

**RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CONTEXTUAL RISK FACTORS AND FEMICIDE
CASES AMONG YOUNG WOMEN IN JUJA SUB-COUNTY, KENYA**

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**A Thesis Submitted to the Graduate School in Partial Fulfilment of the
Requirements for the Award of the Degree of Master of Arts in Criminology and
Security Studies of Tharaka University**

THARAKA UNIVERSITY

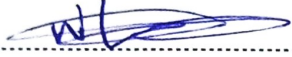
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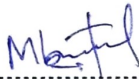
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This Thesis has been examined, passed and submitted with our approval as the university supervisors.

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to my brother for his immense support and unwavering belief in my abilities. I also devote this study to all the families grieving the loss of their loved ones through femicide crimes.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I first give my deepest gratitude to Almighty God for the gift of life, good health, and strength throughout my academic journey.

Also my sincere appreciation goes to my supervisors, Dr. Japheth Lumadede and Mr. Benjamin Mugambi, for their invaluable guidance, encouragement, and support, which have been instrumental in shaping this study.

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ABSTRACT

Femicide has increased in the last decade in the global index. In Kenya, femicide occurs under diverse age brackets but recently the trend is high among young women (16-35 years). In particular, the brutal murders of young women: emerging and with increasing trends and incidents in various places call for immediate solutions. The purpose of this study was to examine relationship between contextual risk factors and femicide cases among young women in Juja sub-county. The Feminist theory and Routine activity theory were used to guide this study. This study was carried out at Juja sub-County in Kiambu County, Kenya. This study adopted the embedded research design. The target population was 300,948 respondents. The accessible population was 200,510 respondents and total sample was 288 respondents consisting of the 10 key informants included in the study, out of which a sample of 278 was drawn through the Slovin's formula. Questionnaires, checklist and interview schedules were the main instruments of data collection. The researcher drew the sample using Stratified simple random sampling. The quantitative data was collected using the questionnaires and check list while the qualitative data was done through interview schedules. Reliability was measured by a pilot study done at Nairobi County. This was through Cronbach Alpha (α) a statistic coefficient used to rate the reliability of an instrument and a value of .816 was established. To measure the relationship, Poisson regression analysis was conducted on the quantitative data with the help of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 26.0 software. Qualitative data was analysed through thematic content analysis utilizing MAXQDA tool version 24.7. The study findings concluded that economic inequalities, cultural victimization and social dysfunctions are major risk factors in regards to femicide cases. The strength of the relationship was measured giving a p-value of .367, well above the .05 threshold. This established that no statistically significant relationship between contextual factors and femicide. This model indicated that the variables do not have a direct, independent effect on the number of femicide cases in isolation but are as a result of a more complex, multi-faceted dynamics at play than simple cause-and-effect. The study provided more insights to the policymakers on formulating relevant social policies, inform the society on better societal practices, contribute to the academia theories and literature on femicide, as well as inform young women in adopting femicide prevention strategies. The study recommends that to reduce these risks, there is a need for strengthened social support systems to address all these areas of concern.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

FGM	Female Genital Mutilation
GBV	Gender Based Violence
IPV	Intimate partner violence
KDHS	Kenya Demographic and Health Survey.
NACOSTI	National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
OCS	Officer Commanding station
UN	United Nations
UNODC	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime.
WHO	World Health Organization

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Introduction

This chapter provides an overview of the study by presenting the background to the study, analyzing the problem that prompted the study, stating the objectives and research questions, highlighting the significance of the study, specifying the scope and limitations of the study and finally operationally defining of the terms.

1.1 Background to the Study

Femicide is the killing of women and girls because of their gender (Websdale, 2014). It is currently seen through the view of violations of human rights as it has become a new social and political issue of global concern. The problem of femicide is present everywhere in the world, so there is no country that does not need to deal with this phenomenon systematically (Richards, 2023).

According to the United Nations on Drugs and Crimes (2023), globally, approximately 51,100 young women were killed by their intimate partners or other close people known to them during 2023, higher than the 2022 estimate of 48,800 victims. The 2023 figures mean that 60 per cent of the almost 85,000 young women killed intentionally during the year were murdered by their intimate partners or other close people known to them (UNODC 2023). In other words, an average of 140 young women, worldwide lost their lives every day at the hands of their partner or a close person. Worldwide, Femicide is most prevalence in Latin America with the Mexican countries, El Salvador and Honduras topping the list (Daly & Wilson, 2018).

