance, Block A, which housed 169 inmates out of the total 1,207, contributed approximately 14.0% to the overall population. This percentage was derived by dividing the population of Block A by the total inmate population and multiplying the result by 100. Once the percentage for each block was established, the corresponding number of respondents to be sampled from each block was calculated. This was done by multiplying the percentage contribution of the block by the overall sample size of 320, and then dividing by 100.

Using the earlier example, Block A's 14.0% contribution translated to about 45 respondents out of the total population.

This procedure was applied systematically to all blocks, ensuring that each segment of the inmate population was fairly and proportionately represented in the study. Such an approach was not only methodologically sound but also vital in ensuring the reliability and generalizability of the findings, as it accounted for the varied sentence categories within the prison population.

3.7 Research Instruments

According to Taherdoost (2016), the selection of an appropriate research instrument is a crucial aspect of any scholarly investigation, as it directly influences the accuracy, validity, and relevance of the data gathered. Similarly, Mvumbi and Ngumbi (2015) underscore the importance of research instruments as essential tools for collecting information from targeted respondents in alignment with the study's objectives. Guided by these insights, this study employed two standardized instruments to gather data: the Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support (MSPSS) and the Psychological Well-Being Scale (PWBS).

Before administering the main instruments as developed by Caro Ryff and Don Drennon-Gala and Cullen, participants were first presented with a demographic questionnaire designed to collect basic socio-demographic information. This section of the instrument included items related to age, gender, marital status, and level of education, which was categorized as Primary, Secondary, College, or University. Additionally, respondents were asked to indicate the duration of their sentence served, categorized into four ranges: 1–5 years, 6–10 years, 11–20 years, and 21 years to life imprisonment. These background variables provided contextual understanding and enabled further analysis of patterns and relationships within the data.

The Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support (MSPSS) was used to assess the participants perceived levels of social support. This 12-item instrument employs a 7-point Likert scale, with responses ranging from 1 ("Very Strongly Disagree") to 7 ("Very Strongly Agree"). The scale is divided into three subscales, each representing a different source of support. The Significant Other subscale comprises items 1, 2, 5, and 10; the Family subscale includes items 3, 4, 8, and 11; while the Friends subscale consists of items 6, 7, 9, and 12. For each subscale, scores are calculated by summing the responses to the four relevant items and dividing the total by four, thereby yielding a mean score that reflects perceived support from each source.

To measure psychological well-being, the study utilized the long-form Psychological Well-Being Scale (PWBS), developed by Ryff and Keyes (1995). This instrument contains 48 items that evaluate key dimensions of mental health, including self-acceptance, autonomy, environmental mastery, personal growth, positive relations with others, and purpose in life. Respondents rated each item on a 6-point Likert scale ranging from 1 ("Strongly Agree") to 6 ("Strongly Disagree"). The scale also includes a number of negatively worded items that were reverse scored during analysis. These negatively phrased items include items 3, 5, 10, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 23, 26, 27, 30, 31, 32, 34, 36, 39, and 41. Reverse scoring ensured the accuracy of the results and the correct interpretation of higher or lower levels of psychological well-being.

A validation study conducted in Japan on the 42-item version of the PWBS confirmed its high internal consistency across all six domains. Specifically, the reliability coefficients were reported as follows: Autonomy ($\alpha = 0.83$), Environmental Mastery ($\alpha = 0.86$), Personal Growth ($\alpha = 0.88$), Positive Relations with Others ($\alpha = 0.88$), Purpose in Life ($\alpha = 0.88$), and Self-Acceptance ($\alpha = 0.91$). These reliability values affirm the scale's robustness and suitability for assessing psychological well-being in various settings, including correctional environments.

Together, the MSPSS and PWBS provided comprehensive insights into the levels of social support and psychological well-being among the study's participants. Copies of both instruments are included in the Appendix section of this document for reference.

3.7.1 Validity and Reliability

The validity and reliability are fundamental in assessing the quality and rigor of a research instrument. Validity refers to the accuracy of an instrument in measuring what it is intended to measure, while reliability concerns the consistency of the instrument in producing stable and repeatable results across different conditions (Kumar, 2014).

In the context of this study, two standardized tools the Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support (MSPSS) and the Psychological Well-Being Scale (PWBS) were used. Both instruments have been subjected to extensive psychometric evaluation in previous studies and are recognized for their high validity and reliability across diverse populations.

The MSPSS was specifically developed as a concise and comprehensive tool for assessing perceived social support. According to Dambi et al. (2018), social support is regarded as a crucial psychological buffer against life stressors, and MSPSS has emerged as one of the most widely validated tools for capturing this construct. Kieu, Vuong, and Dung (2023), in a validation study conducted among Vietnamese HIV patients, confirmed the tool's robustness through a three-stage process involving translation, pilot testing, and final validation. The study reported excellent internal consistency, with a Cronbach's alpha of 0.90, and test-retest reliability with an intra-class correlation coefficient (ICC) of 0.95. Construct validity was supported through positive factor loadings in exploratory factor analysis, confirming that the MSPSS is a reliable and valid instrument for assessing social support across cultures.

Similarly, the PWBS, developed by Ryff and Keyes (1995), has been widely used in psychological and behavioral research to assess dimensions such as autonomy, environmental mastery, personal growth, positive relationships, purpose in life, and self-acceptance. A study involving healthcare professionals, which sought to validate a technology-based health facility evaluation tool incorporating psychological well-being components, employed multiple stages item generation, content validation, pilot testing, and exploratory factor analysis. The findings demonstrated strong construct validity, and the instrument exhibited high internal reliability, measured by Cronbach's alpha scores ranging from 0.83 to 0.91, confirming the robustness of the PWBS in diverse research contexts.

Further evidence of the MSPSS's reliability was provided by Charlton, McQuaid, and Wallace (2023), who assessed the influence of social support on quality of life among older adults with autism. The study, replicated on a different yet similar population group, yielded consistent results, affirming the predictive reliability of MSPSS in assessing the role of social support in life outcomes. Social support significantly contributed to the models for all aspects of quality of life.

In the present study, the researcher conducted a pilot test using a population similar to but distinct from the actual study sample. The pilot study aimed to determine the local validity and reliability of the MSPSS and PWBS tools within the Kenyan prison context. The pilot results were used to confirm the instruments' internal consistency, clarity, and alignment with findings from prior studies as highlighted in the reviewed literature.

3.7.2 Pre-testing of Instruments

According to Hwang (2012), pre-testing of instruments is a crucial step in the research process that involves administering the data collection tools to a smaller group with characteristics similar to the actual study population, prior to the main research. This preliminary exercise enables

the researcher to assess the appropriateness, clarity, and effectiveness of the instruments. Mvumbi and Ngumbi (2015) emphasize that pre-testing ensures that the research tools are not only applicable and understandable but also acceptable to the target respondents.

Mugenda (2013) recommends that a pre-test sample should typically constitute 10% of the total sample size. Given that the main study's sample size is 291, the pre-test was therefore conducted among 29 participants. The pre-testing exercise was carried out at Kamiti Medium Security Prison, which serves as an annex to Kamiti Maximum Security Prison. This institution was chosen because it houses inmates who are nearing the completion of their sentences and thus exhibit similar psychosocial characteristics to those in the maximum facility, while remaining a distinct population from the primary research group.

During the pre-test, the three standardized instruments—Demographic characteristics tool, Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support (MSPSS) and the Psychological Well-Being Scale (PWBS)—were administered to the selected participants. The process involved recording responses, assessing item clarity, identifying ambiguities, and evaluating the time taken to complete the questionnaires. The goal was to determine the instruments' internal consistency, content relevance, and ease of interpretation.

All procedures during the pre-test were conducted in adherence to ethical research guidelines, including obtaining formal permission from the Kenya Prisons Department and securing informed consent from the participants. The data collected from the pre-test was then subjected to statistical analysis to evaluate the reliability of the instruments, particularly through the computation of Cronbach's alpha values.

The outcome of the pre-test informed the suitability and effectiveness of the tools for collecting data on social support and psychological well-being among prisoners at Kamiti.

3.7.3 Scoring of Instruments

Scoring of instruments in research refers to the structured system through which researchers assign numerical values to responses collected using standardized tools. This process enables the quantification of specific characteristics or constructs under investigation, such as levels of social support and psychological well-being. Accurate scoring is essential in ensuring that data collected is measurable, interpretable, and suitable for statistical analysis.

Table 3: Scoring of Instruments

Scale	No. of Items	Range	Low	Moderate	High
MSPSS	12	12 - 84	12 - 35	36 – 75	76 - 84
PWBS	42	42 - 252	42 - 120	121 – 180	181 - 252

Sources: Zimet,Dahlem, Zimet, &Farlet (1988) and (Ryff, C. D, 1989).

The table above presents the scores and ratings by Zimet et al. (2016), the developers of MSPSS scale which provides a guide on scoring on the levels of social support among prisoners in Kamiti Prison. Paired with, is Carol Ryff scores margin which provides a tabulation of different levels of scores representing different levels of well-being among prisoners: (Low, medium and high).

3.8 Data Collection Procedure

Creswell and Creswell (2017) define data collection as the process by which a researcher systematically gathers information relevant to the research objectives. For this study, the data collection process commenced with the researcher obtaining ethical clearance from the Tangaza University Research Ethics Committee (TUREC), followed by a research permit from the National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI). Additionally, an introductory letter from the Director, Institute of Youth Studies (IYS) was issued to the Commissioner General

of Prisons, requesting permission for the researcher to conduct the study at Kamiti Maximum Security Prison.

Upon receiving all necessary approvals, the researcher visited Kamiti Maximum Security Prison to introduce the study to the prison administration and make logistical arrangements. This initial visit included familiarization with the prison setting and coordination with officers in charge to facilitate access to the designated sample groups.

Following approval by the prison authorities, the researcher, accompanied by security personnel, was guided through the eligible prison blocks. In each block, the researcher briefly introduced the study, explained its objectives, and outlined the sampling procedure. This orientation process took approximately one to two days.

Once the eligible participants were identified according to the sampling design, the researcher organized them for questionnaire administration. Depending on security availability, the questionnaires were either administered within the individual blocks or in a centralized location designated by the administration. Prior to distribution, the researcher explained the purpose of the study, assured participants of their confidentiality, and emphasized that participation was voluntary. Participants were informed of their right to withdraw from the study at any stage without penalty or reward.

After providing these assurances, the researcher distributed the questionnaires and offered clear instructions on how to complete them. Data collection was conducted in an orderly and respectful manner, with appropriate support from the prison staff.

Upon completion, the data were compiled, coded, and analyzed using appropriate statistical methods. A final report, containing the findings and recommendations, was submitted to the Kenya Prisons Service to support future decision-making, policy formulation, and academic reference.

The entire process from data collection to analysis was completed within a period of forty working days.

3.9 Data Analysis

Quantitative data analysis primarily involves the use of numerical data to explain, describe, and interpret the results of a study. As noted by Mvumbi and Ngumbi (2015), it is a scientific approach to investigating relationships, patterns, and meanings within collected data. This study employed both descriptive and inferential statistical techniques to analyze the data and derive meaningful conclusions aligned with the study objectives. All statistical analysis was conducted using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) Version 25. The results were presented using appropriate visual aids, including tables, pie charts, bar graphs, and histograms, to enhance clarity and interpretation of the findings.

