

KWAME NKRUMAH UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

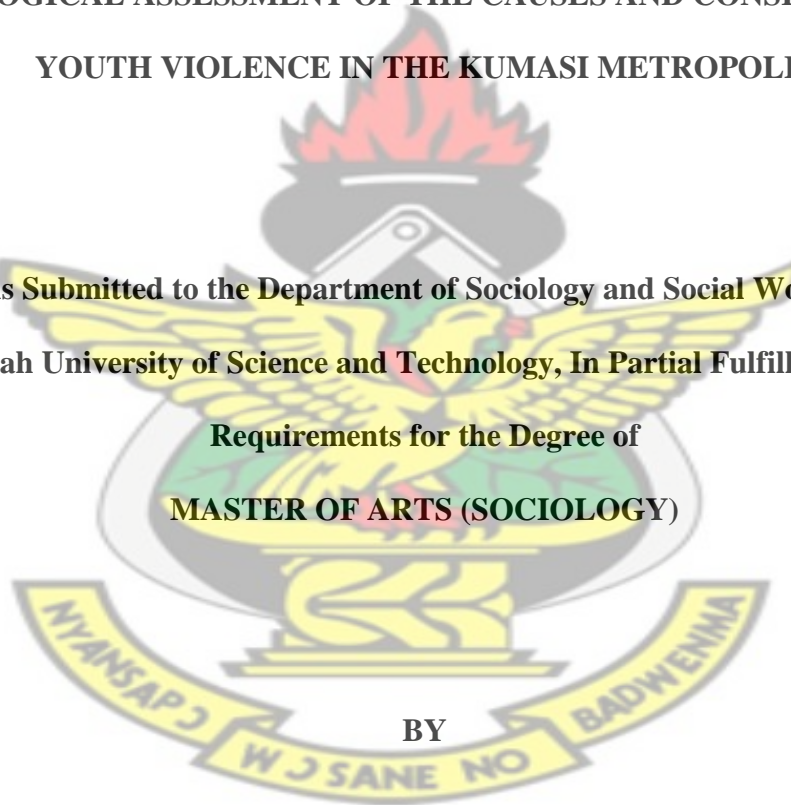
FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY AND SOCIAL WORK

KNUST

**A SOCIOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT OF THE CAUSES AND CONSEQUENCES OF
YOUTH VIOLENCE IN THE KUMASI METROPOLIS**

**A Thesis Submitted to the Department of Sociology and Social Work, Kwame
Nkrumah University of Science and Technology, In Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree of
MASTER OF ARTS (SOCIOLOGY)**



BY

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OCTOBER, 2015

DECLARATION

I hereby declare that, this thesis is my own original work towards the M.A Degree Sociology and that, it contains no material previously published by another person nor material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree of the university except for the references cited and duly acknowledged. I am however responsible for any lapses therein.

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DEDICATION

This thesis is specially dedicated to the Almighty God and my sweet parents, Mr. and Mrs.

Osei Barnie for encouraging and supporting me throughout my programme.

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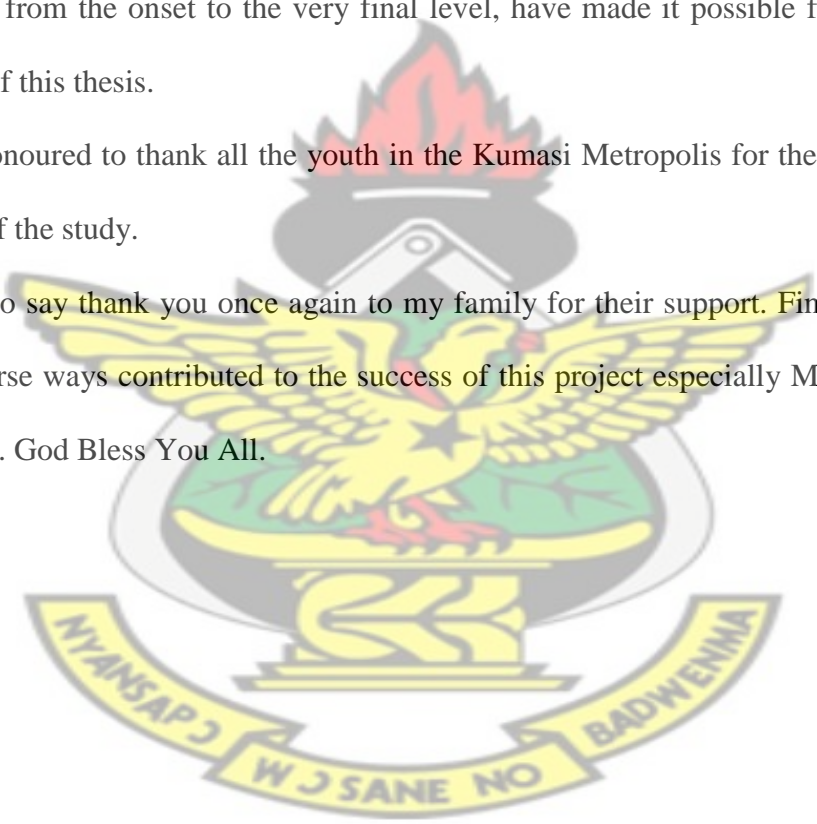
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

First of all, my utmost appreciation goes to the almighty God for bestowing on me the gift of life and the grace throughout this research process. If it had not been Him on my side, I would not have come this far in life. I want to appreciate my respondents for the patience they had during my time with them.

I wish to express my profound gratitude to my thesis supervisor, Dr. Jonathan Mensah Dapaah and my academic mentor Mr. Jonas Asamanin Barnie for their exhortation, gratitude and support from the onset to the very final level, have made it possible for me to see the realization of this thesis.

I am also honoured to thank all the youth in the Kumasi Metropolis for their cooperation in the course of the study.

I just want to say thank you once again to my family for their support. Finally, to all those who in diverse ways contributed to the success of this project especially Mr. Samuel Oteng for his input. God Bless You All.



ABSTRACT

This study was undertaken to assess the sociological causes and consequences of youth violence in the Kumasi Metropolis. Violence by young people is one of the most visible forms of violence in society. Around the world, newspapers and the broadcast media report daily on violence by gangs, in schools or by young people on the streets. Therefore, with the use of a mixed method approach, 71 youth in the Kumasi Metropolis were randomly selected whereas 10 participants were chosen to take part in a focus group discussion. The data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, and findings show that the principal categories of violence were manifested in noise making, rape, murder, stealing and drug addiction, obscene gestures, robbery, stealing, bullying, hitting, fighting, swearing, threatening, shoving/pushing, yelling, sexual abuse and embarrassing. The study suggests peer pressure as the key factor that induced youth violence. It was also noted that becoming physically ill, death, injury, disability, fear and panic when in the dark, low level of community development and shame and disgrace were some of the ramifications of violent behaviours in the community. Finally, to reduce the incidence of violence among youth in the Kumasi Metropolis, the study revealed that education on security tips, equipping the police with logistics targeted at youth gangs, schools and areas where young people congregate and socialize, and the activities of volunteers were security measures employed by their communities in controlling violent behaviours. However, these strategies were dependent on the Government, Chiefs and Non-Governmental Organizations in Ghana.

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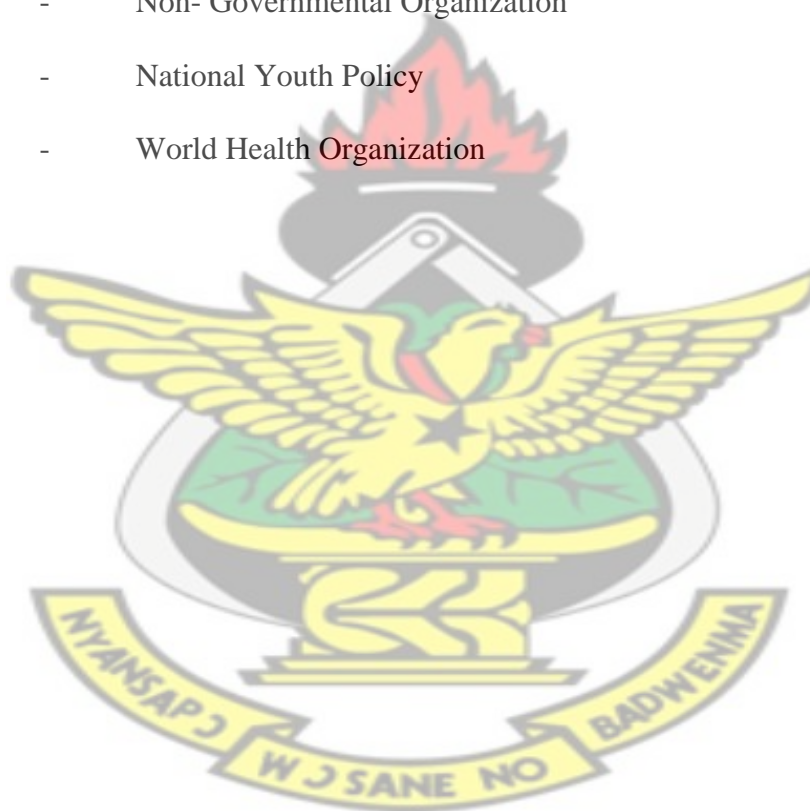
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LIST OF ACRONYMS

CDC	-	Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
DCEs	-	District Chief Executive
DHHS	-	Department of Health and Human Services
GSS	-	Ghana Statistical Service
ILO	-	International Labour Organization
MCE's	-	Municipal Chief Executive
NGO	-	Non- Governmental Organization
NYP	-	National Youth Policy
WHO	-	World Health Organization



CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Background to the Study

Violence is a fact of social life. It is found in our homes, wards, streets, schools, organizations and institutions. As a result it has gained the attention of professionals such as economists, political scientists, transport planners, architects, and NGO Community workers among others according to Moser (2004). Violence is multidimensional and dynamic (Moser, 2004).

WHO (2002) defines violence as “the intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against oneself, another person, or against a group or community, that either results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, mal-development or deprivation.” Cambridge International Dictionary of English also defines violence as “an action or words which are intended to hurt people.”

Thus Violence is basically the use of physical force with the view to obtaining one's need, want or wish. Violence therefore inflicts both physical and psychological harm. It must also be emphasized that the presence of violence may create fear and panic. Violence may also bring in its wake reduced social contact thereby placing restrictions on community life (WHO, 2002).

The youth is said to be a period where the individual becomes an active and responsible member of the society (GSS, 2013). In other words it is the period the individual assumes responsibility for his/her actions. The definition of Youth is fraught with difficulties. In one breath, it is defined as people between the ages of 10 and 29 years. This is by W.H.O. The

U.N sees it as a period between the ages of 15 and 24. The above are not consistent with the Ghanaian situation. In Ghana however, “The National Youth Policy” classifies all persons from 15 to 35 years to constitute the youth of the country (Republic of Ghana, 2010) cited in Ghana Statistical Service (2013:4). For the purposes of this study, the National definition will be adopted since the study is being conducted in Ghana and therefore must be situated in the local Ghanaian context. From the above, the use of national youth policy definition will also cater for the universal definition bracket of the UN which is 15-24.

According to the 2010 Population and Housing Census, the youth constituted in three age brackets (15-19), (20-24) and (25-35) with percentage of the total national Population respectively as 10.6%, 9.4% and 13.8%. All together gives 33.8% of the national total population (GSS, 2010). In line with the national youth policy therefore, the youth forms a third of the population of the country.

In the analysis of the youth groups according to the same 2010 Population and Housing Census, most of them are heads of households or heads of families (GSS, 2010). This places a higher responsibility on them to cater for themselves as well as the other members of the household. This indicates that some youth marry early at the expense of their education.

There is a clear indication that some youth find it difficult to get employment especially in the public sector due to their lower skills and experience (GSS, 2013). This situation may compel some to resort to unorthodox ways of making a living. The state also does not have enough out-of-school-support mechanisms to assist the youth in apprenticeship or entrepreneurial training. And it is said that the devil finds work for idle hands.

Most cities are centers of political, cultural and economic power and as such become high targets of violence. The above have implications for urban development. The issue therefore

is how can we make our urban centers places of comfort destinations for effective socio-economic development?

1.1 Statement of the Problem

In all over of the world, people are naturally socialized to be anti-violent. However, in recent years there has been growing attention to youth violence. According to the GSS (2013), there is higher proportion of death among the adolescents and youth group resulting from accidents, violence, homicide and suicide which were associated with youth exuberance. Thus the youth being energetic indulge in risky ventures which lead to loss of life.