Across African nations, femicide exist as a major ongoing concern (Kovacevic, 2022). The continent stands among globally highest for experiencing high rates of violence against women. Femicide counted 21,000 cases resulting in a global rate of 3.1 % femicide rate per 10,000 female populations in 2023 across Africa (Baldry, 2009). South Africa tops the list with the most recorded femicide cases in Africa. Last year between July and September 2024, 957 women were killed in South Africa (UN 2024). Femicide among Kenyan young women has consistently remained high and the recent cases now elevate femicide to such severity that a solution should be found (Macharia, 2016). according to Femicide Count Kenya, an organization that monitors killings reported in local news, recorded 58 deaths it labelled as femicides between January and October 2022. In 2023,

the organization recorded at least 152 killings – the highest in the past five years. A comprehensive analysis by Odipo Dev and Africa Uncensored documented 579 femicide cases in 2024. The figure was more than double the annual average of 85 cases recorded from 2016 to 2023. A recent report by the National Police Service of Kenya has highlighted a concerning surge in femicide cases across the country where past 3 months of 2025, 129 femicide cases have been reported

Kiambu and Nairobi Counties have reported the highest incidences of femicide-related killings (Amnesty International Kenya, 2021). According to African Data Hub (2024) records 2024 alone, 56 femicide cases were reported in Kiambu County with 16% of these cases from Juja sub-county. The issue of femicide is still a big problem in our society as we experience these issues often in examples that occur daily in Kenya. Recent events include young women being stabbed, raped, dismembered, and bodies dumped after femicide has occurred. According to Mutua (2024) last year alone, 31 young women were killed in the society in less than one month. The gap of knowledge regarding this extreme form of femicide against young women may in practice mean that current national prevention and intervention strategies are not tailored to the specific needs of younger age-groups. It may also mean inadequate capacity (and risk assessment tools) to assess and manage cases of severe young women femicide (Corradi, 2016).

Previous studies have been done linking femicide to factors such social as dysfunctions in society, cultural victimization, and economic inequality. According to Lagarde, (2010) economic issues, including poverty, economic dependency, and unemployment, increase women's vulnerability to Femicide. (Glass, 2014) claims that economic reliance on male partners frequently keeps women in abusive relationships and increases their risk of femicide. Furthermore, as Adhiambo, (2018) points out, cultural victimization is a major factor in the continuation of violence against women. A culture that normalizes femicide is one that encourages victim-blaming, objectification of women, and traditional gender roles (Elliott, 2019).

According to Cecchi, (2022) social dysfunctions, such as poor social safety nets, social isolation, and insufficient law enforcement, increase the likelihood of femicide. Communities with high femicide rates are more likely to be afflicted by social instability, inadequate victim support resources, and bad governance (Block, 2013). Ineffective judicial and law enforcement actions, make the issue worse by failing to hold offenders

accountable and leaving victims without social assistance or legal options (WHO, 2014). According to Connell (2015) many women are confined to violent situations since there are no safe places for them, including shelters or counseling services.

Even with these thorough insights, the interconnectedness of these elements has been overlooked in those studies. The majority of the literature analyzed have looked at social dysfunctions, cultural victimization, and economic inequality separately, failing to consider how these factors all work together especially in the current rampant evolving society to affect femicide among young women. Studies like Cattaneo & Goodman, (2021) for instance, primarily concentrate on the economic causes of femicide, but they fail to look at how social dysfunctions or cultural beliefs and practices increase the hazards for young women.

Further investigation on these factors and contexts of young women femicide, including victims aged 16 to 35 years, would improve our understanding of young women femicide and potentially guide the implementation of prevention strategies specifically tailored to the victims (Abrahams, 2013). It was in the light of this, that this study was undertaken to improve our understanding of young women femicide by obtaining contextual information about the selected factors and femicide among young women in Juja sub-county.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Youths specifically young women as a norm are believed and expected to be equipped with both social and psychological skills on how to protect themselves from various risky situations and cases such as those of femicide. However, this has not been the case as young women femicide cases keep rising in alarming numbers that demand immediate action and humane concern. In 2025 alone, between January and July more than 150 femicide cases were recorded. Previous studies have generally analyzed factors such as violent relationships, economic hardship and mental health treatment availability as the causes of femicide. These studies have insufficiently explored the relationship between such factors as economic inequalities, cultural victimization, and social dysfunctions that have the potential to affect social relationships. It is in this note that this research sought to analyze relationship between economic inequalities, cultural victimization and social dysfunctions with femicide cases among young women in Juja sub-county, Kenya.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

1.3.1 Purpose of the study

The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between contextual risk factors and femicide cases among young women in Juja Sub-County, Kenya.

1.3.2 Specific Objectives

The study was guided by the following objectives.

- i) To examine the relationship between economic inequalities and femicide cases among young women of Juja sub-county, Kenya.
- ii) To determine the relationship between cultural victimizations and femicide cases among young women of Juja sub-county, Kenya.
- iii) To assess the relationship between social dysfunctions and femicide cases among young women of Juja sub-county, Kenya.