Table 4: Data analysis

Items of analysis:	**Type of variable**	**vitality of the test**	**Kind of the test**
Demographic characteristic	Categorical	Collect info about demographic characteristics	Frequencies, percentiles, central tendency (M, SD)
Objective one	One scale	To measure the levels	Descriptive statistical score
Objective two	One scale	To establish levels between 2 scale variables.	Descriptive statistical score
Objective three	Categorical + Scale	Test relationship between categorical and scale variables	Chi-square
Objective four	2 scales	Test relationship between scale variables and prediction	Pearson's correlation coefficient and simple regression.

For analysis of demographic characteristics, which involved categorical variables such as age, gender, marital status, education level, and length of sentence served, the study used descriptive

statistics including frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations. These measures provided a clear overview of the composition of the study sample.

The first and second objectives, which focused on assessing the levels of social support and psychological well-being respectively, were also analyzed using descriptive statistics. Here, measures of central tendency such as mean scores, standard deviations, and total scores were applied. The interpretation was guided by the scoring guidelines provided by the standardized instruments used (MSPSS and PWBS), ensuring accurate categorization of low, moderate, and high levels.

The third objective aimed to examine the relationship between demographic characteristics (categorical variables) and psychological well-being (a scale variable), a chi- square test was used to determine the relationship between the two variables on study.

The fourth objective focused on exploring the relationship between social support and psychological well-being, both of which were continuous scale variables. This was analyzed using Pearson's correlation coefficient to determine the strength and direction of the relationship. Additionally, simple linear regression was used to assess the predictive influence of social support on psychological well-being.

3.10 Ethical Considerations

Ethical considerations in research refer to the set of principles and standards that guide researchers in conducting their studies responsibly and with respect for participants' rights and well-being. According to Heyvaert et al. (2016), ethics in research encompass key concerns such as informed consent, data confidentiality, participant safety, respect for autonomy, and accurate reporting. This study adhered to established ethical procedures to ensure that all aspects of the research respected the dignity and rights of the respondents.

The researcher began by seeking all necessary legal and institutional approvals. These included ethical clearance from the Tangaza University Research Ethics Committee (TUREC) and a research permit from the National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI). An introduction letter from the Director, Institute of Youth Studies was also presented to the Commissioner General of Prisons, officially requesting authorization to conduct research at Kamiti Maximum Security Prison.

Upon receiving these approvals, the researcher held consultative meetings with the prison authorities, including the officer in charge and relevant station officials, to explain the study's objectives, sampling strategy, and ethical protocols. During these meetings, it was emphasized that participation would be entirely voluntary and that no inmate would be coerced into taking part. This was particularly important given that prisoners are considered a vulnerable population.

To ensure that the inclusion criteria were ethically sound, only prisoners who were aged 18 and above, had served or were serving sentences exceeding 10 years, and had a minimum education level of Form Four were included in the study. Respondents needed to demonstrate proficiency in reading and writing in English, as no translations of the questionnaires were provided. Prisoners with severe physical or mental health conditions were excluded, based on medical records and professional recommendations.

Furthermore, some prisoners, although eligible, were excluded due to security considerations. These included inmates held in solitary confinement, those with pending legal appeals, or those deemed violent or mentally unstable. Such exclusions were made in consultation with prison authorities to protect both the researcher and the participants.

Recruitment was carried out systematically, and proper communication channels were established with the prison staff. The researcher clarified that no privileges or punishments would

be attached to participation or non-participation in the study. All efforts were made to prevent undue influence or coercion from prison staff, who were sensitized on the voluntary nature of the research.

In line with the APA Code of Ethics, the researcher ensured that participants were fully informed about the study before data collection. An information session was held in each block where the researcher explained the purpose of the research, the procedures involved, potential risks, expected benefits, and the measures in place to protect their identity. Participants were also given an opportunity to ask questions and receive honest responses.

Participation was contingent upon the signing of a written informed consent form. The researcher read and explained each section of the form to ensure understanding. It was made clear that participants could withdraw at any stage without any negative consequences. The use of written consent complied with prison policy, which does not allow verbal consent.

Confidentiality was upheld throughout the study. Participants were assigned pseudonyms, and their responses were anonymized to protect their identities. Data were securely stored and will be archived in the Tangaza University Institutional Repository, with access limited to authorized academic users.

Special attention was given to minimizing potential risks. Psychological risks such as distress or trauma were anticipated, especially as some questions might evoke painful memories. A trained prison counselor was placed on standby to provide immediate support if needed. Physical risks, such as possible retaliation from other inmates due to perceived favoritism or misunderstanding, were mitigated through awareness sessions involving both participants and non-participants. The nature and purpose of the study were clearly explained to all inmates to prevent misinformation and avoid unrealistic expectations.

It was also clarified that the study would not result in any changes to the legal, health, or incarceration status of the participants, nor would it offer financial rewards to either the participants or the prison institution. All participants were made aware that the research was solely academic in nature and intended to contribute to the broader understanding of prisoners' psychological well-being.

Lastly, the researcher adhered to academic integrity by correctly citing all sources and committing the final document to plagiarism testing. The next section of the study outlines the anticipated impact of the research on knowledge generation and policy development.

3.11 Envisaged Impact of the Study

The primary aim of this study was to examine the relationship between social support (SS) and psychological well-being (PWB) among prisoners at Kamiti Maximum Security Prison, Nairobi County, Kenya. The research was intended to highlight how social support influences the mental health and adjustment of inmates. By establishing this relationship, the findings are expected to inform both academic and policy-oriented discussions on prisoner rehabilitation.

The study underscored the importance of fostering meaningful relationships between prisoners and their families, friends, and other significant individuals. It demonstrated that when inmates feel supported emotionally, materially, and socially, they are more likely to show positive psychological outcomes such as self-acceptance, autonomy, personal growth, and a sense of purpose.

Additionally, the results of the study offer valuable insights for prison administrators and policymakers. The findings can be used to develop evidence-based policies and interventions that integrate social support into rehabilitation efforts. Such policies could involve the creation of

structured visitation programs, family counseling services, and the involvement of community members in supporting inmates' reintegration.

Beyond institutional reforms, the study also has potential implications for the inmates themselves. It aimed to enhance prisoners' understanding of how supportive relationships contribute to psychological well-being, resilience, and a more hopeful outlook on life, even during incarceration. Ultimately, the study contributes to the advancement of knowledge in correctional psychology and proposes a holistic approach to rehabilitation that includes the role of social support systems.

3.12 Chapter Summary

This chapter outlined the methodology used in conducting the study. It began by explaining the epistemological foundation of the research, emphasizing the use of a positivist approach grounded in observable and measurable phenomena. The chapter then described the correlational research design, which was appropriate for examining the relationship between social support and psychological well-being.

Further, the chapter presented the target population, sampling design, and sample size determination, including the use of multistage and proportionate stratified sampling techniques. The instruments used in data collection, namely the Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support (MSPSS) and Psychological Well-Being Scale (PWBS), were described, along with their validity, reliability, and pre-testing procedures.

The data collection process was explained in detail, including ethical considerations, participant recruitment, and the measures taken to protect participants' rights and well-being. Finally, the chapter discussed the data analysis procedures, using both descriptive and inferential

statistics, and concluded with the anticipated impact of the research on prison policies, inmate well-being, and future academic studies.

In the next chapter, the researcher presents the results obtained from the field, discusses the findings in relation to the research questions, and provides recommendations based on the evidence gathered.

CHAPTER FOUR

FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the results of the study based on data collected from prisoners at Kamiti Maximum Security Prison. It begins by outlining the response rate of the distributed questionnaires, followed by a description of the demographic characteristics of the participants. The chapter then proceeds to present the core findings of the study, organized according to the four research objectives. The findings are presented with accompanying statistical evidence, and a summary is provided at the end of the chapter to consolidate the key results.

4.2 Response Rate

This section presents the response rate of the questionnaires distributed to the study participants. A total of 320 questionnaires were administered to selected participants, and the number of responses received is summarized in Table 5 below.

Table 5: Response Rate

Sample Size	Distributed Questionnaires	Returned Questionnaires	Spoiled Questionnaires	Properly filled Questionnaires
320	320	313	0	313

Out of the 320 questionnaires distributed, 313 were returned, giving a response rate of 97.8%. Importantly, none of the returned questionnaires were found to be spoiled or incomplete. This means that all 313 responses were valid and suitable for analysis. According to Taherdoost and Madanchian (2024), such a high response rate significantly enhances the reliability and representativeness of the study findings, offering a strong foundation for generalizing the results within the context of the study population.

4.3 Reliability of Instruments

The study used two standardized instruments to measure the main variables: the Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support (MSPSS) to assess social support, and the Psychological Well-Being Scale (PWBS) to measure psychological well-being. To determine the reliability of these instruments, a Cronbach's alpha reliability test was conducted using SPSS Version 25. Table 6 below presents the results of this analysis, including additional statistical indicators of data distribution such as skewness and kurtosis.

Table 6: Reliability of Research Instruments

No	Scale	Items	Cronbach's Alpha	Skewness	Kurtosis
1.	MSPSS	12	0.822	– .736	- .009
2.	PWBS	42	0.731	- .824	1.357

The MSPSS yielded a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.822, indicating strong internal consistency. The skewness of –0.736 and kurtosis of –0.009 suggest that the data were approximately normally distributed, with a slight negative skew and minimal departure from normality.

The PWBS, with 42 items, recorded a Cronbach's alpha of 0.731, which is within acceptable reliability limits. The skewness of –0.824 suggests a mild negative skew, while the kurtosis value of 1.357 indicates a slightly peaked distribution. Both skewness and kurtosis values fall within the acceptable range of –2 to +2, confirming that the data approximated normality.

These results affirm that both instruments used in the study were statistically reliable and suitable for analyzing the relationship between social support and psychological well-being among the sampled population.

4.4 Demographic Characteristics

This section presents the demographic characteristics of the participants involved in the study, specifically focusing on age, gender, marital status, level of education, and the period already served in prison. A total of 313 male prisoners participated in this research. The demographic data are summarized in Table 7.

Table 7: Demographic Characteristics

	Frequency	Percentage
Age		
18 - 25 years	13	4.2
26 - 35 years	80	25.6
36 - 45 years	107	34.2
46 - 55 years	76	24.3
56 and above	37	11.8
Gender		
Male	313	100
Marital Status		
Married	234	74.8
Not Married	79	25.2
Education Level		
Secondary	226	72.2
College	58	18.5
University	29	9.3
Period Served in Prison		
1 – 5 Years	145	46.3
6 – 10 Years	70	22.4
11 – 20 Years	57	18.2
21 to Life	41	13.1

The age distribution revealed that the 80% and above of the respondents (34.2%) were between 36 and 45 years old. This was followed by those aged 26–35 years (25.6%), and 46–55 years (24.3%). Only 4.2% were aged between 18 and 25 years, and 11.8% were aged 56 years and above. All respondents were male (100%), reflecting the population of Kamiti Maximum Security Prison, which is a male-only facility.

In terms of marital status, a substantial proportion (74.8%) were married, while the remaining 25.2% were not married. Regarding educational background, 72.2% had attained secondary education, 18.5% had reached college level, and 9.3% held university qualifications. Concerning the duration of imprisonment, 46.3% had served between 1 and 5 years, 22.4% had served 6 to 10 years, 18.2% had served 11 to 20 years, and 13.1% were serving life sentences or had already served more than 21 years.