For some time now, people in the urban areas such as Kumasi have expressed concern about youth violence of varied types. For instance, a mid-year Police report in the Ashanti Region indicates that crime and violence decreased only by 314 in 2013. That is from 19,092 in 2012 to 18, 778 in 2013, an indication that the menace is ever present, the reduction notwithstanding. They ranged from bullying and physical fighting, through more severe sexual and physical assault to homicide.

A cursory observation in the daily newspapers and other mass media shows youth violence everywhere and that people had been attacked with guns, knives, machetes and other deadly gadgets. For instance, on the 13th of February, 2015, it was reported on ghanaweb that the Sreso-Tinpom police station in the Atwima-Mponua District had temporarily been closed down following an attack by the youth of the town. The youth was said to have burned down the police station which also served as the residence of the Chief Inspector and also stabbed one of his sons in the stomach.

Also, some hostels affiliated with KNUST had reported incidence of violence or other in their vicinity where, especially, ladies had been attacked and their laptops, mobile phones and monies, among other personal belongings had been taken away from them at ‘weapon point’. Besides, certain parts of the city like the lorry parks are not safe during the night. Some shops and stores close early to avoid attacks. Swindlers had always been known with their activities in the past, but in those days the use of weapons in such activities was absent or very minimal.

Further, there is minimal research on violence risks assessment in Ghana, particularly on its effects on children and adolescents. Considering the very high levels of violence in Ghana, as elicited above, the effective treatment of violent youths is crucial. International literature (Lipsey & Derzon, 1998; Mercy et al., 2002; Resnick et al 2004) on violence is adequate but the scenario is different in Africa especially Ghana.

The growing recognition or incidence of the phenomenon of youth violence in urban areas presents a challenging task to the citizens and urban authorities. Stakeholders in urban areas have raised concerns about the increase of youth violence which was not the case hitherto. Therefore, it is expedient to identify the causes or the factors of youth violence and find ways of mitigating it in urban areas.

1.2 Research Objectives

The study was aimed at identifying causes of youth violence in Kumasi metropolis.

Specifically, the objectives were:

- 1) Identifying the categories of violence that are manifested in the youth.
- 2) Finding out the factors which predispose the youth to be involved in such violence.

- 3) Analyzing the consequences of the violent actions to the individual and the society at large.
- 4) Recommending Youth violence-reduction strategies to deal with the situation.

1.3 Research Questions

Based on the background and statement of problem, the study was guided by the following research questions;

- i. What categories of violence are manifested in the youth?
- ii. What are the underlying causes of violence in the Kumasi Metropolis?
- iii. What are the consequences of the violent actions of the youth to the individual and the society at large?
- iv. What youth violence-reduction strategies can be put in place to deal with the situation?

1.4 Assumptions

1. The breakdown of social norms and values have led to increase in youth violence.
2. The level of societal tolerance is high leading to high level of violence.
3. Lack of effective punishment for people who engage in violence is a causal factor of increase youth violence.

1.5 Justification of Study

The well-being and training of the youth is the back bone of every nation. It is therefore essential for parents, guardians, educators as well as government to focus their attention on

how to bring up or train the youth to become responsible adults in future. Globally, violence resulted in the death of 1.28 million people in 2013 up from 1.13 million in 1990 (GBD, 2013). In Africa, out of every 100,000 people, each year an estimated 60.9% die a violent death. According to Conteh-Morgan (2004) in the last half of the century, violent conflicts have brought in its wake about 25 million deaths in developing nations. These internal wars to him undermine efforts to promote socio-economic progress among other things. Thus it disrupts economic activity or security. For instance, just recently in April 2015, 62 people died in the xenophobic attack in South Africa.

There is also a strong relationship between levels of violence and modifiable factors such as concentrated poverty, income and gender inequality, the harmful use of alcohol, and the absence of safe, stable and nurturing relationships between children and parents (WHO, 2010). It is worth mentioning that in all of these cases cited above, the youth have played instrumental roles. Furthermore, youth violence creates fear and panic and besides makes businesses come to a halt in the society. This has lifelong consequences for physical and mental health and social functioning and can slow economic and social development. The study is justified by the fact that it takes a look at an ubiquitous social problem which needs critical attention.

1.6 Significance of the study

Thus this study is significant because it will provide documented information on the causes of youth violence in urban areas and provide recommendations for the mitigation.

More importantly, there is the upsurge of youth violence in recent times and there is the need to find solutions to the problem due to the fact that every good building cannot stand

without a strong foundation which is its youth. Consequently, how strong the future of this nation would be solidly rests on the youth. If we allow youth violence to persist, we would be experiencing a situation of population growth without skills, which will lead to less quality members of the society, hence, less contribution to national development. Youth violence raises a major concern to the society which cannot be left unattended to.

In sum, the research would be useful to the citizens, policy-makers, ministries, departments, and agencies and Non-Governmental organizations in their attempt to investigate youth violence.

The research will also serve as a source of pertinent literature for further studies.

1.7 Scope of the Study

This study evolved out of a need for greater insight into youth violence and its implications. The study focuses on youth within the ages of 15 to 35 years and is limited to Kumasi Metropolis. Increased knowledge will be obtained on the understanding of factors that make some populations more vulnerable to victimization and perpetration. In addition, valuable information will be collected on issues barely documented in existing literature, such as youth violence categories, what predicts it and what protects it as well as strategies to curb its prevalence.

1.8 Limitations of the Study

This research work encountered some constraints. One of such constraint was the fact that the time for the data collection process was limited. A longer duration was therefore needed to give a deeper insight into the topic under study.

Also language barrier was another limitation since some of the respondents could not understand the English language which was used to design the questions. The researcher was also not conversant with the Hausa language since only a few could understand Asante Twi. Nonetheless, to resolve this barrier, interpreters who acted as research assistant in the collection of the data were employed.

Another problem that was encountered on the field was the bureaucratic nature of contacting the stakeholders and some key informants. It was extremely difficult as some point in contacting stakeholders (Police, Chiefs, DCEs, MCE's, among others) that had key information. The researcher however devoted much time as possible to get the necessary information from the respondents, patiently went through the bureaucratic hurdles that existed.

Furthermore, some of the respondents were reluctant to be interviewed because it interfered with their day to day activities but they were encouraged to co-operate in the research since it was to a great extent about their own welfare.

1.9 Organization of the Study

The ensuing chapters are organized as follows; chapter one is the introduction which covers the background to the study, objectives of the study, research questions, justification of the study, scope and limitations of the study. Chapter two puts into perspective the relevant literature for the research. Chapter three presents a profile of the study area as well as the researcher's chosen methods and procedures adopted in collecting, analyzing and the presentation of the report. Chapter four consists of data analyses and interpretation. The final chapter outlines the summary, conclusions and recommendations of the study.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

This chapter is devoted to pertinent literature on the incidence of youth violence. In essence, Copper identified three forms of literature review that should guide a search and review. These are the integrative review, theoretical review and methodological review. The integrative review looks at the summary of past research while the theoretical review looks at the theories that explain the research problem. The methodological review does not only look at the summary of past research but the strength and weakness of the methods used (Copper, 1984).

A lot of studies have addressed several issues on violence such as definitions, categories, trends and measurements. The rest are causes, costs and consequences and interventions to reduce violence. This chapter adopts an integrative and theoretical review of literature in addressing the following questions; what categories of violence are manifested by the youth; what are the underlying causes of such violence; what are the consequences of the violent actions of the youth to the individual and the society at large; what youth violence-reduction categories can be put in place to deal with the situation? Details of the literature are discussed below.

2.1 Definition of Concepts: Youth and Violence

Violent conflict is becoming inevitable in many societies. This is due to a number of issues such as problem of inequality or class cleavages which according experts continue to

population; others are the negative effects of abject poverty, economic deprivation, unemployment or ethnic discrimination. This results in violent eruption (Conteh-Morgan, 2004).

The concept of Youth is defined variously. In one breadth it is a period where the individual becomes an active and responsible member of the society (GSS, 2013). This is a cultural definition because it is a definition based on cultural context. In another, it is defined in demographic terms, thus period between certain age brackets. The demographic definition has some difficulties, for the United Nations (UN); it is the period between the age brackets of 15 to 24. However, in Ghana according to the National Youth Policy, it is the period between the ages of 15 and 35 (Republic of Ghana, 2010, cited in GSS (2013:14). Ghana's youth constitute about a third of the entire population and are found in three age brackets- (15-19), (20-24), (25-35). For the study to have meaningful impact in the Ghanaian context, the National Youth Policy definition will be used.

Violence on the other hand is defined by the World Health Organization (WHO) as the intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual against oneself, another person or against a group or community that either results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, maldevelopment or deprivation. The Cambridge International Dictionary of English on the other hand defines violence as an action or words which are intended to hurt people.

Youth violence therefore concerns any form of violence perpetrated by the youth. In the context of the study, it is violence caused by people or persons of the age bracket of 15-35.

2.2 Categories of Violence

Violence is a social phenomenon because of its interpersonal nature –perpetrators and victims (Blume, 1996). There is the idea that violence is part and parcel of our everyday life. Moser (2004), categorizes violence into Political, Institutional, Economic and Social. Under political, violence is manifested in the form of guerrilla conflict, conflict between political parties and political associations. It must however be noted that political violence can be in the form of electoral violence which can be manifested in the form such as threats, intimidation, hate speech and disinformation among others (Atta-Boahene, 2012). One cannot also rule out the fact bad governance can predispose people to threats and intimidations to achieve their objectives. Related is the fact that the youth may be mobilized to intimidate political opponents and even voters (Bradfield, 2013).

Institutional violence are those acts such as abuses by health and educational workers, state or community and vigilante (community volunteers in Ghana for instance). Lynching of suspected criminals by community members though illegal is becoming the norm rather than exception. The pulling down of the Legon Toll booth by the National Security operatives (Daily Graphic, Wednesday, February 19, 2014) and the other demolitions of the recent times in Ghana with the use of security operatives like Police and the Military can be placed under this category.

According, to Moser (2004) economic violence is manifested in street theft, robbery, kidnapping for ransoms and trafficking of people among others. The last but not the least category by Moser is social violence. The manifestations of this category are arguments that get out of control, incivility in areas such as traffic and street confrontations, child abuse, inter-generational conflict between parent and children and sexual abuse among others.

According to Moser, social violence also includes ethnic violence or identity based type linked with gangs. This can be linked to Dissel (1997) on Youth, Street Gangs and Violence in South Africa. Here, “the marginalized youth find they have a sense of belonging on the street which may be due to breakdown of the family and the policy of confining members of different racial groups to special locations on the outskirts of major cities played an important role in the evolution of an urban identity determined along racial lines” (Dissel, 1997:2).

2.3 Theories of Youth Violence

This part of the work examines the various studies on the causes of violence in various societies. It looks at theories such as Social Learning, Social Constructions and Systems and Ecological Models.

2.3.1 Social Learning Theory

Several theories of violence dilate on the causes or reasons of the act. The social learning theory of human behavior can be used to explain the phenomenon of violence. The social learning theory according to Bandura (1963) is a perspective which emphasizes that learning is a cognitive process that takes place in a social context. This occurs through observation and direct instructions. The view is that violence is something we learn. It is argued that it is composed of three main parts namely, observing, initiating and reinforcements. The issue is that we see, hear, experience and imitate violence.

In an article published on July 2013 entitled “African Experiences of the Youth on Political Violence - Can Zimbabwe Refuse this option?” Bradfield dilates on some of the reasons

why young men and women get involved in violence. According to him, the reasons are diverse and context-specific. He cited forced recruitment that is where the youth are abducted and indoctrinated to engage in violence. He used the Lord's Resistance Army in Uganda and M-23 in Democratic Republic of Congo as classical examples. Here the abducted are taught how to perpetuate violence on other members of the society to achieve their objectives or aims. The experiences of the people become social and are therefore shared.

2.3.2 Social Constructionism

Another theory for the explanations of the causes of violence is Social Constructionism. It is related to the Social Learning theory. However this deals with perception. The view is that understanding, significance and meaning are developed not separately within the individual but in co-ordination with other human beings. Social reality is based on behaviour, language, culture and institutional practices. Reality is perceived based on interactions with other people. It is concerned with the ways people think about and use categories to structure experiences and analysis of the world.

According to Blume, Constructionist theories of violence focus on discourse theories-shared meanings that either justify violent acts or redefine violence so that it is considered as acceptable behaviour. He notes that people come to accept certain behavioural patterns as normal, for instance boys sharing play themes as fighting monsters and evildoers and that winning is seen as the most important for young males. Males are therefore perceived to be tough. People are therefore brought up to emulate the exploits of violent heroes or role model. There is fascination with violence and video games. To Blume, these have enabled

people to develop perceptual skills and eye-hand co-ordination in preparation for street warfare.