1.4 Research Questions

The following questions guided the study.

- i) What is the relationship between economic inequalities and femicide cases among young women of Juja sub-county, Kenya?
- ii) What is the relationship between cultural victimizations and femicide cases among young women of Juja sub-county, Kenya?

- iii) What is the relationship between social dysfunctions and femicide cases among young women of Juja sub-county, Kenya?

1.5 Significance of the Study

The study is expected to contribute to the body of knowledge already existing on femicide. The findings from this research are a useful source of information to the society at large as a form of awareness of this problem and the underlying risks that face young women of Kenya. The members of the community also understood the risk factors to femicide and can now respond to them accordingly. In addition, the policy makers, social administrators, and advocacy groups were equipped through the study in developing targeted interventions to mitigate the risks faced by young women. It also provided a foundation for future research on gender-related violence on young women and its settings.

1.6 Scope of the Study

This study was carried out to determine the relationship between contextual risk factors and femicide cases at Juja sub-county. The target population was 300,948 residents of Juja. The study encompasses respondents in all the five wards, i.e, Murera, Theta, Juja, Witeithie and Kalimoni ward. A sample of 278 respondents was used. Questionnaires collected the quantitative data and interview schedules collected the qualitative data. The study focused on determining factors such as cultural victimization, economic inequalities and social dysfunction on femicide. The factors were analyzed within the five wards, focusing on both public gathering spaces and household spaces within the sub-county. The study targeted residents in the sub-county, mostly those of female gender. The key informants interviewed were 5 police officers and 5 gender activists in the area. The instruments of data collection were questionnaires for residents, interviews schedules for key informants and checklists to collect femicide counts. The research utilized a mixed-method research design specifically of embedded design.

1.7 Limitations of the Study

- i. Scheduling restraints limited the study. The researcher aligned with the sampled respondents to be aware of the best timing for their availability to conduct the research.
- ii. Financial restraints limited the study. The researcher prioritized the most cost-effective means during the study.

1.8 Assumptions of the Study

- i) The respondents answered the questions honestly without any form of biasness against any gender.
- ii) The typologies of femicide remain consistent across different contexts

1.9 Operational Definition of Terms

Cultural victimization	It's the impact of living in a society whose culture can cause harm to a person based on their culture, identity or spirituality. it occurs when someone uses aspects of victim's culture to inflict suffering or control them.
Femicide	This refers to the intentional killing of women or girls based on their gender
Gender Inequality	This is the unequal treatment of an individual based on their gender. Access to rights, resources and opportunities is unequally distributed among genders
Gender Violence	This is violence that is directed against a person because of their gender or violence that's affects persons of a particular gender disproportionately
Intimate partner violence	It is the physical, sexual or psychological abuse of a person by their partner or spouse.
Social dysfunctions	This refers to a state where a community or society exhibits significant problems which disrupt social functions or a deviation in an individual's ability to integrate their cognition, affection and behaviors to develop social conducts due to problems in the society
Social Economic Pressures	These refers to the challenges and strains on an economy, particularly in relation to employment, resources, and social services.
Young Woman	Refers to a female who is in the early stages of adulthood. The specific age range considered "young" can vary depending on cultural and societal contexts, but it typically encompasses individuals in their teenage years (16-35 years).

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter contains the existing literature which was reviewed during the study on how contextual risk factors relate with femicide among young women in respective themes such as economic inequalities, cultural victimizations and social dysfunctions. This literature was thus sub-divided into the following topics, the overview of femicide, types of femicide, contextual risk factors and femicide; Theoretical framework and the Conceptual framework.

2.2 Overview of Femicide

Femicide, the deliberate killing of women because they are women, remains one of the most persistent and brutal manifestations of gender-based violence globally (Websdale, 2014). It reflects deeply entrenched patriarchal ideologies that position women as subordinate to men, often reinforced by social, cultural, and economic norms (UNODC, 2018). Such values promote the perception of women as property and deny their autonomy, leading to environments where violence is normalized and gender inequality perpetuated. As Hyde (2018) notes, the phenomenon resists a single theoretical explanation, necessitating a multidimensional approach. The ecological model, for example, situates femicide within interconnected layers of influence individual, relational, community, and societal (Banyard, 2015). According to this framework, individual traits (such as aggressive masculinity or substance abuse), relationship dynamics (such as power imbalance), and societal structures (like gendered norms or weak institutions) jointly contribute to women's vulnerability. Similarly, Richard (2023) emphasizes that risk factors such as social isolation, unemployment, and lack of supportive services heighten women's exposure to lethal violence.