4.5 The level of Social Support amongst prisoners in Kamiti Maximum Security Prison in Nairobi County.

The first objective of this study was to assess the level of social support among inmates at Kamiti Maximum Security Prison in Nairobi County. To achieve this, the Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support (MSPSS) was used. The instrument measures perceived support from three sources: family, friends, and significant others. Each participant's overall social support score was obtained by summing the responses across all 12 items. The possible total scores ranged from 12 to 84. For interpretative clarity, scores were categorized into three levels: low (12–35), moderate (36–75), and high (76–84). These classifications are consistent with prior research and provide insight into the prisoners' access to and perceptions of their support systems. Table 8 presents the distribution of social support levels among participants, categorizing them into different levels of social support.

Table 8: Levels of Social Support

Levels of Social Support	Range	Frequency	Percentage (%)
High Social Support	76 – 84	29	9.3
Moderate Social Support	36 – 75	229	73.3
Low Social Support	12 – 35	55	17.4
Total	**12 – 84**	**313**	**100.0**

These findings indicate that while a considerable number of prisoners perceive themselves as receiving moderate social support, a notable segment of the population (17.4%) perceives very limited social support. This observation highlights the importance of strengthening family ties, enhancing peer relationships, and providing meaningful social interventions to improve the overall well-being of prisoners.

4.6 The level of Psychological Well-Being among prisoners in Kamiti Maximum Security Prison in Nairobi County.

The second objective of this study was to assess the level of psychological well-being (PWB) among prisoners at Kamiti Maximum Security Prison. Psychological well-being was measured using the Ryff Psychological Well-Being Scale (PWBS). Responses were summed after reverse-scoring negatively phrased items to ensure consistency in directionality. The total possible score ranged from 42 to 252. To facilitate interpretation, scores were categorized into three levels of PWB: low (42–120), moderate (121–180), and high (181–252). These thresholds were based on existing literature and the distribution of scores within the sample. Table 9 presents the levels of psychological well-being among the respondents.

Table 9: Levels of Psychological Well-Being

Levels of PWB	Range	Frequency	Percentage (%)
High PWB	181 – 252	21	6.7
Moderate PWB	121 – 180	283	90.4
Low PWB	42 – 120	9	2.9
Total	**42 – 252**	**313**	**100.0**

These findings indicate that psychological well-being among prisoners at Kamiti Maximum Security Prison is predominantly moderate, with a small proportion demonstrating either low or high levels of psychological wellness.

4.7 Relationship between Demographic Characteristics and Psychological Well-Being

The third objective of the study was to examine whether demographic characteristics were significantly associated with psychological well-being among prisoners. The demographic variables analyzed included age, marital status, educational level, and time served in prison. Chi-square tests were carried out to evaluate potential relationships with psychological well-being across the identified demographic groups. Table 10 below presents the findings:

Table 10: Results of Chi-Square Test Determining Relationship between Demographics and PWB

Demographics	Psychological Wellbeing				Chi-square Test		
	Total	Low PWB	Moderate PWB	High PWB	X^2	df	Sig.
Age of Participants							
18 to 25	13	1	11	1	3.760	8	.878
26 to 35	80	1	73	6			
36 to 45	107	4	98	5			
46 to 55	76	2	67	7			
56 and above	37	1	34	2			
Marital Status of Participants							
Married	234	7	212	15	.170	2	.918
Not Married	79	2	71	6			
Education Level of Participants							
Secondary	226	9	199	18	6.704	4	.152
College	58	0	55	3			
University	29	0	29	0			
Time Served in Prison							
1 – 5 Years	145	4	131	10	9.131	6	.166
6 – 10 Years	70	3	58	9			
11 – 20 Years	57	1	54	2			
21 - Life	41	1	40	0			

As shown in Table 11, the Chi-square test results demonstrated that there was no statistically significant relationship between age group and psychological well-being (PWB) level, χ^2 (8, N = 313) = 3.76, p = .878. What this suggests is that the age of the prisoners does not have

a significant association with their psychological well-being levels. Additionally, the Chi-square test revealed no significant relationship between marital status and PWB level, χ^2 (2, N = 313) = 0.17, p = .918. This means that both married and unmarried participants exhibited similar distributions across the categories of low, moderate, and high PWB.

Similarly, another test conducted, showed no significant relationship between educational level and PWB level, χ^2 (4, N = 313) = 6.70, p = .152. Although a higher proportion of participants with college or university education reported moderate or high PWB, this trend did not reach statistical significance. Finally, the Chi-square test indicated that time served in prison was not significantly in relationship to psychological well-being, χ^2 (6, N = 313) = 9.13, p = .166. The distribution of PWB levels across different categories of time served was statistically alike.

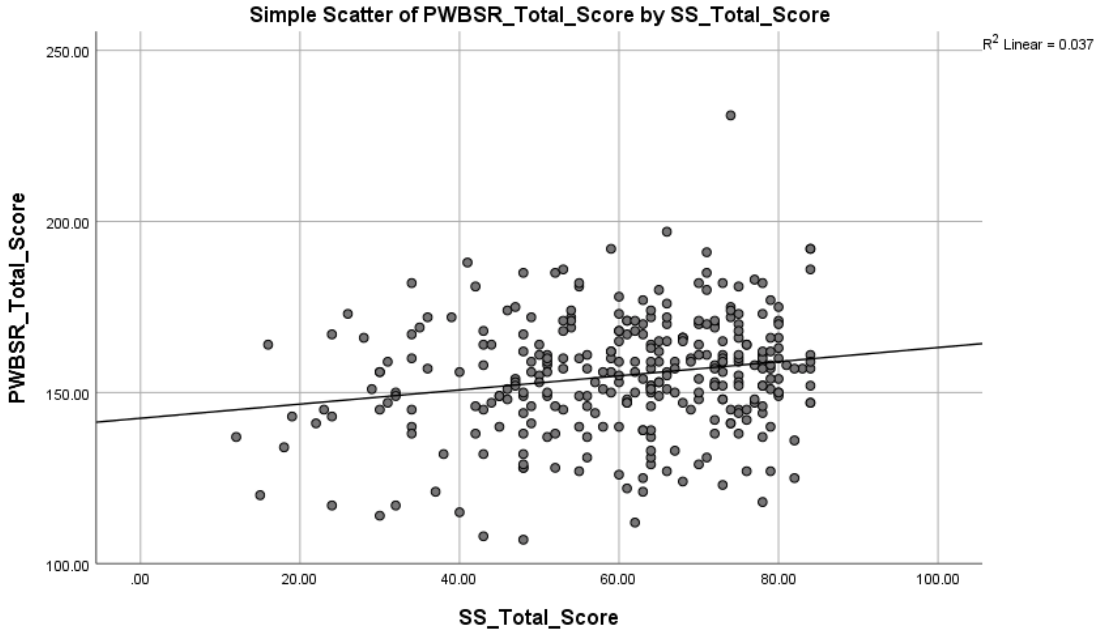
Similarly, another test conducted, showed no significant relationship between educational level and PWB level, χ^2 (4, N = 313) = 6.70, p = .152. Although a higher proportion of participants with college or university education reported moderate or high PWB, this trend did not reach statistical significance. Finally, the Chi-square test indicated that time served in prison was not significantly in relationship to psychological well-being, χ^2 (6, N = 313) = 9.13, p = .166. The distribution of PWB levels across different categories of time served was statistically alike.

After analyzing various demographic factors including age, marital status, educational attainment, and length of time served, there was no statistically significant relationship found with the participant's psychological well-being. Lastly, the gender of participants was not tested as only male participants were included in the study.

4.8 Relationship between Social Support and Psychological Well-Being among Prisoners in Kamiti Maximum Security Prison

The fourth objective of this study was to examine the relationship between social support and psychological well-being among prisoners at Kamiti Maximum Security Prison in Nairobi County. To evaluate this relationship, Pearson's correlation and simple linear regression analyses were conducted. A scatter plot was generated to visually inspect the relationship between the two variables Social Support and Psychological Well-Being. This preliminary visualization, presented in Figure 4, offers an overview of the potential association between the variables before the statistical tests.

Figure 2: Scatter Plot of Relationship between Social Support and Psychological Wellbeing



Visual inspection of the scatter plot reveals a slight positive trend, suggesting that higher levels of perceived social support were generally associated with higher psychological well-being scores. This was supported by a regression analysis that yielded an R^2 value of 0.037, indicating that 3.7% of the variance in psychological well-being could be explained by social support.

To statistically assess the strength and direction of the association, Pearson's correlation coefficient was computed between the total scores of Social Support (SS) and Psychological Well-Being (PWB).

Table 11: Pearson's Correlation Coefficient for the Relationship between Social Support and Psychological Well-Being

Correlations

		SS Total Score	PWB Total Score
SS Total Score	Pearson Correlation	1	.193
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.001
	N	313	313
PWB Total Score	Pearson Correlation	.193	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001	
	N	313	313

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

The results in Table 14 indicate a positive and statistically significant correlation between Social Support and Psychological Well-Being, $r(311) = .193$, $p = .001$. Although the correlation is statistically significant, the strength of the relationship is weak, suggesting that while greater social support is associated with better psychological well-being, the magnitude of this effect is modest.

To further explore this relationship, a simple linear regression analysis was conducted to determine whether Social Support could significantly predict Psychological Well-Being scores.

Table 12: Regression Analysis

ANOVA[a]

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	3317.556	1	3317.556	11.973	.001[b]
	Residual	86171.288	311	277.078		
	Total	89488.843	312			

The ANOVA results indicate that the regression model was statistically significant, F(1, 311) = 11.97, p = .001, meaning Social Support significantly predicts Psychological Well-Being. However, the model explains only 3.7% of the variance in Psychological Well-Being scores (R^2 = .037), suggesting that Social Support is a modest predictor.

A simple linear regression analysis was conducted to examine whether Social Support significantly predicts Psychological Well-Being among inmates at Kamiti Maximum Security Prison. As shown in Table 14, the regression model was statistically significant, F (1, 311) = 11.97, p = .001, indicating that Social Support is a significant predictor of Psychological Well-Being. Although the model reached statistical significance, the strength of the relationship was relatively weak, with Social Support explaining only 3.7% of the variance in Psychological Well-Being scores (R^2 = .037). This suggests that higher perceived Social Support is modestly but significantly associated with better Psychological Well-Being outcomes in this population. The standard error of the estimate was 16.65, reflecting the average distance of the observed scores from the predicted regression line. To better understand the relationship between both variables, Table 15 presents the coefficient regression analysis.

Table 13: Coefficient Regression Analysis

Coefficients[a]

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients			95.0% Confidence Interval for B	
		B	Std. Error	Beta	T	Sig.	Lower Bound	Upper Bound
1	(Constant)	142.501	3.739		38.113	.000	135.144	149.858
	SS_Total_Score	.207	.060	.193	3.460	.001	.089	.324

As shown in Table 16, the unstandardized coefficient B = 0.207 indicates that for every one-unit increase in Social Support score, the predicted Psychological Well-Being score increases by 0.207 points, holding other variables constant. The standardized Beta coefficient of 0.193 aligns with the Pearson correlation value, confirming a weak but statistically significant positive relationship. The t-value = 3.460, with a p-value = .001, confirms that the relationship is statistically significant. The regression constant of 142.501 represents the estimated psychological well-being score when social support is zero. While such a scenario is hypothetical, the intercept remains essential in defining the regression equation.

In conclusion, while the results show that Social Support is significantly associated with Psychological Well-Being, the strength of this relationship is relatively weak. The findings suggest that other factors psychological, institutional, or environmental likely contribute to prisoners' overall mental wellness beyond social support alone.