2.3.3 System Theory

Yet another theory which explains violence is the systems theory. In the most integrative of the efforts to understand human behavior, systems theories have both philosophical and pragmatic roots. The term “systems” is one that may be used in many ways. In simple usage it refers only to the fact that separate elements are connected in some way. In more sophisticated usage, systems theories predict the nature of interactions among the individuals, families, or groups that make up the system that is being studied. Systems theorists view all social interactions as somehow patterned in ways that regulate violence along with all other forms of behaviour. System levels are nested, and each level operates according to its own rules. Feedback processes enable each level to assess its effectiveness and to make necessary modifications to continue functioning. Systems theorists believe that direct efforts to change any system element will fail; the system will restore the missing peace or replace it often in a more exaggerated form. Making a long-term change in a system, problem such as violence requires a coordinated approach that includes an understanding of how violence fits into the system.

A complete system analysis of violence would locate sources of violence (a) in the individuals (b) in dyadic interactions as infant/caregiver and teacher/student; and (c) in family subsystems, neighborhoods, communities, ethnic and religious groups, and the larger society. Subsystem contributions would be seen as organized in ways that both encouraged violent acts and imposed limits on violence. The various system levels would be seen

responding to changing resources, challenges, opportunities and barriers. Above all, the analysis would demonstrate that various attempts to reduce or eliminate violence seem to have instead activated a ‘positive feedback loop’ in which the problems appear to be getting worse.

2.3.4 Ecological Model

According to Moser (2004) a holistic approach to understanding structural factors underlying violence is the ecological model. To her, the model tries to show the interrelated nature of violence and the fact that no single cause is necessary and sufficient to explain violence. The approach therefore combines all the factors that contribute to violence from the individual level through to interpersonal to societal level. At the societal level, the institutional and structural angles can be discerned. The unequal power relations (political and economic marginalization) and the institutionalization of ‘force’ on people in people in certain situations elicit violence. Thus some analysts view violence as an activity involving interrelated processes.

2.3.5 Youth Unemployment and Underemployment

Another predisposing factor to youth violence is youth unemployment and underemployment. Exclusion of young people from the labour force is associated with crime and violence among idle youth (IRIN, 2014). "A decent and productive job [not only] contributes to attaining fundamental individual and family well-being, but also spills over, contributing to society's broader objectives, such as poverty reduction, economy-wide productivity growth and social cohesion," said Diego Rei, the International Labour

Organization's (ILO) senior regional adviser on youth employment in Africa. In a late 2013 report on social inclusion, the World Bank considers youth unemployment to be a form of social exclusion, particularly in developing countries and that: it hinders and degrades the role of young people in society and the development of their countries, and it reduces their personal well-being and future opportunities. Not being able to find good, quality work early on is stressful and discouraging for youths, say the World Bank and ILO.

According to a 2014 World Bank report on youth employment, when youths do not find work, their risk of unemployment as an adult also increases, as does their chance of receiving low wages later in life. The World Bank report noted that there is no specific link between unemployment and violence or crime, however the unemployed youth are disproportionately more likely to commit crimes when a number of other factors, such as weak support networks, are also present.

A decent and productive job contributes to individual and family well-being and poverty reduction. The reports indicate that about 73 million youths could not secure jobs in 2013- defined as those between the ages of 15 and 24. Experts from the World Bank and ILO indicate that unemployment youth is likely to commit crimes.

Finally, exclusion of the youth from decisions affecting their welfare can also lead to violence. Bradfield noted that exclusions such as lack of opportunities in the form unemployment can lead to deep disaffection and frustration as well as insufficient educational opportunities. Other causes are poor governance and social marginalization (Bradfield, 1963). According to Bradfield, these among others are likely to predispose the youth to anti-social activity and involvement in violence. To Bradfield, the youth in this case may resort to violence to vent their disaffection/frustration.

2.4 Risk Factors for the Perpetration of Youth Violence

Research on youth violence has increased our understanding of factors that make some populations more vulnerable to victimization and perpetration. Risk factors increase the likelihood that a young person will become violent. However, risk factors are not direct causes of youth violence; instead, risk factors contribute to youth violence (Mercy, Butchart, Farrington & Cerdá, 2002; DHHS 2001).

Research associates the following risk factors with perpetration of youth violence (DHHS 2001; Lipsey & Derzon 1998; Resnick et al. 2004). The Individual Risk Factors include, history of violent victimization, attention deficits, hyperactivity or learning disorders, history of early aggressive behavior, involvement with drugs, alcohol or tobacco, low IQ, poor behavioral control, deficits in social cognitive or information-processing abilities, high emotional distress, history of treatment for emotional problems, antisocial beliefs and attitudes and exposure to violence and conflict in the family.

Family risk factors ranges from authoritarian childrearing attitudes, harsh, lack or inconsistent disciplinary practices, low parental involvement, low emotional attachment to parents or caregivers, Low parental education and income, parental substance abuse or criminality, poor family functioning to poor monitoring and supervision of children.

Moreover, peer or social risk factors include association with delinquent peers, involvement in gangs, social rejection by peers, lack of involvement in conventional activities, poor academic performance, low commitment to school and school failure.

Finally from the Community level, risk factors of violence include diminished economic opportunities, high concentrations of poor residents, high level of transiency, high level of

family disruption, low levels of community participation and socially disorganized neighborhoods (Mercy et al. 2002; DHHS 2001).

2.5 Protective Factors for the Perpetration of Youth Violence

Protective factors buffer young people from the risks of becoming violent. These factors exist at various levels. To date, protective factors have not been studied as extensively or rigorously as risk factors. However, identifying and understanding protective factors are equally as important as researching risk factors.

Most research is preliminary. Studies propose the following protective factors (DHHS 2001; Resnick et al. 2004). Individual and family protective factors include, intolerant attitude toward deviance, high IQ, high grade point average, positive social orientation, religiosity, connectedness to family or adults outside the family, ability to discuss problems with parents, perceived parental expectations about school performance are high, frequent shared activities with parents, consistent presence of parent during at least one of the following: when awakening, when arriving home from school, at evening mealtime or going to bed and involvement in social activities. On the other hand peer and social protective factors include commitment to school and involvement in social activities.

2.6 Consequences of Violent Actions

The negative fact about violence cannot be denied. According to analysts violence brings in its trail high expenditure on criminal justice services and health care system (Moser, 2004). It is also argued that ‘victims may engage in high-risk behaviors such as alcohol and

substance misuse, smoking and unsafe sex which may also trigger other health risk consequences like contracting of diseases.

One cannot also rule out “insecurity, fear and deteriorating quality of life in terms of restrictions on community life” (Moser, 2004). There is also the destruction of life and property. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) violence causes more than 1.6 million deaths worldwide every year and that violence is one of the leading causes of death in all parts of the world for persons aged 15-44.

According to the WHO (World Report on Violence and Health) an estimated 199,000 youth homicide occurred globally and notes that there are wide variations among the countries with available data (WHO, 2002).

In Cape Town, Lemanski argues that along with the end of apartheid and South Africa’s armed struggle, and the arrival of majority rule, has come a new form of urban panic focused on criminal activity rather than political insurgency, spreading to previously protected white suburbs. Aggravated by historical mistrust of police officers who previously functioned as brutal government enforcers rather than citizen protectors, fear provoked by residential fortification is common to both the poor and the wealthy (Moser, 2004).

However, while the poor use dogs, window grilles and high fences, the rich rely on sophisticated alarms and armed response private security, and increasingly turn to gated communities, fortifying entire neighborhoods with electrified fences and Closed Circuit Television (CCTV) to monitor their citadels. The outcome of such “fear- management” strategies is socio-spatial exclusion and segregation, more polarized than in the 1980s but now managed by citizens rather than the state. (Lemanski cited in Moser 2004) .

In Managua, Nicaragua, Rodgers describes a similar fortified-enclave model, but with contextually specific differences that relate to the small size of Managua's elite class. Here, urban space has been differentiated, not into an archipelago of self-sustaining islands of wealth within a sea of poverty, but through a process of what Rodgers calls "disembedding" (Rodgers, 2000).

Concretizing the above, consequences of violent actions can be categorized under physical, psychological and social. As noted by Black et al, one in four women (24.3%) and one in seven men (13.8%) aged 18 and older in the United States have been the victims of severe physical violence by an intimate partner in their lifetime (Black et al, 2011).

Apart from deaths and injuries, physical violence by an intimate partner is associated with a number of adverse health outcomes (Black, 2011; Breiding, Black & Ryan, 2008). Several health conditions associated with intimate partner violence may be a direct result of the physical violence (for example, bruises, knife wounds, broken bones, traumatic brain injury, back or pelvic pain, headaches). Other conditions are the result of the impact of intimate partner violence on the cardiovascular, gastrointestinal, endocrine and immune systems through chronic stress or other mechanisms (Black, 2011; Crofford, 2007; Leserman & Drossman, 2007).

Physical violence is typically accompanied by emotional or psychological abuse (Tjaden & Thoennes 2000). Violence, whether sexual, physical, or psychological can lead to various psychological consequences for victims (Black, 2011; Coker et al. 2002; Heise & Garcia-Moreno 2002; Roberts, Klein, & Fisher 2003; Warshaw et al., 2009). These researchers noted that psychological consequences of violence include; anxiety, depression, symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), antisocial behavior, suicidal behavior in females,

low self-esteem, inability to trust others, especially in intimate relationships, fear of intimacy, emotional detachment, sleep disturbances, flashbacks, replaying assault in the mind.

With regards to social consequences, victims of violence experienced restricted access to services, strained relationships with health providers and employers, isolation from social networks and homelessness (Heise & Garcia-Moreno 2002; Plichta 2004; Warshaw et al., 2009).

2.7 Violence Reduction Strategies

The integrated nature of violence and the need to deal with it have brought different approaches towards reduction of violence. Some of the mechanisms are specific and others general. However, violence levels can be reduced by various types of interventions, as empirical research has shown.

According to Elliott, interventions to reduce violence are grouped into three general categories; approaches focused on individual youth and their families, approaches focused on neighborhoods and communities, and approaches focused on guns and law enforcement.

Since experts like the social learning theorists agree that violent behavior is learned, these interventions go a long way in affecting the lives of the youth positively. Generally, they seek to teach children that exhibiting violent behaviors is not a suitable mechanism of solving problems or controlling the behavior of others, and that these interventions seek to ameliorate the social conditions that generate and support violent lifestyles (Elliott 1994).

2.7.1 Individual-Level Interventions

Solid evidence suggests that individual-level interventions can be very effective in reducing violent behavior among youth. Individual-level interventions aim at preventing or curbing violence by improving the social, emotional, or cognitive skills of youth and their families. These interventions include parent training and prenatal and early childhood interventions. (Howell & Hawkins 1998; Olds et al. 1998; Sherman et al. 1997).

In Baltimore, according to Brash (2004), individual level interventions include home visitation programs, parent training, and school-based programs for building children's emotional and social capacities (Brash, 2004).

2.7.1.1 Prenatal and Early Childhood Interventions

Youth violence can be traced to prenatal and early childhood problems. Interventions focusing on these areas, such as the home visitation program developed by Olds and his colleagues (Olds et al. 1998), are therefore likely to be useful in reducing youth violence.

Specifically, they address pre- and postnatal causes of neurological deficits that have been linked to persistent antisocial behavior. As well, these interventions focus on early child-parent bonds, which have been found to be necessary for the development of cognitive functioning, trust, empathy, and resistance to deviant peers.

2.7.1.2 Family and Parent Programs

One of the most common family-focused interventions is parent training. These programs may include instructing parents on how to set clear expectations for their children's behavior, monitor behavior, reinforce positive behavior, and develop effective

communications skills. Such training has been found to reduce poor family parenting practices, early aggressive behaviors, and conduct problems (Howell & Hawkins, 1998).

On the other hand, other research has shown that families are less likely to benefit from parent training if the parents have limited economic resources, mental health problems, little social support, or serious marital conflict (Wasserman, Miller & Cothorn 2000). These families may benefit from more intensive interventions, such as family functional therapy or multi systemic therapy.

2.7.2 Community/Neighbourhood-Level Interventions

Since violent youth often come from poor, disorganized neighborhoods where rates of crime, unemployment, drug use, and family discord are high, some experts believe it is unlikely that any single, individually-focused intervention can prevent or reduce violent behavior (Brash, 2004). Community level-interventions also called wraparound or comprehensive strategies—show promise, having been found to help improve outcomes (Lipsey 2003; Sherman et al. 1997). Other interventions that operate at a community-level include school-based programs and mentoring.

2.7.2.1 Wraparound Initiatives

Programs that provide comprehensive services face an inherent challenge of coordination among the various city agencies, nonprofit organizations, and community groups involved in their planning and implementation. Because of their multiple goals and broad scope, wraparound interventions are difficult to implement, and even harder to evaluate. An example of one such program is the New Futures Initiative, in which the Annie E. Casey

Foundation provided \$5 million to \$25 million over five years to ten mid-sized cities. The funding was meant to improve the life chances of disadvantaged youth by reducing correlates of youth violence, such as high school dropout rates and low academic performance (Howell & Hawkins 1998).