Globally, obtaining accurate femicide statistics remains a challenge. Many countries lack standardized reporting systems or fail to disaggregate homicide data by gender (Pateman, 2011). As a result, global figures are often underestimates. The UNODC (2022) estimated that approximately 87,000 women were intentionally killed in 2017, and 58% of these were victims of intimate partners or relatives equating to six women murdered every hour. The persistence of these figures over time signals that prevention efforts have not matched the magnitude of the problem. According to the World Health Organization (WHO, 2014),

women are disproportionately killed by intimate partners, with one in three female homicide victims dying at the hands of a current or former partner, compared to only one in twenty men. This gendered asymmetry reinforces the view of femicide not as isolated crime but as a reflection of structural inequality (Heise, 2020).

Comparative studies show that Latin America and Sub-Saharan Africa record some of the world's highest femicide rates. In Latin America, countries such as El Salvador, Honduras, and Mexico have institutionalized the term *feminicidio* in their legal codes to highlight the state's complicity in allowing such crimes to persist (Russell & Radford, 2019). Similarly, in Sub-Saharan Africa, patriarchal structures, economic dependency, and weak judicial systems have perpetuated impunity for gender-based violence (UN Women, 2022). These contexts illustrate that femicide thrives where patriarchal control over women's bodies intersects with socio-economic vulnerability and institutional failure.

In Kenya, femicide has emerged as a critical social crisis. Although comprehensive national data are limited, available reports indicate an upward trend in gender-related killings, particularly among young women (Mugisha, 2018). Kenya's high levels of intimate partner violence affecting nearly half of women aged 15–49 years (KDHS, 2022) reflect the continuum of violence that often escalates to femicide. Kimani (2021) links these trends to economic inequalities, unemployment, and patriarchal cultural expectations that condition women to tolerate abusive relationships for financial or social security. The socio-economic vulnerability of young women, especially in urban and peri-urban areas such as Juja, Thika, and Nairobi, has been worsened by transactional relationships commonly referred to as “sponsorships” (Odhiambo, 2023). These relationships, driven by economic desperation and power asymmetry, have been associated with a rise in fatal conflicts when disputes over finances, jealousy, or perceived infidelity occur (Amnesty International, 2021).

UN Women (2022) notes that Sub-Saharan Africa consistently ranks among the highest in femicide rates globally, with about 2.7 deaths per 100,000 women annually compared to a global average of 1.3. South Africa, for instance, reported over 1,000 femicide cases in 2020, while Nigeria, Namibia, and Uganda have shown similar upward trends (UNODC, 2022). These figures reveal the persistence of structural violence against women and underscore that legal frameworks alone cannot eliminate femicide without concurrent

social transformation. As Tepperman (2017) argues, the roots of gender violence lie in power hierarchies maintained through culture, economy, and law.

Cultural victimization forms a significant component of femicide across various societies. In some regions, so-called “honor killings” occur when women are perceived to have violated family or community norms concerning sexuality or obedience (Dawson, 2018). Connell (2015) and Kovacevic (2022) observe that such killings are not merely cultural relics but mechanisms of patriarchal social control, often intersecting with poverty and social exclusion. Similarly, in several African contexts, femicide manifests in cases of dowry disputes, witchcraft accusations, and inheritance conflicts (Okoth, 2021). Nyabola (2018) argues that such cultural pretexts normalize male violence, portraying it as socially legitimate or even morally necessary. In Kenya, some traditional norms still enforce women’s economic and emotional dependence on men, constraining their agency and exposing them to violence when they attempt to assert autonomy. Across many societies, deeply entrenched patriarchal values dictate the behavior, identity, and roles of women, often positioning them as subordinate to men (UNODC, 2018). These gendered cultural scripts perpetuate the belief that women are property of men and that their autonomy represents a challenge to male authority. Such beliefs create an environment where violence against women, including femicide, becomes culturally justified or socially tolerated (Websdale, 2014). The normalization of male dominance in the cultural order means that acts of violence are often seen as disciplinary rather than criminal, reinforcing the cyclical nature of victimization. In many communities, women are expected to adhere to submissive, obedient, and nurturing roles, and any deviation—real or perceived—can trigger violent punishment.

In Kenya and much of Sub-Saharan Africa, culture remains a key determinant of women’s safety and status within the household and community (UN Women, 2022). Patriarchal traditions assign men authority over family and property, while women are seen primarily as caregivers and dependents. When women attempt to challenge these roles by seeking education, employment, or leadership positions they are often met with social backlash and, in extreme cases, lethal violence. Studies indicate that cultural expectations around female obedience and male control continue to underpin the majority of intimate partner femicides in Kenya (Mugisha, 2018). In some cases, violence is framed as a means of

restoring “respect” or “order” when women are perceived to have disobeyed or dishonored their partners (Heise, 2020).