4.9 Limitations of Study

This study encountered several limitations, particularly due to the sensitive nature of the target population prisoners. A limitation emerged during the sampling and administration of questionnaires. The prison officers assigned to support the data collection process had limited experience with research procedures. As a result, their role was confined primarily to providing security rather than assisting with logistical or methodological aspects of the study. Additionally,

although the researcher had anticipated comprehension challenges, many participants struggled with the complexity of the questionnaire items, particularly those on the Psychological Well-Being Scale. To address this, the researcher translated key sections of the tool into Swahili and provided verbal explanations where necessary. This adjustment, while necessary for inclusivity, extended the data collection period beyond the initially planned timeline.

Furthermore, several conceptual dimensions of the Psychological Well-Being Scale such as autonomy and environmental mastery proved difficult for participants to contextualize within the constraints of their incarceration. Despite thorough explanations and support from the researcher, interpreting such constructs in a prison setting presented an additional challenge that may have influenced the depth and accuracy of responses.

Nevertheless, these limitations did not compromise the integrity of the study. The research was successfully completed and yielded important insights into the relationship between social support and psychological well-being among prisoners, offering a significant contribution to both academic knowledge and correctional practice in Kenya.

4.10 Chapter Summary

This chapter presented the findings of the study in detail. It began by outlining the response rate, which was notably high, enhancing the credibility of the results. Reliability analysis using Cronbach's Alpha demonstrated acceptable internal consistency for both research instruments. Demographic characteristics of the participants were then presented to contextualize the sample.

Subsequently, the chapter explored each of the four research objectives. For Objective One, descriptive statistics were used to assess the levels of social support among the participants. For Objective Two, levels of psychological well-being were measured using the Ryff Psychological Well-Being Scale. Objective Three examined the relationship between selected demographic

characteristics and psychological well-being using ANOVA and t-tests. Objective Four investigated the relationship between social support and psychological well-being, employing Pearson's correlation and linear regression, revealing a weak but statistically significant positive association.

The chapter concluded by identifying and discussing the key limitations encountered during the research process, particularly the challenges linked to participant comprehension and institutional access. The next chapter will provide an interpretive discussion of the findings, comparing them with existing literature and drawing conclusions and recommendations.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents a detailed discussion of the study's findings based on the objectives outlined earlier. It interprets the results presented in Chapter Four, drawing comparisons with existing literature reviewed in Chapter Two. The discussion is organized according to the four research objectives and research questions. Each section highlights points of convergence and divergence between this study and previous studies, allowing for critical engagement with existing knowledge. Additionally, this chapter revisits the conceptual framework to reflect on how the study findings align with or challenge theoretical perspectives, particularly the Social Support Theory by Don Drennon-Gala and Cullen (1994) and the Psychological Well-Being Model by Ryff and Keyes (1995). The chapter concludes with theoretical insights and practical implications derived from the study.

5.2 Demographic Characteristics and Psychological Well-Being among Prisoners in Kamiti Maximum Security Prison in Nairobi County.

This section provides an analysis of the demographic characteristics of the study participants and how these relate to psychological well-being. The demographic data explored include age, gender, marital status, level of education, and period served in prison.

The age distribution showed that the majority of participants were in mid-life, with 34.2% aged between 36–45 years, followed by 25.6% aged 26–35 years, and 24.3% aged 46–55 years. Only 11.8% were aged 56 and above, while the youngest group (18–25 years) accounted for 4.2% of the sample. These findings suggest that involvement in criminal activities is more prevalent among individuals aged between 20 and 45. This is consistent with Bevin (2024), who reported

that the age range of 21 to 30 years is most associated with criminal behavior globally. Similarly, Prost et al. (2021), in their study in Canada, found a majority of incarcerated individuals were under 35 years, though they also noted a considerable population aged above 65. These findings highlight that criminal behavior cuts across age groups but is more prominent among younger adults.

The gender distribution of the sample was entirely male (100%), reflecting the study's setting at Kamiti Maximum Security Prison, a male-only facility. While this was expected, it also points to a limitation of gender representation. Future studies should consider female prison populations to provide a more holistic understanding of psychological well-being across gender.

In terms of marital status, the majority of participants (74.8%) were married, while 25.2% were not married. These findings align with Awopetu (2021), who found that married male prisoners in Nigeria reported higher psychological well-being than their unmarried counterparts. This supports the idea that family connections may offer emotional stability even within incarceration.

With regard to educational attainment, 72.2% of participants had completed secondary education, 18.5% had attended college, and 9.3% had attained university education. These results suggest that most prisoners in the study had basic educational exposure. Education has been associated with better coping mechanisms and psychological adjustment, and thus may play a role in psychological well-being.

Regarding the period served in prison, 46.3% had served between 1–5 years, 22.4% between 6–10 years, 18.2% between 11–20 years, and 13.1% had served 21 years to life. Most participants had therefore served substantial time in prison, providing them with experiences relevant to assessing long-term psychological effects of incarceration. These findings differ

slightly from those reported by Rogers et al. (2024) in South Africa, where the majority had served sentences exceeding 15 years. In contrast, this study's participants had comparatively shorter durations, which may influence how they experience and report psychological well-being.

Thus, the demographic profile of the study participants offers critical context for understanding their psychological well-being. Age, marital status, education, and time served are important factors that frame the interpretation of well-being outcomes and highlight areas for further research and targeted interventions within correctional settings.

5.3 Levels of Social Support amongst Prisoners in Kamiti Maximum Security Prison in Nairobi County.

This section discusses the findings related to the levels of social support among inmates at Kamiti Maximum Security Prison. Out of the 313 participants, 73.2% (n = 229) reported experiencing moderate levels of social support, 17.6% (n = 55) reported high levels, while 9.3% (n = 29) reported low levels of support. These results suggest that the majority of inmates had some degree of social connectedness, primarily through family, friends, or significant others, although relatively few reported strong or extensive support networks.

According to Galvan and Galvan (2017), social support is a critical coping mechanism through which individuals derive emotional and psychological strength from family, friends, and other significant individuals. This interpretation aligns with Pettus-Davis et al. (2015), who noted that prisoners often struggle with reintegration after incarceration, and social support serves as a key buffer against psychological distress. The predominance of moderate social support in this study suggests that while prisoners benefit from some contact with their social networks, this support is not always robust or consistent. If social support were strengthened, the psychological

resilience of inmates could be improved, potentially reducing reliance on maladaptive coping mechanisms such as substance abuse.

Comparable findings have been reported internationally. Bjørlykhaug (2022) noted that social support plays a crucial role in mitigating mental health challenges, yet it is often underutilized in correctional environments. Similarly, Pamungkas (2024) found that in Indonesian prisons, emotional-focused coping was more prevalent (67.8%) than perceived social support (51.5%), suggesting that inmates often turn inward or to emotional regulation rather than to interpersonal networks. These trends mirror the findings at Kamiti, where high levels of social support were reported by only 17.6% of participants.

Sari et al. (2022), in a review of studies on resilience and social support, similarly concluded that social support is generally limited in prison environments. The results of the current study where 73.2% reported moderate and only 9.3% reported low support reiterate that while some support is present, it is insufficiently mobilized as a strategy for mental well-being. McFadden, Davidson, and Butler (2024) reported moderate levels of support among inmates in Northern Ireland, with support networks often limited to occasional visits from at least one individual. The similarity with Kamiti suggests a broader trend within correctional institutions, where the structure and restrictions of incarceration hinder the full development of support systems.

Gruber et al. (2021) and Mehdi et al. (2021) emphasized the increasing scientific interest in the relationship between social support and psychological well-being. Mehdi et al. (2021) findings in Iranian prisons showed a statistically significant elationship ($r = 0.327$) between social support and psychological well-being. Compared to Kamiti, where most prisoners reported only

moderate levels of support, these findings suggest a need for enhanced family and community engagement strategies within Kenyan prisons.

The positive influence of family support was also affirmed in studies conducted in Nigeria and Cameroon. Akwaji (2024) found significant relationship between familial connections and prisoner well-being in Nigerian correctional institutions. Likewise, Ndengue et al. (2024) demonstrated significance between emotional ($p = .001$), informational ($p < .001$), and material support ($p = .04$) and inmates' mental health in Cameroon. These results emphasize the global relevance of social support as a rehabilitative factor.

In Kenya, Paul (2021) found that sociological coping strategies beyond traditional family and friend networks played a significant role in prisoner well-being. This suggests that broadening the conceptualization of social support within prison systems may enhance its impact. Overall, the relatively low percentage (17.6%) of prisoners at Kamiti reporting high social support highlights a need for interventions that enhance access to and quality of social relationships during incarceration.

5.4 Levels of Psychological Well-Being among prisoners in Kamiti Maximum Security Prison in Nairobi County.

This section presents the findings regarding the psychological well-being of prisoners in Kamiti Maximum Security Prison. Using the Ryff Psychological Well-Being Scale, participant scores were classified into three categories: low (42–120), moderate (121–180), and high (181–252). The results showed that the majority of inmates, 90.4% ($n = 283$), fell within the moderate range. Only 6.7% ($n = 21$) reported high levels of psychological well-being, while 2.9% ($n = 9$) were categorized as having low psychological well-being.

These findings are consistent with global studies that highlight the prevalence of psychological well-being challenges among incarcerated populations. Gopinathan, Vijayshankar, and Roy (2024) assert that psychological health concerns are common in correctional environments, while Facer-Irwin (2023), in a study involving 221 inmates, reported a prevalence of psychological conditions ranging between 0.1% and 27%. The findings from Kamiti, where only 6.7% reported high psychological well-being, affirm the need for targeted psychological interventions.

Fovet et al. (2023), in a comparative study in France, reported a higher prevalence of psychological conditions among prisoners (4.7%) compared to the general population (0.6%). These disparities reflect the psychological burden of incarceration, particularly where limited access to external support structures exists. The findings from Kamiti support this conclusion, as the prison environment naturally restricts contact with family and friends, thereby lowering emotional resilience and contributing to psychological vulnerability.

Family cohesion has been shown to play a significant role in enhancing inmates' well-being. Ghazanfari et al. (2023) reported mean scores of 55.90 ± 11.90 for family cohesion and 10.68 ± 3.32 for purpose in life among Iranian inmates, suggesting a moderate but meaningful contribution of family ties to psychological well-being. In the current study, the predominance of moderate PWB among prisoners implies that family, friends, and significant others can be leveraged to improve well-being if properly engaged.

Amoke et al. (2020) documented widespread mental health conditions across African prison systems. Their study indicated that 70% of Ghanaian prisoners, 63% in England and Wales, 63% in Zambia, and 57% in Nigeria suffered from various forms of psychological morbidity. Although the current study reported a relatively small proportion of low PWB (2.9%), the fact that

nearly all prisoners (90.4%) reported only moderate well-being points to a population at risk. These individuals may not exhibit acute psychological distress but are unlikely to be thriving emotionally, mentally, or socially.

In summary, the findings on psychological well-being among inmates at Kamiti Maximum Security Prison emphasize the need for institutional support structures that prioritize mental health. Few prisoners reported high well-being, and the overwhelming majority had only moderate scores. This highlights the importance of fostering a rehabilitative environment that promotes personal growth, emotional stability, and access to meaningful social relationships.

5.5 Relationship between Demographic Characteristics and Psychological Well-Being among Prisoners at Kamiti Maximum Security Prison.

This section discusses the association between various demographic characteristics and psychological well-being (PWB) among prisoners at Kamiti Maximum Security Prison. The analysis focused on both continuous variables (such as age and period served in prison) and categorical variables (including marital status and educational level), aiming to uncover how these factors might relate to prisoners' psychological well-being.