2.7.2.2 School-Based Programs

School-based programs are a community-level strategy much more easily evaluated than comprehensive programs. Schools are a natural setting for violence prevention, as they provide regular access to children throughout their developmental years (Sherman et al. 1997). Some interventions focus on school performance, others on improving the capacity of schools to control their levels of disorder, and still others on changing individual behaviors.

For example, Dissel (1997) advocates the need for the development of the skills of the young people. She touches on a project initiated by an executive member of Guateng Council which aimed at incorporating members of the union into educational and skill-training programs to enable them equip the young with different roles in life.

2.7.3 Gun and Police Interventions

Most serious violence perpetrated by youth involves guns. Therefore, interventions aimed at reducing the prevalence of gun-ownership among youth are likely to be effective at reducing youth violence, especially fatal violence.

Police patrols directed at gun seizures can reduce gun-related violence, as the Kansas City Gun Experiment, discussed below, demonstrated. Research suggests youth are attuned to

such actions (Webster 2002). Surveyed youth report that they are more likely to leave their guns at home when police presence is heightened in their neighborhoods.

Research suggests that when police patrols targeting gun carrying and violence are increased, youth may be more likely to leave their weapons at home-and therefore less likely to use the weapon in a confrontation.

One intervention testing this theory was the Kansas City Gun Experiment, which used extra police patrols in an 80-block hotspot area with a homicide rate of 177 per 100,000 people which is about 20 times the national average. The extra patrols were meant to seize guns and deter gun carrying. During the 29-week experimental period in 1992 and 1993, police increased gun seizures by 65 percent in target areas. Meanwhile gun crimes declined 49 percent in the target areas, while they went up 4 percent in a control area. Homicides declined 67 percent in target areas. Evaluators found no evidence of displacement of crimes from the target area to surrounding areas (Sherman et al. 1995). The program has since been replicated in Indianapolis, Philadelphia, and California.

2.8 Conclusion

This study contributes to the existing works on Youth Violence by bringing to the fore innovative information which is context-specific for filling the gaps of the previous studies. Importantly, the study uses a broader age bracket for the definition of the youth. Besides, it examines youth violence in general revealing the various categories of youth violence in the study area. Thus, it brings to light a combination of diverse forms of violence which are not solely based on police reports or court proceedings. Furthermore, this study contributes to

the proper understanding of violence by looking at it from the broader perspective, which is the integrative approach.

Further based on the integrated nature of violence, the mechanism of prevention and reduction will be through integrated approaches which will deal with the multi-dimensional nature of the act.

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CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Methodology

Research methodology is understood as an embodiment of the various steps that are generally adopted by a researcher in studying his/her research problem along with the logic behind their adaptation. This chapter provided a clear presentation on the processes of how this research was completed scientifically. It involved the research design and sampling procedure to be used in conducting the research.

3.2 Research Design

According to the Babbie (2004), the design for the study includes an outline of what the researcher will do from writing the hypothesis and its operational implications to the final analysis of data. It constitutes the blueprint for the collection, measurement and analysis of data.

The research design was a cross-sectional non-experimental survey. This decision was inspired by the fact that cross-sectional non-experimental survey is a design in relation to which data collection will be predominant by administering questionnaire to more than one case of single point in time. Besides, it allowed the researcher to carry out this study in a natural, real-life setting like Kumasi, thus increasing the external validity of the study.

3.3 Sampling Procedure

Sampling Procedure is a detailed description of the processes followed to arrive at the study sample (Babbie, 2004). The researcher carefully selected number of units for a study in such a way that the units represent the larger group from which they were selected. Sampling procedure captures the population, unit of analysis, sampling technique and the sample size.

3.3.1 Population and Sampling Units

The total collection of all cases or respondents in which the researcher is interested in represents the population (Babbie, 2004). More often than not, in a study, the population is very complicated to study. Therefore, an inference about the population is made with the help of study population or sample.

The target population therefore was all youth in the province of Kumasi. Based on police records/reports, three high violence prone sub-metros were selected as the study population. The sampling units of analysis were male and female young people in the selected sub-metros in Kumasi.

3.3.2 Sampling Technique

In a study, any definite plan for obtaining a sample from a given population constitutes the sample design (Babbie, 2004). It refers to the technique adopted by the researcher in selecting items for the sample. The concern is to understand or know the perception and incidence of violence by the youth. In order to get a sense of that perception, it is appropriate to draw a sample which will reflect the views of the larger population. A list of sub-metros with information on the towns (suburbs) and enumeration areas were used. The two main

sampling procedures that is, probability and non-probability sampling techniques were resorted to.

With regards to the probability sampling procedure, simple random sampling where every sub-metro, community and person in the Kumasi metropolitan area had an equal chance of being included in the study was used. Sample where lists of suburbs enumeration areas and dwelling units were systematically drawn.

In addition, stratified sampling technique was used where in every enumeration areas person within the suburb had an equal chance of selection from each enumeration area. Lastly, multi-stage area sample was used as follows.

First of all, purposive sampling technique was used to select three sub-metros, namely Asawase, Oforikrom and Suame. Within each of the sub-metros, the suburbs were listed and one each was chosen at a random. For each of the suburbs selected, the enumeration areas were numbered and one each was selected randomly among those identified. Within each enumeration area, the housing units were listed and thirty (30) compound houses were chosen using a systematic random sampling. All the households within the compound chosen were listed and numbered. Using a number cards, a member each of the household listed was asked to select one of the cards.

The household so selected became the eligible household for the interview. Within the household, the members were listed on the cards and a member was asked to select one of the cards. The individual who corresponds to the card number chosen became the respondent alternated between men and women and where the interview was, with say, a female, only women were listed and chosen at random. The same applied to the males.

Non-probability sampling technique where the procedure does not provide potential suburbs or respondents with a known chance of being selected was also used.

3.3.3 Sample Size

From the population, a sample of (71) respondents was carefully selected from the population for the purpose of the study. The choice of this size was informed by the fact that the researcher had a limited time frame as well as the limited availability of resources to carry out the study. Therefore it was unwise to select large samples.

Besides, these youth had very comparable features and it was probable that they will produce related outcomes. Therefore it was not necessary for very outsized samples.

3.4 Sources of Data

To get relevant data to undertake this study, primary and secondary data were used. The study was structured to obtain primary sources of information by the use of questionnaires providing first-hand testimony or direct evidence concerning the study.

On the other hand, WHO reports (2002; 2010), relevant journal articles, books, and manuscripts constituted secondary data. This was to interpret, assign value to and draw conclusions about the events reported in primary sources.

3.5 Data Collection Methods

The instruments that this study made use of in data collection were predominantly a questionnaire and a structured focus group interviews. The questionnaire encompassed two

sections. The first section comprised the Socio-demographic data of respondents while the latter section of the questionnaire investigated the objectives of the study.

The questionnaire was both open and closed-ended. Open-ended questions offered respondents an opportunity to express themselves on an issue and give a basis for their answers. On the other hand, closed-ended questions were used to stimulate high rate of response, allowing respondents a wider range of options and enhancing easy handling and quick analysis of data collected.

Equally, structured focus group interviews with youths from three sub-metros namely Manhyia, old Tafo and Suame were employed. This mix method saved time and presented information collected from all different respondents in almost the same form and order whilst making analysis simpler and richer.

3.6 Data Analysis and Management

With the quantitative method, statistical tools were used in analyzing the data. Collected data were edited, encoded and analyzed, then presented in the form of frequency tables, pie chart and bar charts with the help of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS).

With the qualitative method of analysis (where there were areas for specifications) thus in case, sociological inferences and analysis were employed. The qualitative data was used in the form of comprehensive statements and analytical inference.

3.7 Ethical Consideration

Ethical concerns are expedient when planning and conducting research. The researcher made sure to adhere to all the ethical issues that will help in conducting a good and

responsible research. In view of this, the prospective research participants were given as much information as might be needed to make an informed decision about whether or not they wish to participate in the study. Prospective participants were made to understand that they could also withdraw from the study at any point in time.

Moreover, information provided was treated as confidential as possible. The researcher verbally explained to the participants that whatever information given was not going to be disclosed to the media or any other person who was not related to the study. Finally, as part of exercising a high level of confidentiality, anonymity was highly respected. The research was devoid of the names of the prospective participants.



CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

4.0 Introduction

This chapter presents and discusses the results obtained from the study. To facilitate understanding, descriptive statistical tools such as tables, percentages and pie charts were employed with the aid of SPSS (v20) and Microsoft excel to analyze relevant responses provided. The implications of certain response patterns are further explained to aid understanding. Apart from using the questionnaire to solicit for information; focus group discussions were widely used to probe for further explanations given by the respondents. All the seventy one (71) questionnaires sent to respondents, were retrieved representing 100%. The data were presented according to the research questions.

4.1 Respondents' Bio-Data

Demographically, the concept youth can be defined in terms of age brackets between 15 and 35 (GSS, 2013). With reference to the Table 4.1 below, 9 (12.7%) respondents were between the ages of 15-19. Out of the 9 respondents aged between 15-29, 6 of them were males whereas 3 were females. Twenty Seven (38.0%) respondents on the other hand were between 20-24 of which 17 were males and 10 being females. However, 23 males and 12 females were between the ages of 25-35. It can therefore be concluded in Table 4.1 that majority of respondents were males between 25-35 years old. Interestingly, the study confirms the convention that women are self-controlled when it comes to violence which explains a lot of males participated in the study. Previous studies have sought to explain

male violence towards women as rising from patriarchal values which motivate men to control women's behavior using violence if necessary. However, studies also have revealed that when it comes to marital relationships, women are more likely than men to be controlling and aggressive. A report from a UK daily mail explained psychologists at the University of Cumbria questioned 1,104 young men and women using a scale of behavior which ranged from shouting and insulting to pushing, beating and using weapons. They discovered that women were significantly more likely to be verbally and physically aggressive to men than vice versa (www.dailymail.co.uk; accessed 25/06/14).

Table 4.1: Sex and Age

Sex	Age			total
	15-19	20-24	25-35	
Male	6	17	23	46
Female	3	10	12	25
Total	9	27	35	71

Source: Author's Field Work, 2014

Religious Affiliation

The settled world order is secular and fanaticism thrives when people feel alienated and threatened for their beliefs. In the study of youth violence, the religious affiliation of respondents is expedient because it is a commonplace that wars and religions are closely associated. For instance, since 1945 till date there has been an increasing tendency for wars to be fought along religious lines. Table 4.2 below depicts that majority of thirty-eight (38) out of the seventy-one (71) sampled respondents in the Kumasi Metropolis were Moslems.

Twenty seven (27) of them were males whiles eleven (11) were females. On the other hand, only thirty three (33) were Christians; nineteen (19) males and fourteen (14) females. The results indicate that the Islamic-dominated areas in the Kumasi metropolis; such as Aboabo, Ayigya, Asawase, Suame among others have significant numbers in constituting the population density of Kumasi.