One of the most pronounced manifestations of cultural victimization is the practice of “honor killings,” where women are murdered by family members for allegedly bringing shame upon the family (Dawson, 2018). Although more commonly associated with certain regions in the Middle East and South Asia, similar dynamics exist within African contexts. Women may be killed for behaviors perceived as immoral such as rejecting marriage proposals, engaging in relationships outside wedlock, or seeking divorce (Connell, 2015). These acts are culturally rationalized as necessary to restore family dignity. The ideology of honor thus becomes a cultural mechanism that legitimizes violence and silences women. Even where formal laws prohibit such acts, community support and silence often protect perpetrators, allowing these crimes to persist with impunity (Kovacevic, 2022).

In parts of Africa, including Kenya, cultural practices related to dowry, inheritance, and witchcraft accusations have also been linked to femicide (Okoth, 2021). Dowry disputes often place women in precarious situations, particularly when marriages fail, as families may demand repayment or resort to violence. Similarly, widow inheritance still practiced in some rural communities subject’s women to coercive relationships that can turn deadly when resisted. Accusations of witchcraft, often targeting older or widowed women, have led to numerous killings justified as community purification rituals (Nyabola, 2018). These cultural practices not only strip women of agency but also institutionalize their vulnerability to lethal violence.

Cultural victimization also manifests in the way society perceives and responds to femicide. Victim-blaming remains widespread, with women often accused of provoking violence through their behavior or lifestyle. Such attitudes, reinforced by cultural narratives of female submission, discourage reporting and hinder justice (Amnesty International, 2021). In Kenya, police officers and community elders sometimes frame femicide as a private domestic issue rather than a criminal offense (Ombaka, 2022). This normalization of violence reflects deep cultural resistance to gender equality. Women’s attempts to seek independence or justice are often dismissed as rebellion against tradition, further exposing them to violence.

In modern Kenya, cultural victimization has taken on new dimensions with the influence of digital media and globalization. Social media platforms have become spaces where gender norms are both challenged and reinforced. On one hand, campaigns like #StopKillingWomen and #JusticeForFaith have amplified awareness about femicide and challenged patriarchal silence (Odhiambo, 2023). On the other hand, online harassment, misogynistic trolling, and public shaming reflect how cultural victimization adapts to new spaces. Women who voice opinions on gender rights often face cyberbullying, threats, and reputational attacks forms of symbolic violence that mirror physical victimization in society (Mutua, 2020). This interplay between traditional and digital forms of cultural control underscores how pervasive gender-based victimization remains across social spheres.

Cultural norms surrounding masculinity also play a significant role in sustaining femicide. The idea that masculinity is tied to dominance, aggression, and control perpetuates violent behavior toward women. Men are culturally conditioned to assert authority within relationships, while women are taught to submit and endure (Banyard, 2015). When this power hierarchy is challenged such as when women earn more income, seek education, or reject romantic advances violence is used as a tool to reestablish control (UNODC, 2018). In many communities, men who fail to control their partners are mocked as weak, further pressuring them to assert power through aggression. This toxic construction of masculinity not only endangers women but also limits men's ability to express vulnerability or seek help, thereby perpetuating cycles of violence.

The justice system's response to culturally justified violence further illustrates the entrenchment of victimization. Despite legal reforms and constitutional provisions guaranteeing equality, enforcement remains weak due to cultural biases within institutions. Police officers, prosecutors, and judges often share the same patriarchal beliefs that devalue women's lives (Kamweru, 2020). As a result, cases of femicide are underreported, poorly investigated, or dismissed as accidents or suicides. Families may also withdraw cases due to pressure from community elders who advocate reconciliation instead of prosecution (Ombaka, 2022). Such outcomes reinforce the perception that women's lives are expendable within the cultural order.

Cultural victimization also extends to the media portrayal of femicide. News reports often sensationalize killings or focus on the victim's behavior rather than the perpetrator's

actions. Descriptions such as “love gone sour” or “crime of passion” minimize the gravity of femicide and obscure its cultural and structural roots (Nyabola, 2018). This framing contributes to societal desensitization and normalizes violence against women as part of everyday life. Furthermore, families of victims often face stigma, with communities labeling them as cursed or dishonored. Such social ostracism deters others from reporting or speaking out against similar crimes.