The age distribution in this study revealed that a substantial proportion of the participants fell within the mid-life range (36–45 years), while the youngest cohort (18–25 years) constituted only 4.2% of the population. This trend contrasts with Bevin's (2024) study in India, which showed that 91% of prisoners were between 21 and 30 years, suggesting that criminal behavior in the Indian context is more common among younger adults.

However, the current study revealed no significant relationship between marital status and PWB level, χ^2 (2, N = 313) = 0.17, p = .918. This means that both married and unmarried participants exhibited similar distributions across the categories of low, moderate, and high PWB.

Contrary to this finding, Prost et al. (2021) reported a higher prevalence of psychological disorders among older inmates (65 years and above) in Canada, compared to younger prisoners (below 35 years). These differences across studies point to the context-specific nature of how age influences mental well-being in correctional facilities. The findings from Kamiti suggest that psychological well-being is influenced by factors other than age and warrant further investigation into other demographic or psychosocial variables.

With respect to marital status, 74.8% of participants were married, while 25.2% were unmarried. While Awopetu (2021) found that married male convicts in Nigeria exhibited significantly higher PWB than their unmarried counterparts ($t(916) = 3.00$, $p < .05$), this study observed no such effect. This study revealed no significant relationship between marital status and PWB level, $\chi^2 (2, N = 313) = 0.17$, $p = .918$. This suggests that in this setting, marital status does not significantly impact psychological well-being, challenging assumptions that marital ties inherently enhance inmates' psychological well-being.

Regarding educational attainment, participants reported varying levels of education: 72.2% had completed secondary school, 18.5% had attended college, and 9.3% had attained university-level education. Though Awopetu (2021) previously reported a significant influence of education on psychological well-being, the current study found no such relationship. The chi-square test indicated that there was no significant relationship between educational level and PWB level, $\chi^2 (4, N = 313) = 6.70$, $p = .152$. This finding raises questions about the role of education in fostering psychological resilience in prison environments and suggests a need for further exploration.

The duration of imprisonment also appeared unrelated to psychological well-being in this study. The Chi-square test indicated that time served in prison was not significantly in relationship to psychological well-being, $\chi^2 (6, N = 313) = 9.13$, $p = .166$. The distribution of PWB levels across

different categories of time served was statistically alike. This indicate that length of incarceration was not significantly associated with PWB. This contrasts with findings from Rogers et al. (2024), who reported significant relationships between length of sentence and psychological well-being among inmates in South Africa. The lack of significant findings in the current study suggests that PWB may be shaped by more nuanced or contextual variables beyond incarceration time. Collectively, these findings present a divergent picture from much of the existing literature and suggest that demographic characteristics alone such as age, marital status, education level, and sentence duration may not be sufficient indicators of psychological well-being among prisoners.

The assumptions embedded in social support theory, particularly those advanced by Cullen and Drennon-Gala (1994), emphasize the role of interpersonal support structures in buffering psychological stress during incarceration. However, the demographic results of this study suggest a need to reassess or broaden the scope of inquiry into factors that influence inmates' well-being. It is also worth noting that presumed coping strengths such as older age or marital status do not necessarily translate to higher psychological well-being.

For instance, the belief that older prisoners are more resilient, or that unmarried prisoners experience fewer stressors, was not supported by statistical evidence in this context. Instead, the lack of significant relationships across demographics suggests that broader psychosocial or institutional factors may have a greater role in influencing psychological outcomes for incarcerated individuals.

Finally, Cullen (1994) model of social support outlines four key types of support: emotional, instrumental, informational, and appraisal. These support types typically provided by parents, siblings, friends, colleagues, and community members appear to have a more substantial

effect on PWB than demographic attributes. This underscores the importance of strengthening interpersonal networks as a mechanism for enhancing inmates' mental health.

5.6 The relationship between Social Support and Psychological Well-Being among Prisoners

The fourth objective of this study was to explore the relationship between social support and psychological well-being among prisoners in Kamiti Maximum Security Prison. This relationship was assessed using Pearson's correlation and linear regression analyses.

Initial visual analysis using a scatterplot revealed a positive linear trend, suggesting that higher levels of social support were associated with higher levels of psychological well-being. The regression model yielded an R^2 value of 0.037, indicating that social support accounted for 3.7% of the variance in psychological well-being. Although this effect size is relatively small, the positive slope supports the hypothesis of a direct relationship.

The Pearson correlation analysis confirmed a statistically significant, though weak, positive correlation between social support and psychological well-being, $r(311) = .193$, $p = .001$. This finding is consistent with the work of Walton (2025), who observed that peer support initiatives in correctional facilities significantly improved inmates' psychological well-being ($p < 0.01$). Similarly, Ibrahim (2025) found that both dispositional traits and perceived social support significantly predicted psychological well-being, affirming that interpersonal relationships play a meaningful role in enhancing inmates' emotional health.

Further, the linear regression analysis reinforced these findings. The model was statistically significant, $F(1, 311) = 11.97$, $p = .001$, confirming that social support is a significant predictor of psychological well-being among inmates. However, the R^2 value of 0.037 again indicates a modest effect size, suggesting that while social support contributes to mental well-being, it is not the sole

influencing factor. Mefoh et al. (2016) similarly found that family-based support significantly influenced psychological well-being among inmates at Enugu Prison in Nigeria.

The regression coefficients revealed that for every one-unit increase in social support, psychological well-being scores increased by 0.207 points. The standardized beta coefficient (β = .193) aligned with the correlation value, further confirming the positive association. The t-value for the social support variable was 3.460 with a corresponding p-value of .001, signifying the result's statistical significance.

These findings lend empirical support to the theoretical foundations laid by Don Drennon-Gala and Cullen (1994), who posited that strong support networks can mitigate the psychological burdens of incarceration. As articulated by Chouhy and Lee (2020), social support theory underscores the protective role of interpersonal networks in reducing criminal behavior and fostering rehabilitation. The current study affirms this assertion, showing that prisoners who perceived higher levels of support reported better psychological outcomes.

Moreover, the congruence between the dimensions of psychological well-being such as autonomy, purpose in life, self-acceptance, and positive relationships and the components of social support (emotional, informational, instrumental, and appraisal) highlights a conceptual alignment between these constructs. However, given the relatively weak predictive power of social support alone, it is evident that other factors such as environmental conditions, institutional support structures, and individual psychological resilience must also be considered in future studies.

In conclusion, the findings of this study underscore the importance of fostering meaningful social connections for incarcerated individuals. While social support does not entirely account for psychological well-being, it plays a statistically significant and practically relevant role in enhancing inmates' capacity to cope with the challenges of incarceration.

5.7 Suggestion for Improving Theory

Social Support Theory posits that individuals undergoing critical life stressors such as imprisonment, the diagnosis of chronic illness, or the loss of a loved one may experience psychological distress that requires buffering through supportive relationships (Chouhy & Lee, 2020). Don Drennon-Gala and Cullen (1994) define social support as a constitutive element of adult social bonds, which, when operational, contribute to behavioral and emotional change.

The findings from this study affirmed that Social Support is a statistically significant predictor of Psychological Well-Being among prisoners at Kamiti Maximum Security Prison, $F(1, 311) = 11.97$, $p = .001$. However, while the association was statistically meaningful, the strength of the relationship was relatively weak. The regression analysis revealed an unstandardized coefficient (B) of 0.207, indicating that for every one-unit increase in social support, psychological well-being increased by 0.207 units. The standardized beta coefficient ($\beta = 0.193$) aligned with the Pearson correlation coefficient ($r = .193$), suggesting a modest yet positive influence.

These findings highlight an area for theoretical refinement. While the theory adequately captures the buffering role of social support, it may benefit from a more nuanced conceptualization of support types, especially in the context of incarceration. For instance, Curley (2025) advanced the understanding of social support by introducing "companionship" as an essential factor. This dimension encompasses emotional, empathetic, instrumental, and informational support elements shown to enhance prisoners' capacity to cope with the psychological demands of confinement. Therefore, incorporating companionship as a distinct element into the existing theoretical framework may improve its explanatory power and practical relevance in correctional settings.

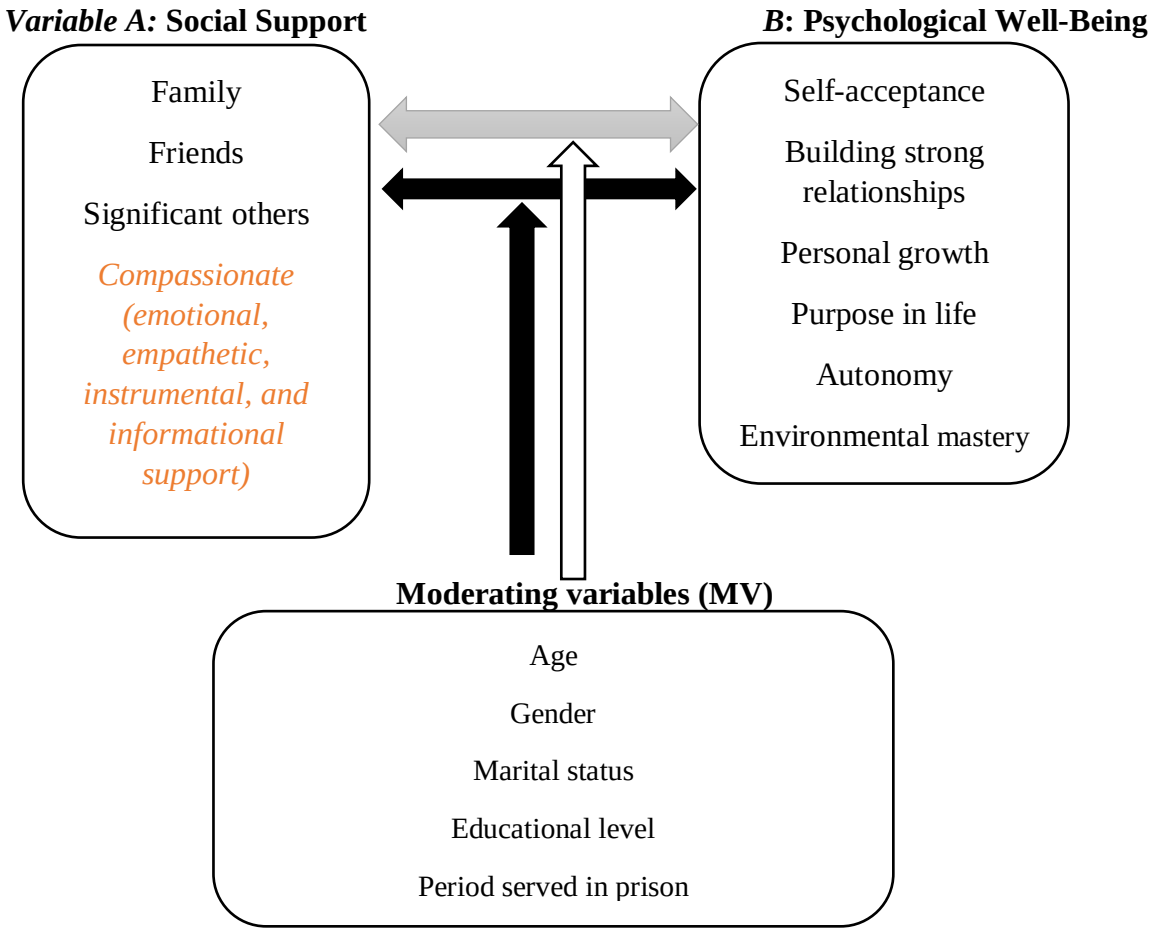
In sum, while the original theory remains foundational, the empirical evidence from this study suggests that expanding the model to include multidimensional and context-specific

components such as companionship could better account for the complex realities of prisoners' psychological well-being.