Table 4.2: Sex and Religion

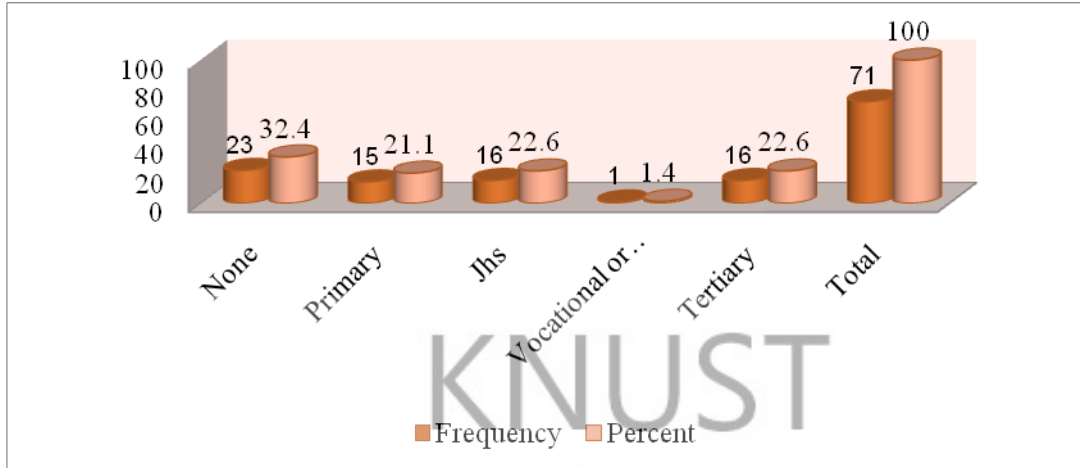
Sex	Age		Total
	Christianity	Islam	
Male	19	27	46
Female	14	11	25
Total	33	38	71

Source: Author's Field Work, 2014

Level of Education

With regards to education, 23 respondents constituting 32.4% had not been formally educated whiles 15 respondents representing 21.1% have had primary level of education. Sixteen (16) out of the seventy-one (71) sampled respondents have had the Junior High School and tertiary level of education respectively. However, only 1 respondent constituting 22.6% had completed the vocational/Technical level of education. Looking at the Figure 4.1 below, preponderance of the youth sampled in the Kumasi Metropolis have a low level of education. It also implies that Muslims have a significant presence in the study area

Figure 4.1: Level of Education

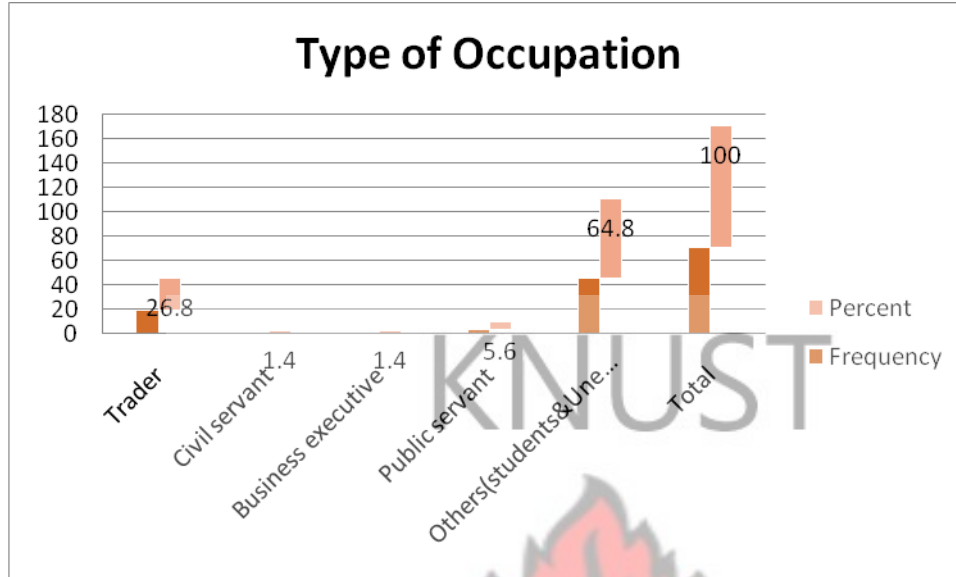


Source: Author's Field Work, 2014

Type of Occupation

The study therefore revealed that greater fraction of participants (64.8%) was unemployed. However, 26.8% of them were into trading activities, 1.4% were civil servants while 5.6% were in the public service. According to the Integrated Regional Information Network, exclusion of young people from the labour force is associated with crime and violence among idle youth (IRIN, 2014). From the results below, it can be assumed that most of the youth in the Kumasi Metropolis also indulge in violent behaviours due to joblessness.

Figure 4.2: Type of Occupation



Source: Author's Field Work, 2014

Marital Status

Inferring from the Table 4.3 below, out of the 71 sampled participants, 34 males and 20 females were single. Thirteen (13) of them were married. For those married, 9 were males and 4 were females but only a male was divorced while 3 participants were separated; 2 males and a female. It is obvious from the results that majority of participants are single. According to Hirschi (1969), the unmarried or people who are single have less weak family attachments and therefore more prone to delinquent behaviours. In other words, relationships and commitments are given a very important role in determining whether laws are broken by people.

Table 4.3: Sex and Marital Status

Sex	Marital status				Total
	Single	Married	Separated	Divorced	
Male	34	9	2	1	46
Female	20	4	1	0	25
Total	54	13	3	1	71

Source: Author's Field Work, 2014

4.2 Respondents' Perspective on the Meaning of Violence

From the focus group discussions of eleven participants, violence was conceptualized from diverse perspectives. Meanwhile the dictionary.com defines violence as any behaviour involving physical force intended to hurt, damage, or kill someone or something. However, in the study, the one of the respondent's noted that violence *'simply means engaging in fighting, stealing and forming gangs to rob and rape people'*. Another attributed violence to fighting and noise making whiles the third respondent agreed with dictionary.com that violence refers to *"engaging in fighting with knives and hurting other people physically as well as robing people of their possessions"*. Moreover violence was explained as a component of physical abuse. The fourth respondent noted that *"Violence is seen as any behaviour where human beings abuse each other"*.

The above responses show that respondents had equally a fair idea of what violence meant and their opinions could be summarized in the WHO's perspective of violence as "the intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against oneself, another person, or against a group or community, which either results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, mal-development, or deprivation," but

acknowledges that the inclusion of "the use of power" in its definition expands on the conventional meaning of the word.

That is, from the various definitions, it associates intentionality with the committing of the act itself, irrespective of the outcome it produces. Generally, though, anything that is turbulent or excited in an injurious, damaging or destructive way or presenting risk accordingly, may be described as violent or occurring violently, even if not signifying violence by a person and against a person (WHO, 2002).

4.3 Categories of Violence

Information gathered on the types of violence common among the youth in the study area indicates that majority of the youth confirmed that with the exception of lynching and kidnapping which had the least frequencies, the rest of the violent behaviours as elicited in the Table 4.4 below were evident among the youth in general. Prominent among these types are fighting, robbery. It is worth noting that on a daily basis robbery and stealing are reported in the media in the Kumasi Metropolis.

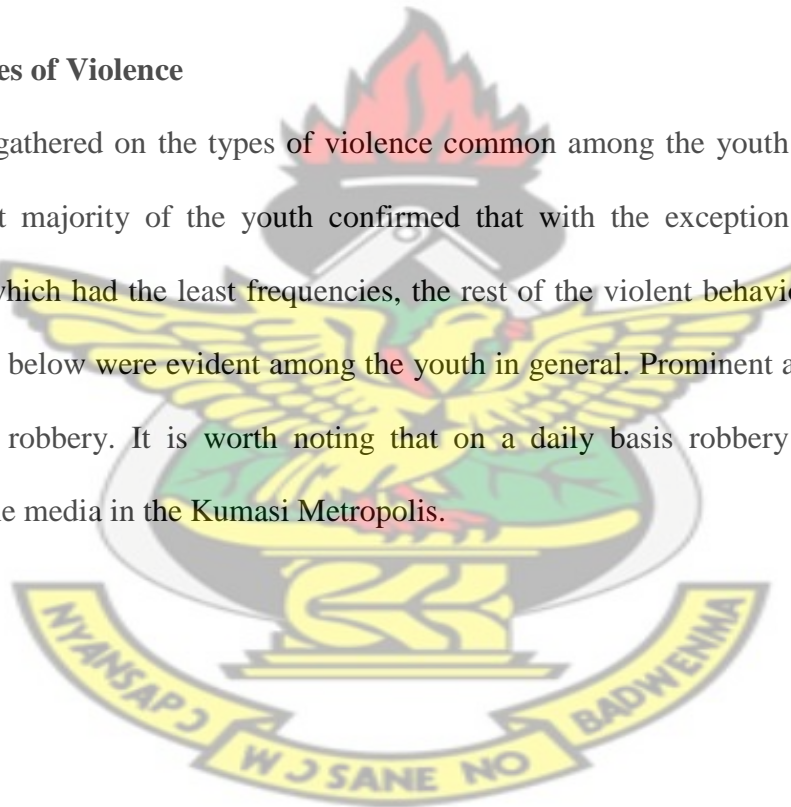


Table 4.4: Types of Violence Common among the Youth

Categories of Violence	Frequency	Percent
Physical Fighting	59	83.1
Robbery	50	70.4
Stealing	50	70.4
Threatening	47	66.2
Bullying	46	64.8
Hitting	46	64.8
Obscene Gestures	43	60.6
Swearing	42	59.2
Yelling	40	56.3
Sexual Abuse	40	56.3
Embarrassing	39	54.9
Shoving/Pushing	34	47.9
Lynching	13	18.3
Kidnapping	10	14.1

Source: Author's Field Work, 2014**N=71****Type of Violence in the community**

Table 4.5 apparently presents information gathered on the field concerning the types of violence youth in the community engage in. The result is not different from that of Table 4.4. The most common violent behaviours youth in the community engaged in ranges from obscene gestures, robbery, stealing, bullying, hitting, to fighting, swearing, threatening, shoving/pushing, yelling, sexual abuse and embarrassing. That is, respondents are of the view that the same violent behaviours very common among the youth are also evident among those of Kumasi Metropolis. It can also be concluded that although there are

different categories of violence behaviours, in the Kumasi Metropolis, they are not evident in just one category but are diffused.

Table 4.5: Types of Violence youth in the community engage in

Categories of Violence	Frequency	Percent
Physical Fighting	52	73.2
Stealing	50	70.4
Robbery	47	66.2
Swearing	45	63.4
Threatening	45	63.4
Bullying	41	57.7
Obscene Gestures	40	56.3
Embarrassing	40	56.3
Yelling	36	50.7
Hitting	34	47.9
Shoving/Pushing	32	45.1
Sexual Abuse	30	42.3
Kidnapping	11	15.5
Lynching	10	14.1

Source: Author's Field Work, 2014

N= 71

Youth Involvement in Violence

When respondents were asked whether they had ever involved in violence, a majority of 39 (54.9%) confirmed that they were involved in violence. This confirms Blume's assertion that violence is a social phenomenon because of its interpersonal nature –perpetuators and

victims (Blume, 1996). That is, everyone experiences violence in one form or the other. On the other hand, 32 (45.1%) were of the view they had not been involved in violence. A person becomes either the perpetrator or the victim of the violent behavior.

Moreover, we can argue from the data that for those who are involved in violence, a significant number of them have a low level of education. This is therefore likelihood that a lower educational background could trigger a greater involvement in violent behaviours and vice versa.

Table 4.6: Youth involvement in violence based on educational level

Level of Education	Are you involved in Violence ?		Total
	Yes	No	
None	24	9	36
Primary	4	1	5
JHS	9	7	16
Vocational or Technical	0	1	1
Tertiary	2	14	16
Total	39	32	71

Source: Author's Field Work, 2014

Incidence of Violence

In connection with the majority of 39 respondents who confirmed that they were involved in violence, 3 (4.2%) were engaged in violence every day. Twelve (16.9%) did it once in a week, 2 (16.9%) did it every fortnight. Meanwhile 4 respondents indulged in violence once in a while, occasionally and monthly respectively. Table 4.8 below indicates that most of the youth in the Kumasi Metropolis indulged in violence once in a week.

It is also important to note that in as much as respondents indulged in violence once in a week, they shared that experience with their peers since a majority of 20 out of the 39 respondents agreed on that.

According to the WHO (2002), there are close links between youth violence and other forms of violence. Violent young people frequently commit a range of crimes and display other social and psychological problems. Although categories of violence in Moser's standpoint are political, institutional, economic and social, respondents in the focus group discussion were of the view that categories of violence were basically manifested in fighting, bullying, noise making, rape, murder, stealing and drug addiction.

Respondents in the group therefore could not give a clear cut distinction between the categories and examples of violence. They opined that most of the categories of violence are manifested in the examples they have provided above.