In the context of Juja Sub-County, cultural victimization has been observed in the persistence of attitudes that equate female independence with immorality. Young women who move to urban centers for education or work are often stigmatized as “modern girls” who reject traditional norms (Mutua, 2020). This perception contributes to moral policing, victim-blaming, and at times, fatal violence. Femicide cases in Juja and nearby urban areas frequently involve conflicts rooted in male expectations of control and female defiance of cultural boundaries. Despite increased awareness and education, patriarchal mindsets continue to shape gender relations and justify violence. The interplay between culture, patriarchy, and law reveals why femicide remains resistant to change despite legal and policy interventions. Deep-seated cultural beliefs often override formal legal protections, creating a gap between policy and practice. Legal reforms like the Protection against Domestic Violence Act (2015) cannot achieve their full effect in societies where violence is culturally normalized (Republic of Kenya, 2010). To address femicide effectively, cultural transformation is as crucial as legal enforcement. This requires challenging the myths, taboos, and traditions that perpetuate gendered power imbalances.

Economic inequality is another key driver of femicide. Studies have consistently linked women’s financial dependency to increased vulnerability to violence (Heise, 2020). Poverty limits women’s access to education, employment, and justice systems, thereby entrenching subordination. During periods of economic hardship, tensions within households often escalate into physical violence, as men project economic frustration onto female partners (Jane, 2017). Kenya’s growing informal economy, which employs a large number of young women, has not translated into economic security. Instead, unstable income sources, coupled with limited access to credit or property ownership, perpetuate dependence on male partners (Mutua, 2020). Institutional weakness compounds the problem: despite the enactment of the Protection against Domestic Violence Act (2015) and constitutional provisions for gender equality (Republic of Kenya, 2010), enforcement

remains inconsistent (Kamweru, 2020). Police apathy, corruption, and social stigma often discourage victims' families from seeking justice (Ombaka, 2022). Economic inequality is another key driver of femicide. Studies have consistently linked women's financial dependency to increased vulnerability to violence (Heise, 2020). Poverty limits women's access to education, employment, and justice systems, thereby entrenching subordination. During periods of economic hardship, tensions within households often escalate into physical violence, as men project economic frustration onto female partners (Jane, 2017). Kenya's growing informal economy, which employs a large number of young women, has not translated into economic security. Instead, unstable income sources, coupled with limited access to credit or property ownership, perpetuate dependence on male partners (Mutua, 2020). Institutional weakness compounds the problem: despite the enactment of the Protection against Domestic Violence Act (2015) and constitutional provisions for gender equality (Republic of Kenya, 2010), enforcement remains inconsistent (Kamweru, 2020). Police apathy, corruption, and social stigma often discourage victims' families from seeking justice (Ombaka, 2022).

This manifest through structural imbalances in access to resources, decision-making, and participation in productive sectors. In most societies, men still control land, inheritance, and formal employment opportunities, while women are disproportionately represented in low-paying, insecure jobs. This economic subordination leaves women dependent on male partners or relatives for financial support, making it difficult for them to exit abusive relationships (Heise, 2020). Poverty also interacts with social expectations of female obedience and male dominance, reinforcing a cycle where economic control translates into physical control. When women attempt to assert independence whether by working, pursuing education, or ending relationships they often face violent backlash (Jane, 2017).

In Kenya, economic stress has become a major factor behind rising domestic and intimate partner violence. Many femicide cases are reported in households or relationships where financial strain and unemployment are prevalent (Mutua, 2020). The economic burden on men, traditionally viewed as providers, generates frustration and feelings of inadequacy. When combined with patriarchal norms that permit male aggression as a display of authority, these conditions increase the likelihood of violent outcomes. Young women, particularly those in informal employment or "sponsor" relationships, are more at risk, as financial dependence often blurs the line between intimacy and exploitation. Economic

inequality thus reinforces gender hierarchies that sustain femicide as an expression of male power and control (Heise, 2020).

Moreover, urbanization and migration have not necessarily improved women's economic autonomy. In urban centers like Nairobi, Thika, and Juja, young women migrate seeking employment or education but often end up in precarious economic situations. Many work in domestic service, hospitality, or small-scale vending sectors with limited labor protections and poor pay. Such conditions heighten economic dependence on male partners or older men who provide financial assistance in exchange for sexual or emotional relationships (Mutua, 2020). Conflicts arising in these arrangements, particularly when expectations of financial support are unmet, have been linked to several femicide incidents reported in media and by civil society organizations. Thus, economic inequality not only fuels dependency but also shapes the context within which violence occurs.

The institutional framework intended to protect women from such outcomes remains inadequate. The Constitution of Kenya (2010) and the Protection against Domestic Violence Act (2015) established important legal safeguards, yet implementation gaps persist. Many women lack awareness of their rights or cannot afford legal representation, especially in rural and informal urban settings (Kamweru, 2020). Police response to domestic violence cases is often slow or dismissive, with victims being told to resolve disputes "at home." This lack of accountability emboldens perpetrators and perpetuates a culture of impunity (Ombaka, 2022). In cases where femicide occurs, investigations are rarely thorough, and prosecutions often fail due to corruption or lack of evidence. The justice system's weakness effectively normalizes violence against women by signaling that perpetrators will not face serious consequences.