5.8 Revisited Conceptual Framework

This section revisits the conceptual framework introduced in Chapter Two to assess its ongoing relevance and accuracy in light of the study's findings. The framework originally posited a direct relationship between Social Support (SS) and Psychological Well-Being (PWB), with demographic characteristics (age, gender, marital status, education level, and time served in prison) acting as potential moderating variables.

Figure 3: Relationship between Social Support and Psychological Well-being



Sources: Taylor, S.E. (2011) and Ryff, C. D. (1989).

The revised framework retains the core components of the original model while introducing key refinements based on the data. The bidirectional arrows reflect the correlational design of the study. A pale-colored arrow represents the statistically significant yet weak relationship found between SS and PWB, indicating a measurable but modest relationship.

Conversely, the arrows representing demographic characteristics are depicted in a neutral or transparent tone, symbolizing the lack of statistically significant moderating effects observed in the study. This suggests that, within this context, demographic variables did not meaningfully influence the relationship between SS and PWB.

Additionally, the concept of *companionship* has been integrated as a subcomponent of Social Support. Based on Curley's (2025) work, companionship includes emotional connection, empathy, practical assistance, and information-sharing, all of which are particularly relevant in the carceral environment. This addition strengthens the framework by addressing previously underrepresented facets of support and aligning the theoretical model more closely with real-world dynamics in prison settings.

5.9 Chapter Summary

This chapter provided a comprehensive discussion of the study's findings, aligned with the four research questions and framed against existing scholarly literature. It began with an analysis of demographic characteristics and their association with psychological well-being, concluding that none of the variables (age, marital status, education level, or time served) showed significant influence on PWB within the sample.

The chapter then examined the levels of social support and psychological well-being among inmates, finding that the majority of participants experienced moderate levels of both. Despite the statistically significant relationship between social support and psychological well-

being, the association was weak, suggesting the presence of other influential factors not captured in this model.

Based on the study's findings, theoretical enhancements were proposed, specifically the inclusion of *companionship* as a vital element within Social Support Theory. The chapter concluded by revisiting the conceptual framework, updating it to reflect empirical realities, and reinforcing the importance of social support in shaping mental health outcomes among incarcerated individuals.

The next chapter, Chapter Six, will provide a summary of the key findings, draw overall conclusions, and present recommendations for future research, policy, and practice.

CHAPTER SIX

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Introduction

This chapter is a provision of a detailed synthesis and a summary of the study findings, key outcomes, and outlining conclusions aligned with the data, and presenting definite recommendations. Its major objective is to put together the research insights gotten, deliver a practical direction for all relevant stakeholders, and provide the way forward for prospective research.

6.2 Summary of Findings

The study sought to understand the relationship between social support and psychological well-being of prisoners. A case of Kamiti maximum security Prison. The research design was quantitative one, and employed a correlational research design. The research used systematic sampling technique to obtain the participants. Data was collected using standardized tools: Multidimensional Scale on Perceived Social Support (MSPSS) and Psychological Well-being Scale (PWBS) and data analyzed using SPSS version 25.

The Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support (MSPSS), consisting of 12 items, demonstrated high internal consistency with a Cronbach's alpha of 0.822, indicating good reliability. The skewness value of –0.736 and kurtosis value of –0.009 suggest that the distribution of scores was approximately normal, with a slight negative skew and negligible kurtosis.

The Psychological Well-Being Scale (PWBS), consisting of 42 items, also showed acceptable internal consistency, with a Cronbach's alpha of 0.731. The skewness value of –0.824 suggests a slight negative skew, while the kurtosis value of 1.357 indicates a mildly peaked

distribution. Both values fall within acceptable ranges (–2 to +2), suggesting that the data reasonably approximate a normal distribution.

After distributing 320 questionnaires, the research received a response rate of 97.8%. This study was conducted in a male prison facility (100%) and therefore there were no variety of gender. However, the participants age was distributed according to the following results: the majority were aged between 36 – 45 years (34.2%), followed by those aged 26 – 35 years (25.6%) and 46 – 55 years (24.3%). Participants aged 56 years and above accounted for 11.8%, while the youngest group (18 – 25 years) made up only 4.2% of the sample. Regarding marital status, a significant majority of the participants 234 were married (74.8%), while 79 were not married (25.2%) at the time of the study.

Following educational attainment, 226 had completed secondary education (72.2%), while 58 had attended college (18.5%) and 29 had obtained university-level education (9.3%). As for the period served in prison, 145 of the participants (46.3%) had served between 1 – 5 years, 70 of the participants (22.4%) had served 6 – 10 years, 57 of the participants (18.2%) had served 11 – 20 years, and 41 of the participants (13.1%) had served 21 years to life.

The first objective of this study sought to understand the level of social support on psychological well-being of prisoners. Among the 313 prisoners who participated in the study, the majority of respondents, 229 participants (73.2%), reported moderate levels of social support. Additionally, 55 participants (17.6%) experienced high levels of social support, while 29 participants (9.3%) fell into the low social support category. This distribution indicated that most inmates perceived a moderate degree of support from their social networks, with fewer individuals reporting very low or very high levels of support.

The second objective looked at the level of psychological well-being among prisoners in Kamiti maximum security prison. The psychological well-being (PWB) scores of the 313 participants were categorized into three levels based on the total score ranges: low (42 – 120), moderate (121 – 180), and high (181 – 252). The vast majority of participants, 283 individuals (90.4%), fell within the moderate PWB range. A smaller proportion of 21 participants (6.7%), scored in the high PWB range, suggesting a relatively small group with high psychological well-being. Conversely, only 9 participants (2.9%) were classified as having low psychological well-being, indicating potential psychological vulnerability or distress.

The third objective of the study sought to understand the relationship between demographic characteristics and psychological well-being. A case of Kamiti Maximum security Prison, Nairobi County, Kenya. The chi-square test on age indicated that there were no statistically significant relationship between age group and psychological well-being (PWB) level, χ^2 (8, N = 313) = 3.76, p = .878. The Chi-square test revealed no significant relationship between marital status and PWB level, χ^2 (2, N = 313) = 0.17, p = .918. These findings indicated that marital status did not have a significant effect on psychological well-being among the prisoners in this sample. In regard to level of education, results indicated that there was significant relationship between educational level and PWB level, χ^2 (4, N = 313) = 6.70, p = .152.

Therefore, there was no significant difference in psychological well-being scores across the different educational levels.

The Chi-square test indicated that time served in prison was not significantly in relationship to psychological well-being, χ^2 (6, N = 313) = 9.13, p = .166. There was no statistically significant difference in psychological well-being scores across the different time-served categories. In

conclusion, all the demographic characteristics had no significant difference with PWB in this study.

The last objective four sought to understand the relationship between social support and psychological well-being among prisoners. A case study of Kamiti maximum security prison, Nairobi County, Kenya. The scatter plot indicated that higher levels of reported social support tended to correspond with higher psychological well-being scores (R^2 of 0.037). The Pearson correlation analysis indicated a positive and statistically significant correlation, r (311) = 0.193, p = 0.001. A linear regression analysis was statistically significant, F (1, 311) = 11.97, p = 0.001, indicating that Social Support was a significant predictor of Psychological Well-Being.

The coefficient region analysis had an intercept 142.501, the unstandardized coefficient (B) for Social Support is 0.207, and the standardized Beta value of 0.193 confirmed that the relationship was positive and alignsed with the Pearson correlation coefficient (r = .193). The t-value associated with the Social Support variable was 3.460, and the p-value was .001, indicating that this coefficient was statistically significant at $p < .01$. This means that Social Support is a significant predictor of Psychological Well-Being among inmates in this sample.

6.3 Conclusions

The study observed the levels of social support of prisoners as well as the psychological well-being of prisons for both variables. The conclusions that were drawn are well aligned with the results or findings which not only present the empirical and statistical evidences obtained but also provide a thorough insight into the implications these findings have for prisoners at Kamiti maximum security Prison, Nairobi County, Kenya.

Grounded on the findings of the first objective, it can be concluded that a big number of prisoners at Kamiti maximum security prison experienced moderate level of social support from

family, friend and significant others. Considering that statistics proved social support to be a predictor of PWB, these findings underscore the urgent need for welcoming and opening prison doors to social agents so that they can support prisoners in order to improve on their psychological well-being.

Grounded on the second objective, it can be concluded that a big number of the participants fell under the moderate psychological well-being level. This is an indication that prisoners at Kamiti maximum security prison are vulnerable to psychological problems and distress. This experience therefore enables a swift action to be taken especially encouraging family, friends and significant others to often times visit the prisoners while in custody. This impacted on their psychological well-being.

Grounded on the third objective, it is now evident that prisoner's psychological well-being is not depended on their age, gender, marriage status, level of education or the period served in prison. Therefore, this piece of work advocates for a diversified approach to psychological well-being of prisoners which may require considering other factors like being compassionate: this may entail providing the prisoners with emotional support and empathetic support through counselling and being there for them, instrumental like providing material things or personal effects, and may be informational support especially on what they need to know while in prison.

Grounded on the fourth and the very final objective which sought to understand the relationship between social support and psychological well-being of prisoners at Kamiti maximum security prison. Basing on the statistical findings of this study which indicated a positive and statistically significant correlation of the variables on study ($r(311) = .193$, $p = .001$), the study firmly calls for implementation of social support and creation of platforms/venues that are befitting

and friendly to the families, friends and significant others to gain an unrestricted and limitless access to their relatives in Kamiti maximum security prison.

6.4 Recommendations

Guided by the conclusions arrived at in this study, the following recommendations are proposed:

Prisoners of Kamiti prison: The outcome of this study has shown that prisoners psychological well-being is depended on the social support rendered to them. As indicated in Chapter One, the outcomes of this study shall first and foremost benefit the prisoners. In such a spirit, prisoners are encouraged to maintain good social networks and especially being in good relationship with their families, friends and significant others. This need is best realized in times of need whereby the social investment that was done in their free world (before incarceration) turns out to be a hub for hope, empathy, instrumental or material support, informational support for them in time of need (imprisonment).

The director of rehabilitation programs: The findings of this study provide profound insights on how to foster the psychological well-being of prisoners. In the prisons department stand out a directorate that is responsible for formulating and overseeing rehabilitation programs for all prisons in Kenya. The prisons motto '*kurekebisha na haki'* as resounds in the minds of prisons officers and prisoners can only be actualized by grounding prisons programs of interventions to the needs of prisoners basing on research done in regard to the specific and well identified needs.

A periodic evaluation of these programs needs to be done: This may include taking record of examination of the prisoner during admission to the penal institution, the genre of programs that the prisoner participated in the course of incarceration, a portfolio model by the rehabilitation officers be established that shall be presented before a review committee with agreed intervals as

established. This shall provide a very close monitoring of the progress a prisoner is making in terms of behavior change. The impact of social support and any other practice of support shall form part of the periodic report on the progress of the inmate. The findings of this study will act as a spring board and point of reference on matters social support and psychological well-being.

Counselling psychology practitioners: The reviewed literature in Chapter two affirms that mental well-being has gained a global concern in the recent past. Research indicating the prevalence of prisoner's mental problems to be high in contrast with the general public. These findings therefore assisted the prison officers with relevant knowledge on counselling psychology to embark on addressing the different needs associated with the prison's community.