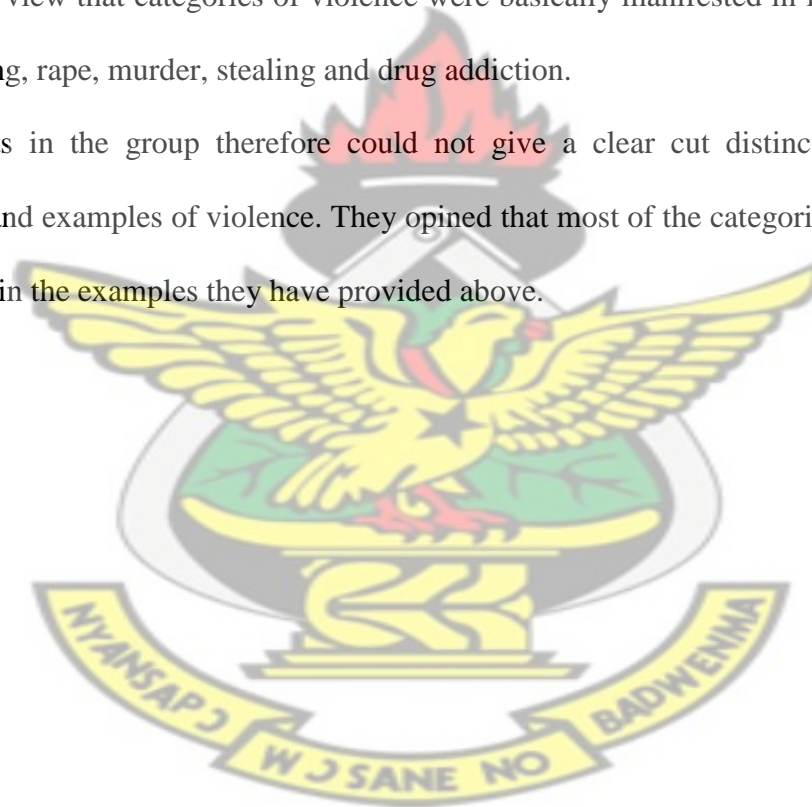


Table 4.7: Incidence of violence

Category	Frequencies	Percent
<i>How often do you engage in violence?</i>		
Everyday	3	4.2
Once in a week	22	16.9
Every Fortnight	2	2.8
Monthly	4	5.6
Once in a while	4	5.6
Occasionally	4	5.6
Non-Applicable	32	59.2
<i>With whom did you involve in Violence?</i>		
Peers	42	59.2
Parents	20	28.2
Neighbour	3	4.2
Stranger	3	4.2
Non-Applicable	3	4.2
Total	71	100

Source: Author's Field Work, 2014

4.3 Causes of Youth Violence

From the focus group discussion, a participant was of the view that unemployment is one of the causes of violence among the youth. The youth see stealing as a means of survival. This confirms the literature that exclusion of young people from the labour force is associated with crime and violence among the idle youth (IRIN, 2014). The result also agrees with the conflict perspective. This perspective stresses on the importance of power and conflict on

social relationship as well as the problems resulting from social and economic inequalities among people and societies. According to Robertson (1987) conflict in this sense, violence, results from the struggle over values and claims to scarce status, power and resources in which the aims of the opponents are to neutralize, injure or eliminate their rivals.

That is, economic marginalization may elicit violence on the part of the youth to sort of balance the unequal power relations or address the situation of the social exclusion (ILO, 2012).

Another noted that one of the factors that predisposes the youth to engage in violence is promiscuity. This because those who are promiscuous think someone might take their loved one away from them and this could induce violent behaviours. They cannot stand the sight of their partners mingling with other people and will go at all length including the use of violence to guard against that. In addition, they also explained that people who are promiscuous are aggressive and will resort to threats and abuse to achieve their sexual desires.

Also, another respondent noted that the issue of alcoholism, smoking and drug addiction were cited as behavioural patterns that could induce violent behaviours. This could be likened to the *Mertonian theory of anomie*. The word “anomie”, refers to a state of 'normlessness' or “rootlessness” created by the breakdown of common standards of behavior and morality. The term often refers to situations where social order appears to have collapsed. Robert Merton described this term as “as a breakdown in the cultural structure due to disjunction between the cultural norms and goals and the socially structured capacities of members of the group to act in accord with them”. From the Mertonian perspective, every society has its goals and the prescribed means of achieving the goals.

However when there is a disjunction between society's goals and the means in the attainment of the goals anomie occurs (Merton, 1938).

All respondents agreed that illiteracy was also another potent factor which predispose the youth to indulge in violent behaviours. According to respondents, the higher the educational level, the lesser the propensity of the youth to indulge in violence and vice versa.

According to Mercy et al, research on youth violence has increased our understanding of factors that make some populations more vulnerable to victimization and perpetration. Risk factors increase the likelihood of a young person becoming violent. However, risk factors are not direct causes of youth violence; instead, they contribute to youth violence (Mercy et al. 2002; DHHS 2001). Researches associate individual, family, peer and community risk factors with perpetration of youth violence (DHHS 2001; Lipsey & Derzon 1998; Resnick et al. 2004)

Nonetheless, from the study, youth in the study area were of the view that peer pressure, frustration, curiosity, the media and lack of parental guidance are the factors that predispose them to engage in violent behaviours.

For peer pressure, violent behavior may simply be an effort to impress friends by youth who randomly staged the event so that the aggressor could claim peer acceptance. In the absence of an audience, the youth are generally more likely to resolve conflict without recourse to violence but when peers are involved, they are more likely to resort to violence to resolve the conflict for their peers to see them as tough. Conversely, Steinberg (2000) noted that even if large numbers of adolescents are unsupervised after school because their parents are working, not all unsupervised adolescents will engage in acts they know are wrong simply

because their friends pressure them to do so. Also, anger and frustration on the part of the youth can propel behaviors of aggression and rage.

Violence in the media can influence the youth and can cause them to act aggressively. This is evident in the Table 4.8 below as 69% of respondents consented to this view. The Influence of media can be in the form of anything the youth see, hear or interact with that can be found on the internet, on television, in magazines, at the movies, in video games, in advertising, among others filled with aggressive messages increase the likelihood of aggressive and violent behavior in both immediate and long-term contexts.

This is in line with Bandura's Social Learning theory which indicates that violence is something which can be learned through observation, imitation and reinforcement (Bandura, 1963). In essence, the youth learn how to perpetuate violence through the media that is, radio and television.

Moreover, a majority of respondents (84.5%) indicated that insufficient parental guidance is a cause of youth violence. That is, youth who receive insufficient supervision by their parents or parental figures are prone to engaging in aggressive behaviors or criminal activity because they make poor choices. There is the likelihood that youth who have parents who do not take an active role in their life, will go out of control. They will make friends with the wrong people, not strive to do their best in school and are likely to stop caring about their future.

According to Worsley, (1957) socialization is a training process by which an individual learns the rules and practices of a social group. Socialization therefore creates an awareness of one's social role thereby making an individual conform to the accepted ways of behavior. Without much of socialization, the individual is likely to go against societal norms because

he/she has not learned the rules and practices well. In as much as these factors were identified, peer pressure was dominant.

Table 4.8: Factors Which Predispose Youth to Violence

Categories	Frequency	
	Yes	No
Peer pressure	70 (98.6%)	1 (1.4%)
Curiosity	66 (93.0%)	5 (7.0%)
Lack of parental guidance	60 (84.5%)	36 (50.7%)
Influence of the media	49 (69.0%)	22 (31.0%)
Frustration	42 (59.2%)	29 (40.8%)
Source: Author's Field Work, 2014		N=71

As noted earlier in the study, peer pressure can cause youth violence when youth's friends are prone to aggressive behaviors. Steinberg (2000) asserts that many adolescents will do risky, dangerous, or illegal things when in the company of their peers but they would not engage in such behaviours when on their own. However, out of the 71 sampled youth in the Kumasi Metropolis, majority of them, 98.6%, as evident in the Table 4.9 below agreed that although peer pressure pre-disposes them to indulge in violent behaviours, none of them felt pressured to smoke cigarette, drink, use drugs steal or fight because they are part of a social group.

Moreover, adolescents who are most able to resist peer pressure are those who have strong and positive relationships at home (Steinberg, 2000). From the study, the youth in the Kumasi Metropolis are of the view that reasons for smoking, using drugs, drinking alcohol, stealing and fighting do stem from other factors other than peer pressure.

Table 4:9: Peer Pressure Influence

Categories	Frequency	
	Yes	No
Fight	33 (46.5%)	38 (53.5%)
Smoke Cigarette	32 (45.1%)	39 (54.9%)
Drink alcohol	31 (43.7%)	40 (56.3%)
Use drugs	15 (21.1%)	56 (78.9%)
Steal	10 (14.1%)	61 (85.9%)
Source: Author's Field Work, 2014		N=71

Out of the 71 randomly sampled respondents, majority of respondents (73.2%) confirmed that they were not involved in drugs. Meanwhile, out of the 26.8% who used drugs, most of them explained that their association with their peers for the fear of social rejection was not the reason why they used drugs but for personal satisfaction. Moreover, the most common drug; marijuana, in the local parlance “wee” used was every two-three days (11.3%). Other drugs mentioned are cocaine and heroin.

Table 4.10 Influence of Alcohol/Drugs

	Frequencies	Percent
<i>Do you take Drugs/alcohol</i>		
Yes	19	26.8
No	52	73.2
<i>If Yes, why do you take drugs/alcohol</i>		
Helps me cope with my work	1	1.4
Sexual Pleasure	1	1.4
Boast energy and makes me more active	3	4.2
Personal satisfaction	5	7.0
Peer pressure	3	4.2
N/A	58	81.7
<i>How often do you take drugs/alcohol</i>		
Everyday	3	4.2
Every 2-3 days	8	11.3
Once a month	1	1.4
Every two months	1	1.4
N/A	58	81.7
Total	71	100

Source: Author's Field Work, 2014

Among adults, it is socially acceptable to drink alcohol and some people may enjoy its taste or relaxing effects. However, even small amounts of drugs or alcohol can alter moods. This means that drugs or alcohol can change the way a person behaves and they may not be able to think straight. Of the 19 respondents in Table 4.10 who took drugs and alcohol, majority (9.9%) indicated that they became loud which presupposes that their behavior can have far-reaching consequences. Families and friends can be the targets of alcohol-fuelled outbursts,

as well as other unsuspecting members of the public. Drugs and Alcohol therefore remain clearly important factors as far as violence is concerned.

That is, in as much as majority of respondents did not take drugs or alcohol, the responses of the few are equally significant. This is because it is in line with studies of alcohol and aggressive behavior that people who are more irritable, have poorer anger control, and who display lower levels of empathy towards others when sober, and are more likely to be aggressive when they have alcohol in their system (Heinz , Beck , Meyer-Linderberg , Sterzer & Heinz , 2011).

Table 4.11: Mood after taking drug or alcohol

Category	Frequency	Percent
N/A	52	73.2
Loud	7	9.9
Passive	6	8.5
Friendly	6	8.5
Total	71	100.0

Source: Author's Field Work, 2014

From the above, a greater fraction (73.2%) of respondents agreed that drugs were accessible in their community. The most common drug accessible to the youth in their communities was marijuana. This means that youth can get their hands on marijuana and over the counter (pharmacy) drugs more rapidly and easily. However, it can be noted that greater drug availability does not necessarily translate into greater drug abuse among the youth. While

this paradox persists, it also raises questions about what aside from drug accessibility determines substance abuse behavior.

Table 4.12: Drug Accessibility and type of Drug

Category	Frequencies	Percent
<i>Are drugs easily accessible</i>		
Yes	52	73.2
No	19	26.8
<i>Type of drugs</i>		
Marijuana	61	85.9
Heroin	5	7.0
Cocaine	3	4.2
Other Drugs	2	2.8
Total	71	100

Source: Author's Field Work, 2014

4.4 Consequences of Youth Violence

Youth violence results in considerable physical, emotional, social, and economic consequences. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), United States, violence is also a major cause of nonfatal injuries among youth. In 2011, more than 700,000 young people aged 10–24 years were treated in emergency departments for nonfatal injuries sustained from assaults. They maintained that no state is immune to the devastating impact of youth violence (CDC, 2011).

Interestingly, from the study, majority of 66.2% in Table 4.13 were of the view that they had not sustained any form of physical injury due to an assault. This does not outrightly debunk the view that physical injury is a negative consequence of youth violence. Revelations from the study simply imply that although physical injury is one of the ramifications of violence, majority of those sampled in the study have had no experience so far as physical injury is concerned. However, out of the remaining 32% who were victims of assault only 9% made report to the police.

Table 4.13: Physical Injury and Police Report

Category	Frequencies	Percent
<i>Have you sustained physical injury due to an assault</i>		
Yes	23	32.4
No	47	66.2
<i>If yes, did you report to the police</i>		
Yes	9	12.7
No	14	87.3
Total	71	100

Source: Author's Field Work, 2014

According to Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), United States, on average, 16 persons between the ages of 10 and 24 are murdered each day in the United States (CDC, 2009). In addition to causing injury and death, Mercy et al. opined that youth violence affects communities by increasing the cost of health care, reducing productivity, decreasing

property values, and disrupting social services (Mercy et al. 2002). Having noted the above consequences, the study also revealed that a majority of 64.8% of youth in the study area agreed that becoming physically ill is one of the ramifications of engaging in violent behaviours. Eighty four (84%) also maintained that they are affected by violence by behaving violently. Meanwhile, they did not consider, mental illness, becoming vagrants, prostitution and theft as consequences of violent behaviours.