Economic inequality also interacts with social stigma and cultural expectations. In communities where women are expected to tolerate abuse for the sake of family unity, poverty makes escape nearly impossible. Women who are financially dependent on their partners may choose to endure repeated violence rather than face homelessness, hunger, or social ostracism (Jane, 2017). This dynamic creates a silent epidemic of abuse that occasionally escalates into femicide. The lack of economic empowerment programs targeting low-income women further compounds this vulnerability. Without access to stable income, education, and social protection, women remain trapped in abusive environments where violence becomes normalized (Heise, 2020).

The informal economy, where a significant portion of Kenyan women work, illustrates how economic inequality fuels gender-based violence. Informal jobs rarely offer health insurance, maternity benefits, or workplace protections, leaving women exposed to both economic and physical risks (Mutua, 2020). Female domestic workers, bar attendants, and casual laborers often face harassment and exploitation, sometimes culminating in violent confrontations or death. Economic inequality also intersects with education gaps limited access to schooling confines many women to low-income work, which in turn reduces their bargaining power in relationships and society at large. As a result, economic dependency becomes both a cause and a consequence of gender-based violence, creating a self-perpetuating cycle that culminates in extreme forms such as femicide.

Empirical evidence from Kenya further shows that areas with higher poverty and unemployment rates tend to report more cases of femicide and intimate partner violence (Mutua, 2020). Economic stress contributes to toxic relationships marked by control, jealousy, and aggression. The inability of women to access independent financial resources reduces their capacity to leave abusive situations or seek justice after violence occurs (Ombaka, 2022). Even when women are economically active, gender pay gaps and job insecurity continue to reinforce dependence on men. Consequently, economic empowerment must be viewed not just as a development goal but as a core strategy for reducing femicide. Ensuring women's equal participation in economic life through fair wages, property rights, and access to credit can significantly reduce their exposure to violence (Republic of Kenya, 2010).

Walby (2017) and Fowler (2020) highlight that global data on femicide remain inconsistent due to poor classification and underreporting. In many countries, homicide records do not indicate the gender of the victim or the perpetrator's relationship to the victim, obscuring patterns of intimate partner femicide. Feminist scholars and organizations have responded by developing alternative observatories and "femicide watches" to document women's killings (Fregoso, 2010). In Kenya, initiatives like Femicide Count Kenya and the African Data Hub (2024) play a crucial role in bridging data gaps, tracking trends, and mobilizing public advocacy. Their findings reveal a worrying pattern: most victims are young women aged 16–35, and killings often occur in private or semi-private spaces such as homes, guest rooms, and social meeting spots. These

deaths reflect broader social dysfunctions where economic pressure, digital exploitation, and cultural expectations converge.

The COVID-19 pandemic exacerbated gender-based violence worldwide. Lockdowns restricted women's movement and access to support services, while economic disruptions increased dependency on abusive partners (UNFPA, 2020). Sagot (2022) reported a 70% surge in gender-based violence during the early months of the pandemic. In Kenya, the Federation of Women Lawyers (FIDA, 2021) noted a spike in domestic violence cases, many of which escalated into femicide. Heise (2020) interprets this trend as evidence of how crises amplify pre-existing inequalities, trapping women in cycles of economic and emotional dependency. Post-pandemic recovery efforts have shown that without targeted gender-responsive policies, the risks of femicide remain high, especially for marginalized women.

The rise of social media has transformed the visibility of femicide. Hashtags such as #StopKillingWomen and #JusticeForFaith have galvanized public outrage and activism (Odhiambo, 2023). Digital advocacy has pressured governments to acknowledge the crisis and pushed for reforms in policing and judicial responses. However, Macharia (2016) cautions that online activism must translate into structural policy change to be effective. In Kenya, despite increased public debate, policy interventions remain reactive and fragmented. Awareness campaigns, though impactful, are often temporary and underfunded, limiting their long-term influence.

Although literature highlights multiple causes of femicide economic, cultural, and institutional few studies have examined their intersection at the community level. Juja Sub-County provides a critical context for understanding this intersectionality. The area's mix of urban expansion, economic inequality, and youthful demographics has fostered both opportunity and vulnerability. As several high-profile cases in 2023–2024 revealed, femicide in Juja often stems from relational and economic tensions, exacerbated by digital exploitation and weak community surveillance systems (Gathara, 2020). Yet, empirical research focusing specifically on these localized dynamics remains limited. This study therefore contributes to filling that gap by analyzing how economic inequalities, social dysfunctions, and cultural victimization interact to influence femicide among young women in Juja Sub-County.