This research further recommends revisiting the content of the unit on counselling psychology provided for on the paramilitary training manual whether it meets the relevancy of prisons context. Last but not least, this research recommends for establishment of counselling centers (mandatory) in every prison in Kenya. In the Kenyan prisons, a professional counselling psychologist (uniformed or civilian) be posted with only specified counselling duties. This will help both prison staff deal with observable work-related issues (burnouts, absenteeism, suicide, substance abuse etc.), family related issues and also address the various needs as presented by the prisoners.

Researchers in general: this part upholds the idea that research is the most probable scientific way of perceiving and understanding people's problem from a practical and systematic angle. The findings of this piece of work recommends practitioners in this field to invest in research so as to remain relevant in their approach to problems in order to employ standard interventions to the identified needs.

6.5 Recommendations for Future Research

This research endeavored to find out the relationship between Social Support and Psychological Well-Being among Prisoners. A case of Kamiti Maximum Security Prison, Nairobi County, Kenya. While the research predominantly looked at the social support dimensions: family, friends and significant others whose findings had a positive significant difference with psychological well-being, a qualitative research design or mixed research could be used in order to incorporate the experiences of prisons life and also get insights on the prisoner's relationship with their families, friends, prison staff and significant others.

Furthermore, since this research focused on a male prison facility (homogeneous), further study can be carried out among female prisoners in order to find out whether social support could have any influence on their psychological well-being among female inmates. In addition, this study could also be done among juvenile prisoners undergoing training in Borstal institutions or Youthful Correctional Training Centers (YCTC) and find out whether their relationship with families could have any impact on their psychological well-being for the period spent in training.

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APPENDIX A: Letter of introduction

Esteemed Participant,

I wish to introduce myself to you. I go by the name Jacob Musyoki Mbaya Mutua, a student currently pursuing a MA degree in Counselling Psychology, specialization: youth counselling. My research is looking at the association between social supports (SS) and PWB among inmates in Kamiti Prison. This research work forms part of the pre-requisites for my Master of Arts degree in Counselling Psychology.

Taking part in this piece of work is entirely deliberate. All data that may be attained from this particular exercise will remain confidential and kept within the scope established. This being a voluntary exercise, you are free to withdraw from participating at any level with no consequences charged upon you. Your contribution in this academic study is valued and adds to the existing body of knowledge. However, kindly note that there will be no financial benefits that will be provided for your participation. If in agreement, kindly append your signature on the attached informed consent form and proceed to complete the questionnaires provided for this study.

I am grateful for accepting to participate in this study

My earnest appreciations,

Mutua Jacob Musyoki Mbaya

MA- Counselling Psychology Student: Tangaza University.

APPENDIX B: Informed Consent

Project Title: *'Relationship between Social Support and psychological well-being among prisoners. A case of Kamiti Maximum Security Prison, Nairobi County, Kenya'*

This piece of work has been officially permitted by Tangaza University body responsible for research: (TUREC) and also approved by the council for higher learning (NACOSTI).

Objective: investigate how social support enhance psychological well-being of prisoners.

Partakers: The sampled group are the prisoners of Kamiti Maximum Security Prison. Any participant will have the permission to pull out from the study freely at their convenient time. Such an act will NOT attract any kind of admonishment. In addition, the research will not attract any monitory implications to all participants.

Confidentiality: All participants are kept completely anonymous. You will not be required to write your names on the questionnaire-you may use a code or a pseudo name. The findings of each participant will only be presented in a summative form, not individually. This will keep your personal information protected and anonymized. This piece of work is being carried out by a student of Tangaza University who is in pursuance of a master's degree in counselling psychology. This work has been authorized by the departmental head- IYS. Any anticipatory risk: physical or psychological shall be well addressed. The participants are obliged to complete a sequence of questionnaire so as to complete the study. The responses thereof shall be treated as discrete and results presented in aggregate way as opposed to individual presentation. Participation in this exercise is optional; no monetary rewards shall be provided and members will not face any punishment or mistreatment for withdrawing their data or from participation at any level.

Contact: TU, P.O Box 15055 -00509, Southern L. Road, Telephone no: +254 722204724

Researcher: Mutua Jacob Musyoki. Mbaya Position: On going post graduate program: Specialization: Youth Counselling.

Beholder's sign: ……..... Day ……month ……Year……...

Participant's statement of commitment:

I hereby attest reception of a detailed explanation of the project's aims and my role in it by the researcher and have gotten a copy of the informed consent. There were multiple opportunities for me to ask questions concerning this project, and I affirm that they were all well responded to by the researcher.

- I therefore, willingly take part in this exercise without coercion or force of any kind. I am aware that I can freely terminate my involvement at any time or level.
- I assent to participate in this research willingly.

Participant Sign……. **Day…**.…**Month……Year……..**

APPENDIX C: Questionnaires for Participants

Section A: Demographic characteristics

Please answer all the provided queries.

---

1. Age: ☐ **2. Sex (M/F)**: ☐

3. Spousal status:

Married…… ☐

Not married…… ☐

4. Educational Level

Secondary…… ☐

College…… ☐

University…… ☐

5. Period served in Prison (years).

1 - 5	6 – 10	11 - 20	21 to life

SECTION B: Scale on Social Support (MSPSS).

Provided below is a MSPSS scale: Kindly circle against the statements which applies to you. The score range from 1- very strongly disagrees to 7- very strongly agree

The questions provide an explanation on how you feel about yourself as an individual. You are reminded that the answers that you provide are neither right nor wrong. If you are in agreement or disagreement with the statements provided, kindly circle the number against your description. **1 = Very Strongly Disagree, 2 = Strongly Disagree, 3 = Mildly Disagree, 4 = Neutral, 5 = Mildly Agree, 6 = Strongly Agree, 7 = Very Strongly Agree.**

Sources: Zimet,Dahlem, Zimet, &Farlet (1988)

SECTION C: Psychological Well-Being Scale (PWBS)

	Significant Others							
6	I am not afraid to voice my opinions, even when they are in opposition to the opinions of most people.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**
7	My decisions are not usually influenced by what everyone else is doing.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**
8	I tend to be influenced by people with strong opinions.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**
9	I have confidence in my opinions, even if they are contrary to the general consensus.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**
	Family							
10	My family really tries to help me	1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**
11	I get the emotional help I need from my family	1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**
12	I can talk about my problems with my family	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**
13	My family is willing to help me make decisions	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**
	Friends							
14	My friends really try to help me	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**
15	I can count on my friends when things go wrong	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**
16	I have friends with whom I can share my joys and sorrows.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**
17	I can talk about my problems with my friends	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**

Guided by the scale, kindly indicate how often the statements apply to you by circling against the statements provided. The score ranges from one representing strongly disagree to six representing strongly agree.

1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree Somewhat, 3 = Disagree Slightly, 4 = Agree Slightly, 5 = Agree Somewhat, 6 = Strongly Agree

	Autonomy						
18	I am not afraid to voice my opinions, even when they are in opposition to the opinions of most people.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
19	My decisions are not usually influenced by what everyone else is doing.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
20	I tend to be influenced by people with strong opinions.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
21	I have confidence in my opinions, even if they are contrary to the general consensus.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
22	It's difficult for me to voice my own opinions on controversial matters.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
23	I tend to worry about what other people think of me.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
24	I judge myself by what I think is important, not by the values of what others think is important.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
	Environmental Mastery						
25	In general, I feel I am in charge of the situation in which I live.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
26	The demands of everyday life often get me down.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
27	I do not fit very well with the people and the community around me.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
28	I am quite good at managing the many responsibilities of my daily life.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
29	I often feel overwhelmed by my responsibilities.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
30	I have difficulty arranging my life in a way that is satisfying to me.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
31	I have been able to build a living environment and a lifestyle for myself that is much to my liking.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
	Personal Growth						
32	I am not interested in activities that will expand my horizons.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
33	I think it is important to have new experiences that challenge how you think about yourself and the world.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
34	When I think about it, I haven't really improved much as a person over the years.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
35	I have the sense that I have developed a lot as a person over time.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
36	For me, life has been a continuous process of learning, changing, and growth.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
37	I gave up trying to make big improvements or changes in my life a long time ago.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
38	I do not enjoy being in new situations that require me to change my old familiar ways of doing things.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
	Positive Relations with Others						
39	Most people see me as loving and affectionate.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
40	Maintaining close relationships has been difficult and frustrating for me.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
41	I often feel lonely because I have few close friends with whom to share my concerns.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
42	I enjoy personal and mutual conversations with family members and friends.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
43	People would describe me as a giving person, willing to share my time with others.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
44	I have not experienced many warm and trusting relationships with others.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**

45	I know that I can trust my friends, and they know they can trust me.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
	Purpose in Life						
46	I live life one day at a time and don't really think about the future.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
47	I have a sense of direction and purpose in life.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
48	I don't have a good sense of what it is I'm trying to accomplish in life.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
49	My daily activities often seem trivial and unimportant to me.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
50	I enjoy making plans for the future and working to make them a reality.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
51	Some people wander aimlessly through life, but I am not one of them.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
52	I sometimes feel as if I've done all there is to do in life.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
	Self-Acceptance						
53	When I look at the story of my life, I am pleased with how things have turned out.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
54	In general, I feel confident and positive about myself.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
55	I feel like many of the people I know have gotten more out of life than I have.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
56	I like most parts of my personality.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
57	In many ways I feel disappointed about my achievements in life.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
58	My attitude about myself is probably not as positive as most people feel about themselves.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
59	When I compare myself to friends and acquaintances, it makes me feel good about who I am.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**

Source: (Ryff, C. D, 1989).

APPENDIX D: Permission to use Ryff Psychological Well-Being Scale (PWBS)

Jacob Musyoki Mbaya Mutua 16/00712@tangaza.ac.ke>

RE: PSYCHOLOGICAL WELL-BEING SCALE (PWBS)

From: Jacob Mutua jackmbaya66@gmail.com **To** : CAROL RYFF <cryff@wisc.edu>

Hello Dr. Ryff.

My name is Jacob M. M. Mutua, a MA student doing Counselling Psychology, specialization: youth counselling at Tangaza University, Nairobi. I wish to test prisoners' mental well-being using the Ryf Scale of PWB on the topic '**relationship between social support and psychological well-being of prisoners at Kamiti Maximum Security Prison, Nairobi County, Kenya**' I humbly request for your authorization to administer your scale to my respondents.

Thankyou in advance.

With Kind regards,

Jacob Mutua

From, CAROL RYFF <cryff@wisc.edu>

Hello Jacob Mutua,

We appreciate for your interest to use the PWB scale. You have my permission to use it for your work except for commercial purposes. Using this scale will not attract any charges whatsoever. We request that you share with us a copy of any article that you publish thereafter.

1- Ryff PWB Scales.docx
92K

2- Ryff PWB Reference Lists.docx
208K

We wish you all the best in your prospective research work.

APPENDIX E: Request to administer MSPSS among prisoners

Jacob Musyoki Mbaya Mutua 16/00712@tangaza.ac.ke>

RE: MSPSS Scale.

From :Jacob Mutua jackmbaya66@gmail.com **To**: Z, Greg D <gzimet@iu.edu>

Hello, Dr. Zimet

My name is Jacob M. M. Mutua, a MA student in Counselling Psychology at Tangaza University, Nairobi, Kenya. I wish to research the topic '**Relationship between Social Support and Psychological Well-Being of Prisoners at Kamiti Maximum Security Prison, Nairobi County, Kenya**'. With all due respect, kindly grant me your approval to administer MSPSS scale to my respondents.