Table 4.14: How the youth have been affected by violence

Consequence	Frequency	Percent
Become Vagrants	16	22.5
Develop Mental illness	26	36.6
Become Physically ill	46	64.8
Behave Violently	60	84.5

Source: Author's Field Work, 2014 **N= 71**

According to Moser, “insecurity, fear and deteriorating quality of life in terms of restrictions on community life is one of the consequences of youth violence (Moser, 2014). Respondents agreed that they sometimes felt apprehensive about walking at night and as well limited outdoor activities when it got dark early. This confirms the assertion that by violence, whether sexual, physical, or psychological can lead to various psychological consequences for victims (Black, 2011; Coker et al. 2002; Heise & Garcia-Moreno 2002; Roberts, Klein & Fisher 2003; Warshaw et al., 2009). These studies concluded that psychological consequences of violence include; anxiety, depression, symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), antisocial behavior, suicidal behavior in females, low self-esteem, inability

to trust others, especially in intimate relationships, fear of intimacy, emotional detachment, sleep disturbances, flashbacks, replaying assault in the mind.

In conclusion, violence by young people is one of the most visible forms of violence. Both fatal and non-fatal assaults involving young people contribute greatly to the global burden of premature death, injury and disability. Youth violence deeply harms not only its victims, but also their families, friends and communities (WHO, 2002).

From the focus group discussions, all respondents consented to the WHO assertion that death, injury and disability are some of the ramifications of violent behaviours in the community.

Psychologically, one of the respondents was of the view that it creates fear and panic within the community. That is, people will feel unsafe to walk during the night and talk to strangers alone. From the community level, another respondent opined that it affects community development. Since violent activities leads to the destruction of property and lives, the cost of these properties affects societal development. They argued that budgets for taking care of these properties could be channeled to other developmental projects in the society.

Moreover, all respondents agreed that indulging in violent behaviours tarnishes the image of the individuals involved. Most often perpetrators are arrested and exposed to the media for public view. That is, respondent see as not too good for an individual's ideal self.

Table 4.15: Fear and Insecurity

Category	Frequencies	Percent
<i>I am apprehensive about walking at night</i>		
Never	19	26.8
Seldom	4	5.6
Sometimes	32	45.1
Often	10	14.1
Always	6	8.5
<i>When it's get dark early, I limit my outdoor activities</i>		
Never	1	1.4
Seldom	1	1.4
Sometimes	3	4.2
Often	3	4.2
Always	5	7.0

Source: Author's Field Work, 2014**N=71**

4.5 Violence Reduction Strategies

Although several nations are experimenting new alternatives to deal with juvenile violence, traditional approaches to social control still dominate their policies (World Report on Violence and Health, 2000). Generally, security is paramount in dealing with violent behaviours. The study revealed that education on security tips, equipping the police with logistics targeted at youth gangs, schools and areas where young people congregate and socialize, and the activities of volunteers were security measures employed by their

communities in controlling violent behaviours. In spite of the above, a significant percentage of (85.9%) indicated that those measures were not adequate to deal with violent behaviour.

Table 4.16: Adequate Security and Security Measures

Category	Frequencies	Percent
<i>Do you have adequate security?</i>		
Yes	10	14.1
No	61	85.9
<i>Security Measures</i>		
Education on security tips	61	85.9
Equipping the police with logistics	5	7.0
Activities of volunteers	3	4.2
Total	71	100

Source: Author's Field Work, 2014

Despite the inconsistencies in human behaviour which is evident in violent acts, many promising types of anti-violence strategies, focusing on both discipline and social and personal transformation, have been devised by government, communities, and schools. According to Elliott (1994), interventions to reduce violence are grouped into three general categories; approaches focused on individual youth and their families, approaches focused on neighborhoods and communities, and approaches focused on guns and law enforcement. The study reveals in Table 4.17 that parental and family interventions like being grounded by parents can help reduce violent behaviours. However, the proportion is not too significant as it represent the views of less than half of the sample. Ninety- eight (98%) of respondents

also confirmed that school based interventions like expulsion from school can reduce violent behaviours. Finally, 88.7% of respondents agreed that the enactment of stiffer penalties for convicted juveniles and more rigid sentencing guidelines for judges as well as the reliance on large correctional facilities for detention and punishment can reduce violent behaviours.

In sum, a variety of strategies have been tried to reduce violent behaviour among young people as evident from the study. These interventions aim at changing individuals' skills, attitudes and beliefs. From the study, stakeholders like chiefs, government, NGO's, political parties and parents were the focal point in addressing youth violence.

From the focused group discussion, respondents agreed that Chiefs should create jobs for the youth in the community. This will keep them busy and will avoid their indulgence in violent behaviours. One of the respondents confirmed to the researcher that *"the chiefs should desist from illegal sale of stool lands and focus on investing in the education of the youth"*. This is because they believed illiteracy was one of the predisposing factors of violence.

All respondents confirmed that the chiefs should critically take into consideration the opinions of the youth in the community as well as encourage the youth to engage in community projects.

On the part of the government, all respondents noted that government should endeavor to create a lot of jobs for the youth. Also, the government should take measures in making the Youth Employment Programme (YEP) effective and attractive. For another respondent, there should also be education and sensitization of the youth on the negative effects of violence. In addition, government should subsidize the cost of education and if possible make it free so all and sundry can afford. *"There should be the creation of industries to bridge the youth employment gap in the country"*. This is what one respondent

acknowledged. She also added that government should augment the laws on violence and make sure that they are strictly enforced.

Respondents suggested that NGO's should stop embezzling funds and use funds for their intended purposes in the creation of jobs and make sure that the lives of people are better. This will prevent the youth from engaging in violent acts.

With regards to political parties, two respondents were of the view that they should desist from enticing the youth with money and other incentives to engage in violent behaviours. They should also strive to accomplish the projects they promise during campaigns when given the mandate. Still on political parties, all respondents agreed that they should advise the youth to accept the results of the election even if it doesn't favour them to prevent violent actions thereof. This is because political parties that are not in favor of the electoral results contract the youth to engage in electoral violence which is manifested in the form such as threats, intimidation, hate, speech and disinformation, among others (Atta-Boahene, 2012).

Finally, all respondents established the fact that parents should avoid comparison but encourage their children to do what is right and lawful. They also argued that parents should also persuade their children to desist from violent behaviours.

Another respondent was of the view that parents should lead by example. That is, they should lead lives devoid of violent behaviours by not exhibiting violent behaviours in front of their children. On the other hand, all respondents confirmed to the researcher that children's education should be the priority of parents and more especially they should incorporate into the socialization of their children religious and moral education. These will go a long way in reducing violent behaviours in the Kumasi Metropolis.

Table 4.17: Strategies for reducing violent behaviours

Consequence	Frequency	Percent
Grounded by parents	35	49.3
Expelled from school	64	90.1
Effective penalties for deviants	63	88.7
Correctional facilities for punishments	60	84.5
Source: Author's Field Work, 2014		N= 71



CHAPTER FIVE

MAJOR FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

5.0 Introduction

This concluding chapter presents a synopsis of the objectives and analysis of the study. The chapter therefore has three compartments. The initial section summarizes the findings that emerged from the study. The focal point of the second section concludes on the major issues that were discussed while the final section considers the recommendations of the study

5.1 Summary of Findings

5.1.1 Socio-demographic characteristics

Majority of respondents were males between 25-35 years old. However, most of them were single and were Moslems. This therefore revealed that the Islamic-dominated areas in the Kumasi metropolis; such as Aboabo, Ayigya, Asawase, Suame among others have significant numbers in constituting the population density of Kumasi.

With regards to education, preponderance of the youth sampled in the study area had a low level of education. Meanwhile, greater fraction of participants was unemployed. This according to IRIN (2014) is an indication for violent behaviours because exclusion of young people from the labour force is associated with crime and violence among idle youth.

5.1.2 Respondents perspective on the meaning of violence

From the study, respondents had equally a fair idea of what violence meant and their opinions could be summarized in the WHO's perspective of violence as "the intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against oneself, another person, or against a

group or community, which either results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, maldevelopment, or deprivation," but acknowledges that the inclusion of "the use of power" in its definition expands on the conventional meaning of the word.

5.1.3. Categories of violence

It was revealed by the study that violent behaviours in the Kumasi Metropolis are not evident in just one category but are diffused. Although categories of violence in Moser's standpoint are political, institutional, economic and social, respondents were of the view that categories of violence were basically manifested in noise making, rape, murder, stealing and drug addiction, obscene gestures, robbery, stealing, bullying, hitting, fighting, swearing, threatening, shoving/pushing, yelling, sexual abuse and embarrassing.

Moreover, most respondents confirmed that they experienced violence in one form or the other once in a week. It is also important to note that in as much as respondents indulged in violence once in a week, they shared that experience with their peers.

5.1.4 Causes of youth violence

From the study, youth in the study area were of the view that peer pressure, frustration, curiosity, the media and lack of parental guidance were factors that predispose them to engage in violent behaviours. The issue of alcoholism, smoking and drug addiction were cited as behavioural patterns that could induce violent behaviours. However, although respondents indicated drug usage as a cause of youth violence, majority of respondents confirmed that they were not involved in drugs. But for those who used drugs, the most

common drug; marijuana, in the local parlance “wee” was used every two-three days and that they became loud when they took drugs which presuppose that their behavior could have far-reaching consequences.

Respondents agreed that illiteracy was also another potent factor which predispose the youth to indulge in violent behaviours. According to respondents, the higher the educational level, the lesser the propensity of the youth to indulge in violence and vice versa. In as much as these factors were identified, peer pressure was dominant.

5.1.5 Consequences of youth violence

Interestingly, from the study, most respondents were of the view that they had not sustained any form of physical injury due to an assault. This does not outrightly debunk the view that physical injury is a negative consequence of youth violence. It only means that respondents have not experienced any form of physical injury. Nonetheless, revelations from the study explains that a majority of youth in the Kumasi Metropolis agreed that physical injury is one of the ramifications of engaging in violent behaviours while others maintained that they are affected by violence by behaving violently. However, they did not consider, mental illness, becoming vagrants, prostitution and theft as consequences of violent behaviours.

Respondents also consented to the WHO assertion that death, injury and disability are some of the ramifications of violent behaviours in the community.

Psychologically, the study revealed that youth violence created fear and panic within the community and that they sometimes felt apprehensive about walking at night and as well as limited out-door activities when it got dark early. From the community level, the study noted that it retarded community development. Violent activities lead to the destruction of

property and lives. They argued that budgets for taking care of properties and paying compensation to bereaved families could be channeled to other developmental projects in the society.

Moreover, all respondents agreed that indulging in violent behaviours tarnished the image of the individuals involved. Most often perpetrators are arrested and exposed to the media for public view. That is, respondent saw it as not too good for an individual's ideal self.

5.1.6 Strategies for reducing violent behaviours

Generally, almost all respondents agreed that there were inadequate security measures in dealing with violence. But having said that they indicated that education and sensitization of the youth on the negative effects of violence was paramount in reducing youth violence. The study revealed that education on security tips, equipping the police with logistics targeted at youth gangs, schools and areas where young people congregate and socialize, and the activities of volunteers were security measures employed by their communities in controlling violent behaviours.

The study revealed that parental and family interventions like being grounded by parents can help reduce violent behaviours. Most of the youth also confirmed that school based interventions like expulsion from school could reduce violent behaviours. In sum, a variety of strategies have been tried to reduce violent behaviour among young people as evident from the study. From the study, stakeholders like chiefs, government, NGO's, political parties and parents were the focal point in addressing youth violence.

5.2 Conclusion

According to WHO (2002), youth violence is anything that is turbulent or excited in an injurious, damaging or destructive way or presenting risk accordingly, may be described as violent or occurring violently, even if not signifying violence by a person and against a person. Youth violence is therefore harmful behaviours that can start early and continue into young adulthood. The young person can be a victim, an offender, or a witness to the violence.

Research has documented the magnitude of youth violence and the trends in that violence over time. But what do we know about why young people become involved in violence? Why do some youths get caught up in violence while others do not? There is no simple answer to these questions, but scientists have identified a number of things that put children and the youth at risk of violent behavior.

From the study, violence is noticeable when people make noise, rape, murder, steal and are addicted to drug. Others are evident in obscene gestures, robbery, bullying, hitting, fighting, swearing, threatening, shoving or pushing, yelling, sexual abuse and embarrassing.

Moreover, answers to why some youths get caught up in violence while others do not ranged from alcoholism, smoking and drug addiction which are induced by peer influence. More significantly, other factors include illiteracy, poor family functioning, poor grades in school, poverty in the community.

This therefore confirms the assumption of the study that the breakdown of social norms has led to an increase in youth violence. That is, lack of or weak family attachment of the youth due to poor family function and their decision to remain independent make them prone to

violent behaviours. This however does not necessary mean that high societal tolerance is a casual factor for high level of violence as indicated by the assumption of the study.

However, the presence of these factors does not always mean that a young person will become an offender. Youth violence includes various behaviors. Some violent acts such as bullying, slapping, or hitting can cause more emotional harm than physical harm. Others, such as robbery and assault (with or without weapons), can lead to serious injury or even death. The study also concludes that youth violence is harmful in the sense that it causes psychological distress, physical injury and sometimes death.

Youth violence has been a serious problem in some of our cities for several years now but we need to accept that over the years not enough has been done to deal with the underlying drivers of the violence. The study concludes that there are inadequate security measures in dealing with youth violence in the various communities but every crime is caused by a criminal, therefore there is the need to do more to prevent young people from getting involved in violent activity. The study also did not confirm the assumption that lack of effective punishment for people who indulge in violence is a causal factor of increase in violence. From the study, majority of respondents agreed that there were effective penalties for deviants who indulge in violence, the perpetration notwithstanding.

For too long, government action has not been as effective as it should be at stemming youth violence. There is the need for long-term, evidence-based programme to get a proper grip on youth violence.

5.3 Recommendation

The ultimate goal is to stop youth violence before it starts. Based on the results of the study, the following prevention strategies are recommended.

The study recommends parent and family based programs to improve family relations. Parents should receive training on child development. From the study, lack of parental guidance was cited as one of the causes of violence. Therefore parents should be trained to acquire skills for talking with their children and solving problems in non-violent ways.

The study also recommends a social development strategy to teach children especially youth on how to handle tough social situations. They should learn how to resolve problems without using violence. Moreover, there should be mentoring programs aimed at pairing an adult with a young person. The adult serves as a positive role model and helps guide the young person's behavior. This is an attempt to reduce the amount of media violence and youth access to it.

There should also be public education on the negative consequences of violence by advocacy groups. Violence and aggression can be part of the teaching curriculum of educational institutions in Ghana.

Security agencies must be resourced, that is both human and equipments to control and reduce violence. Youth who are engage in violence should be punished appropriately or sent to borstal institutions for rehabilitation.

Finally, changes should be made to the physical and social environment. These changes address the social and economic causes of violence such as unemployment. Jobs should be provided to the youth through the formal and informal sectors. If possible, the National

Youth Employment Program should be strengthened so as to provide youth who are unemployed job opportunities.

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APPENDIX I

QUESTIONNAIRE

This is a research questionnaire being conducted by an MA Sociology Student, surveying Youth Violence in Urban Areas. I would greatly appreciate your cooperation in responding to the questionnaire. Please do not put your name, as all responses will be held confidential

INSTRUCTION: Please put a tick in the box next to the answer of your choice or write in the space provided as the case may be.

A. SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC DATA OF RESPONDENTS

1. Sex

1. Male [] 2. Female []

2. Age

- 1) 15-19 [] 2) 20-24 [] 3) 25-35 []

3. Religion

1. Christianity [] 2 Islam [] 3 Traditional [] 4 others (specify).....

4. Occupation

1. Student [] 2.Trading [] 3.Apprenticeship [] 4. Artisan [] 5. Others
(Specify)

5. Level of Education

1. None [] 2.Primary [] 3.JHS [] 4.Vocational/Technical []

6. SHS [] 7. Tertiary [] 8. Others (Specify)

6. Type of occupation?

1. Trader [] b. Civil servant [] c. Farmer [] d. Business executive []
e. Public servant [] f. Other (specify).....

7. Status of employment

1. Full Time [] 2. Part-time [] 3. Casual [] 4. Others specify

8. Marital Status

1. Single [] 2. Married [] 3. Separated [] 4. Divorced [] 5. Widowed []

B. CATEGORIES OF VIOLENCE MANIFESTED IN THE YOUTH

9. What types of violence are common among the youth?

1. obscence gestures [] 2. Robbery [] 3. Stealing []
4. Bulleying [] 5. Lynching [] 6. Hitting []
7. Physical fighting [] 8. Sweraing [] 9. Threating []
10. Shoving/Pushing [] 11. Yelling [] 12. Sexual abuse []
13. Kidnapping [] 14. Embarrasing [] 15. Others (Specify) ...

10. What types of violence in this community are the youth engaged in?

1. obscence gestures [] 2. Robbery [] 3. Stealing []
4. Bulleying [] 5. Lynching [] 6. Hitting []
7. Physical fighting [] 8. Swearing at [] 9. Threating []
10. Shoving/Pushing [] 11. Yelling [] 12. Sexual abuse []
13. Kidnapping [] 14. Embarrasing [] 15. Others (Specify)..

11. Are you involved in violence? 1. Yes [] 2. No []

12. If yes to question 11 how often do you engage in violence?

1. Everyday (Daily) [] 2. Once in a week [] 3. Every Fortnight [] 4. Monthly []

13. if yes to question 11 how did you get involved in violence?

1. Peers [] 2. Parents [] 3. Relatives [] 4. Neighbour [] 5. Stranger []

14. Do you know of at least one youth in your community that is involved in violence?

1. Yes[] 2. No []

C. FACTORS WHICH PREDISPOSE THE YOUTH TO VIOLENCE

15. Do you drink alcohol?

1. Yes [] 2. No []

If No to question 15, move to Question 18

16. How often do you drink alcoholic beverages?

1. Weekends only [] 2. Once in a month [] 3. 2-3 days/week [] 4. Daily [] 5. Never []

17. How do you see your behaviour when you drink alcohol?

1. Loud [] 2. Passive [] 3. Friendly [] 4. Other (Specify).....

18. Have you ever experienced any of the following

- | | | |
|--------------------------|----------------------|----------------------------|
| 1. Obscene gestures [] | 2. Robbery [] | 3. Stealing [] |
| 4. Bullying [] | 5. Stabbing [] | 6. Hitting [] |
| 7. Physical fighting [] | 8. Swearing at [] | 9. Threatening [] |
| 10. Shoving/Pushing [] | 11. Yelling [] | 12. Sexual abuse [] |
| 13. Kidnapping [] | 14. Embarrassing [] | 15. Others (Specify) |

19. Do you use drugs?

1. Yes [] 2. No []

20. If yes to question **19**, why do you take drugs? If No, move to question **25**

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21. Have you ever used any of the following illegal substances?

1. Marijuana [] 2. Cocaine [] 3. Heroin [] 4. Others (Specify)

22. How often do you take drugs?

1. Everyday [] 2. Every 2-3 days [] 3. Once in a month [] 4. Every two months []

23. Did the drugs influence the way you behaved toward other people?

1. Yes [] 2. No []

24. If yes, in what way?

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.....

25. Do you know of at least one youth in your community that uses drugs?

1. Yes [] 2. No []

26. Are drugs easily available to the youth in your community?

1. Yes [] 2. No []

27. What drugs are used by the youth in your community?

1. Marijuana [] 2. Cocaine [] 3. Heroine [] 4. Others (Specify)

28. Have you ever felt pressured by peers to do any of the following?

- | | |
|--------------------|----------------------|
| a) Smoke Cigarette | 1. Yes [] 2. No [] |
| b) Drink alcohol | 1. Yes [] 2. No [] |
| c) Use drugs | 1. Yes [] 2. No [] |
| d) Steal | 1. Yes [] 2. No [] |
| e) Fight | 1. Yes [] 2. No [] |

29. Which of the following are reasons why the youth in your community use drugs?

- | | |
|------------------------------|----------------------|
| a) Peer Pressure | 1. Yes [] 2. No [] |
| b) Depression | 1. Yes [] 2. No [] |
| c) Curiosity | 1. Yes [] 2. No [] |
| d) Influence of the media | 1. Yes [] 2. No [] |
| e) Lack of parental guidance | 1. Yes [] 2. No [] |
| f) Influence of drugs | 1. Yes [] 2. No [] |
| g) Influence of alcohol | 1. Yes [] 2. No [] |

Others (Specify).....

30. Do people in this community tolerate violent behavior?

1. Yes [] 2. No []

D. CONSEQUENCES OF VIOLENT ACTIONS

31. Have you ever sustained physical injury due to an assault (violence)?

1. Yes [] 2. No []

32. If yes, did you report to the police?

1. Yes [] 2. No []

33. How have the youth in your community been affected by violence?

a) Become physically ill []

b) Develop mental illness []

c) Become vagrants []

d) Turn to theft []

e) Turn to prostitution []

f) Behave violently []

Others (please Specify)

34. Do you feel safe in your neighbourhood

1. Never [] 2. Seldom [] 3. Sometimes [] 4. Often [] 5. Always []

35. Have you ever received any of the following forms of punishment?

a) Grounded by parents 1. Yes [] 2. No []

b) Expelled from School 1. Yes [] 2. No []

c) Suspended from School 1. Yes [] 2. No []

d) Arrested by police 1. Yes [] 2. No []

e) Physically punished by parents 1. Yes [] 2. No []

36. Do you find it difficult to talk to strangers

1. Yes [] 2. No []

37. I am apprehensive about walking alone at night

1. Never [] 2. Seldom [] 3. Sometimes [] 4. Often [] 5. Always []

38. When it gets dark early, I limit my outdoor activities

1. Never [] 2. Seldom [] 3. Sometimes [] 4. Often [] 5. Always

39. The crime rate in my community is high

1. Strongly Disagree [] 2. Disagree [] 3. Agree [] 4. Strongly Agree []

40. I get intimidated easily

1. Strongly Disagree [] 2. Disagree [] 3. Agree [] 4. Strongly Agree []

41. I heed warnings and use caution

1. Strongly Disagree [] 2. Disagree [] 3. Agree [] 4. Strongly Agree []

D. VIOLENCE REDUCTION STRATEGIES

42. Is there adequate security in your community to prevent, control or reduce violent behavior?

1. Yes [] 2. No []

43. If yes to question 42, what security measures have been put in place to prevent, control or reduce violence among the youth

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44. Are punishments against the possession of drugs strictly enforced in your community?

1. Yes[] 2. No[]

45. If a person becomes violent, I believe I have the personal resources necessary to handle the situation

1. Strongly Disagree [] 2. Disagree [] 3. Agree [] 4. Strongly Agree []

46. There are times when the only way to control violent person is by physically restraining that person.

1. Strongly Disagree [] 2. Disagree [] 3. Agree [] 4. Strongly Agree []

47. I am confident that in the event of a violent attack, if I call for help I will get an immediate response.

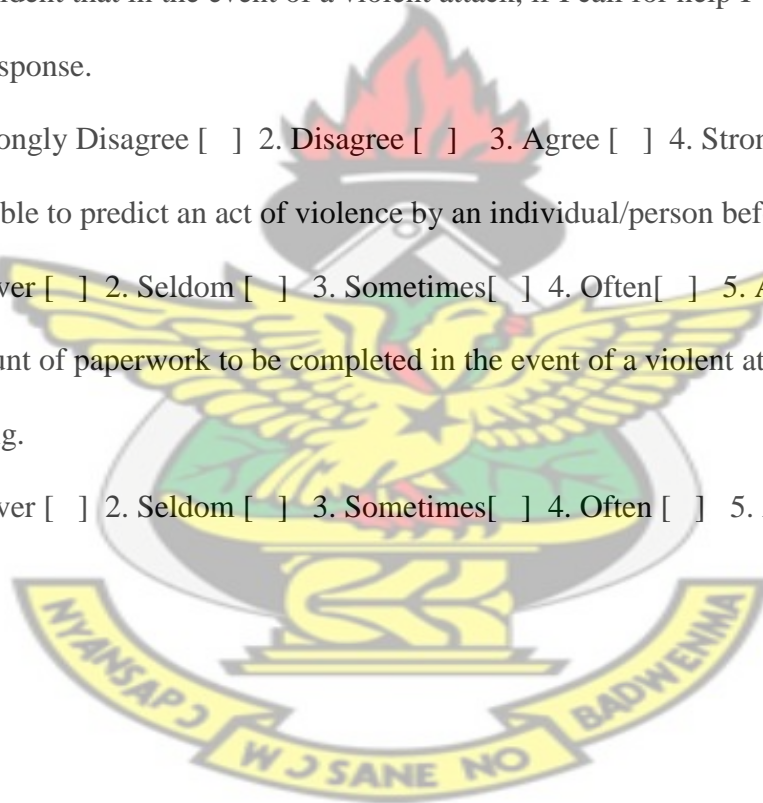
1. Strongly Disagree [] 2. Disagree [] 3. Agree [] 4. Strongly Agree []

48. Is it possible to predict an act of violence by an individual/person before it occurs?

1. Never [] 2. Seldom [] 3. Sometimes [] 4. Often [] 5. Always []

49. The amount of paperwork to be completed in the event of a violent attack, keeps me from reporting.

1. Never [] 2. Seldom [] 3. Sometimes [] 4. Often [] 5. Always []



APPENDIX II

FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION

OUTLINE QUESTIONS

1. What is your understanding of Violence?
2. What categories of violence are manifested in your community?
3. What are the underlying causes of such violence?
4. What are the consequences of the violent actions to the individual and the community at large?
5. What violence-reduction strategies can be put in place to deal with the situation?