Thank you in advance.

With Kind regards,
Jacob Mutua

From: Zimet, Gregory D gzimet@iu.edu

Subject: RE: [External] REQUEST TO USE MSPSS SCALE

Dear Jacob. Mutua,

Permission has been granted for the above request. Kindly find attached English version and the scoring information for your reference. In addition, several articles that report to the tools validity and reliability have also been attached.

Best wishes for your research

Kind regards

Greg Z.

APPENDIX F: Ethics Approval from Tangaza University

TANGAZA UNIVERSITY

Teaching Minds, Touching Hearts, Transforming Lives.....

REF: TU/ISERC2025/01/0059 14th March 2025

To: Mutua Jacob Musyoki Mbaya, **Reg. No.** Reg. No. 16/00712

Dear Mutua,

Re: *"Relationship between Social Support and Psychological Well-Being among Prisoners: A Case of Kamiti Maximum Security Prison, Nairobi County, Kenya.*

This is to inform you that TU-ISERC has reviewed and approved your above research proposal. Your application approval number is *TU/ISERC2025/01/0059.* The approval period is **14th March 2025 – 15th March 2026**. This approval is subject to compliance with the following requirements;

1. Only approved documents including (informed consents, study instruments, MTA) will be used
2. All changes including (amendments, deviations, and violations) are submitted for review and approval by TU-ISERC.
3. Death and life-threatening problems and serious adverse events or unexpected adverse events whether related or unrelated to the study must be reported to TU-ISERC within 72 hours of notification.
4. Any changes, anticipated or otherwise that may increase the risks or affected safety or welfare of study participants and others or affect the integrity of the research must be reported to TU-ISERC within 72 hours
5. Clearance for export of biological specimens must be obtained from relevant institutions.
6. Submission of a request for renewal of approval at least 60 days prior to expiry of the approval period. Attach a comprehensive progress report to support the renewal.
7. Submission of an executive summary report within 90 days upon completion of the study to TU-ISERC.

Prior to commencing your study, you will be expected to obtain a research license from National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI) https://research-portal.nacosti.go.ke and also obtain other clearances needed.

Yours sincerely

Dr. Daniel M. Kitonga (Ph.D., MBA)
Chair, TU - ISERC

TANGAZA UNIVERSITY INSTITUTIONAL SCIENTIFIC AND ETHICAL REVIEW COMMITTEE (TU-ISERC)
★ 14 MAR 2025 ★
P. O. Box 15055 - 00509
NAIROBI - KENYA

P.O. Box 15055 - 00509 Langata, Nairobi Kenya
Tel: +254 20 8097667 / 0732 897 000 / 0733 685 059 / 0722 204 724 / 0714 610 777
Email: inquiries@tangaza.ac.ke
Website: www.tangaza.ac.ke

APPENDIX G: Letter of Appointment to NCOSTI

TANGAZA UNIVERSITY

Teaching Minds, Touching Hearts, Transforming Lives.....

OFFICE OF THE CHAIRMAN
TANGAZA UNIVERSITY
INSTITUTIONAL SCIENTIFIC AND ETHICS REVIEW COMMITTEE

E-mail: iserc@tangaza.ac.ke **Website:** www.tangaza.ac.ke

OUR Ref: TU/ISERC2025/01/0059 **Date:** 14th March 2025

The Commission Secretary,
National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation
P.O. Box 30623,
Nairobi – Kenya.

Dear Sir/Madam,

Re: Recommendation for Research Permit – Mutua Jacob Musyoki Mbaya

This is to confirm that Mutua Jacob Musyoki Mbaya is a PI in a researcher protocol which was submitted to TU-ISERC for review. The protocol was reviewed and approved for research permit.

Mutua wishes to carry out a research under the title *"Relationship between Social Support and Psychological Well-Being among Prisoners: A Case of Kamiti Maximum Security Prison, Nairobi County, Kenya.*

I strongly recommend Mutua Jacob Musyoki Mbaya to the Kenyan National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation for issuance of a research permit. The permit will enable him to proceed to data collection for his study. Thanking you in advance for your cooperation.

Yours sincerely,

Dr. Daniel M. Kitonga (Ph.D., MBA)
Chairperson, TU-ISERC

TANGAZA UNIVERSITY INSTITUTIONAL SCIENTIFIC AND ETHICAL REVIEW COMMITTEE (TU-ISERC)
★ 14 MAR 2025 ★
P. O. Box 15055 - 00509
NAIROBI - KENYA

APPENDIX H: NACOSTI Permit

REPUBLIC OF KENYA

NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR
SCIENCE,TECHNOLOGY & INNOVATION

Ref No: **945966**

Date of Issue: **27/April/2025**

RESEARCH LICENSE

This is to Certify that Mr.. JACOB MUSYOKI MBAYA MUTUA of Tangaza University , has been licensed to conduct research as per the provision of the Science, Technology and Innovation Act, 2013 (Rev.2014) in Nairobi on the topic: Relationship between Social Support and Psychological Well-Being among Prisoners: A Case of Kamiti Maximum Security Prison, Nairobi County, Kenya. for the period ending : 27/April/2026.

License No: **NACOSTI/P/25/4172728**

945966

Applicant Identification Number

Director General
NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR
SCIENCE,TECHNOLOGY &
INNOVATION

Verification QR Code

NOTE: This is a computer generated License. To verify the authenticity of this document, Scan the QR Code using QR scanner application.

See overleaf for conditions

APPENDIX I: Letter of Permission from Commissioner General of Prisons

MINISTRY OF INTERIOR AND NATIONAL ADMINISTRATION
STATE DEPARTMENT FOR CORRECTIONAL SERVICES
KENYA PRISONS SERVICE

Telegrams: "COMPRISONS", Nairobi
Telephone: +254-20-2722900-6
Fax: +254-2-2714716
Email: commissioner.prisons@gmail.com
When replying please quote
Ref No. 2005040461/137

PRISONS HEADQUARTERS
P.O. BOX 30175-00100
NAIROBI

Date: 08th May 2025

PF: NO: 2005040461
Jacob Musyoki Mutua (Cpl)

Thro'

The Officer in charge,
Nairobi Remand &All.Prison
P.O. Box 18554-00500
NAIROBI

Welfare Officer
IP Cleared to use.
13/5/2025

RE: APPLICATION FOR ACADEMIC RESEARCH

We acknowledge receipt of your letter requesting to conduct academic research at Kamiti Medium and Kamiti Maximum prison as a requirement in undertaking a Master's degree course in counselling psychology.

This is to inform you that your request titled *"**relationship between social support and psychological well-being among prisoners in kamiti medium and Kamiti Maximum Security Prison**, Kenya"* for a period of six days running from **12th May 2025** has been approved.

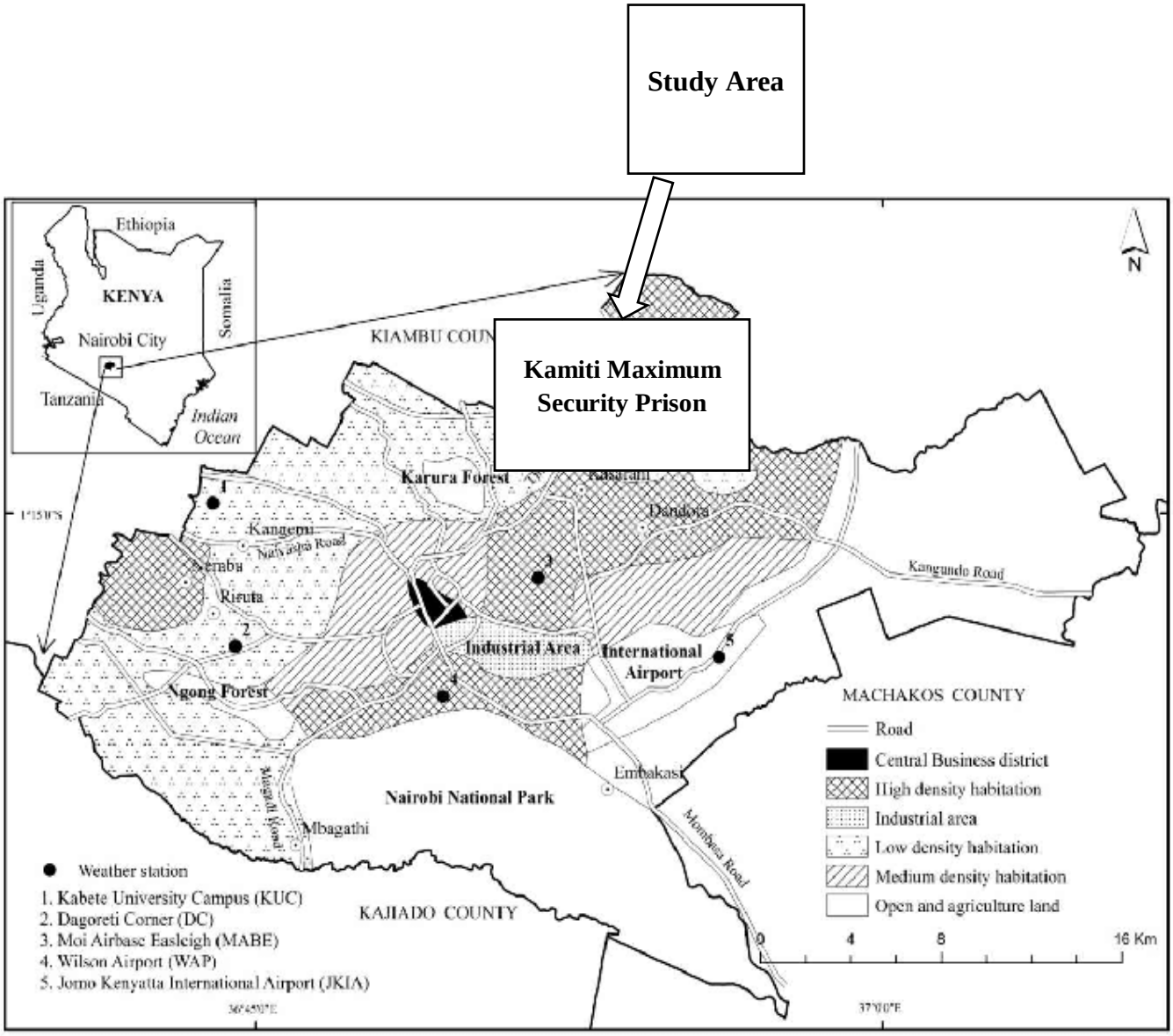
You will be expected to comply with Prisons rules and regulations during your attachment period. You will also be required to provide the Prisons Headquarters with a copy of your practicum report at the end of your attachment.

By a copy of this letter, the officer in charge,Kamiti Medium and Kamiti Maximum prison is requested to accord you the necessary assistance.

ANDERSON M. MCHARO, MBS, ACGP(A&P)
FOR: COMMISSIONER GENERAL OF PRISONS

Cc
Officer in charge,
Kamiti Maximum Prison
Kamiti Medium Prison

APPENDIX J: Map of Nairobi County: Kamiti Maximum Security Prison



APPENDIX K: Plagiarism Report

Mutua Jacob Musyoki Mbaya

Relationship between Social Support and Psychological Well-Being among Prisoners

Quick Submit

Quick Submit

Tangaza University College

12% Overall Similarity

The combined total of all matches, including overlapping sources, for each database.

Filtered from the Report

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- Quoted Text
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Integrity Flags

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