The reviewed literature portrays femicide as a multifaceted social problem rooted in economic, cultural, and institutional inequalities. Despite global and regional efforts, the persistence of femicide in Kenya underscores deep systemic failures. Addressing it requires more than punitive measures; it demands structural transformation empowering women economically, reforming justice institutions, and challenging patriarchal norms that condone violence. Understanding the localized expressions of these global dynamics, as this study does in Juja Sub-County, is essential for designing targeted prevention and policy responses.

Femicide is divided into different types depending on the conduct of the offender, his connection with the alleged victims; and the circumstances in which this kind of crime takes place (Martin, 2009). Therefore, at the end, only two aspects need to be focused on while analyzing femicide, which include context and gender.

Intimate partner femicide. This occurs when a woman dies in the hands of a male partner or ex-partner; this frequently occurs when the man is abusive. Attempting to leave an abusive partner, or seeking a divorce or separation are circumstances that put the female into the greatest danger of femicide from a boyfriend or husband (Walby, 2015). The perpetrator feels that the victim belongs to him or, conversely, he belongs to her, due to unequal and strictly defined gender roles (Websdale, 2013).

Non-Intimate femicide. This is femicide committed by family and relatives. It is subdivided into different types:

Honor killings: This is normally committed by close family members (including women) after they feel that the victim has crossed the acceptable standards of cultural expectations in as much as the demeanor of a family is concerned (Tare, 2012). What is most often the husband in the situation, without needing any specific sexual experience, desires with the help of punishment to force the victim a young woman who wants to refuse an arranged marriage, or who is already pregnant, or who is too active sexually before marriage, or is suspected of so doing. Many femicide cases in the name of honor are reported in countries like Afghanistan, India, Palestine, Tunisia (Baker, 2018).

Dowry death. These practices are still continuing within many of the culturally South-Asian countries as noted by the UNODC (2018). Official data of crime in India of 2019 under Indian Penal code showed more than 7000 dowry deaths and more than 5000

abetments to suicide as per recent National Crimes Records Bureau. Wives who have had their family of origin pay a lower or unsubstantiated amount as dowry may be subjected to lethal Policy Department, Directorate-General for External Policies (Caputi, 2019).

Femicide-suicide. This is the killing of women through premeditated murder accompanied with the deaths of the murderer is a matter of record in virtually all the European countries, including Australia and Moldova (Block, 2013). Conflict and war environment femicide. This occurs in wars genocide and armed conflict against women and other vulnerable groups as a means to destroy the local community as well as degrade the opponent (Assembly, 2012). The victims of rape are then disqualified and sometimes murdered afterwards. Female sex selection femicide. According to Laureate Amartya Sen, the international community Nobel Prize winner (1990), this is the patriarchal gender selective killing of females even before or after their birth, which ensured pre- and post-natal elimination of female fetuses in Asia and North Africa as well as Latin America, where this phenomenon is common. In more recent times, other scholars have further projected the numerical figure to have increased to 126 million by 2010 with china and India on average being largely responsible for sex ratio deficiency at birth. According to the United Nations Population Fund (UNPFA), there is the deliberate extermination of young girls and women particularly through infanticide, starvation and negligence, which stems from prejudice discrimination, where women are considered unworthy of life than a son. Current excess female mortality post-natal is worsening in even a higher rate and it will certainly hit 150 million by the year 2035 (Baker, 2018).

Witch-hunting femicide. More than 200 women are killed through witch-hunting in villages of Assam (India) in the past two decades (Dutton, 2015). The practice is more prevalent in Nepal, the Pacific Island and Tanzania. While traditional male healers are viewed as special people, women can be hunted with desire that ends up in violence and end in femicide cases (Grana, 2011).

2.3 Economic Inequalities and Femicide

Vulnerability to femicide among young women depends primarily on their level of economic inequality (Patel, 2018). The deprivation of basic needs, limited financial control and financial vulnerability produces situations that result in abusive relationships and mental health problems alongside feelings of powerlessness (Palma-Solis, 2010). For economically deprived women the absence of survival resources makes abusive

relationships possible through predatory encounters that threaten their safety and well-being (Meneghel, 2017). Those who does not access these basic amenities may fall into difficult financial obligation presenting traps for victims suffering abuse (Cattaneo & Goodman, 2021). Financial vulnerabilities make women not able to exit unhealthy relationships or abusive circumstances and their problems could eventually become fatal in extreme circumstances (Martin, 2009).

A wide range of factors are known to be associated with fatal and non-fatal violence rates regardless of gender. Income inequality has been found to be a strong predictor for homicide in both a meta-analysis of cross-national predictors of crime (Wilson,2016) and in a large ecological study of violence including 169 countries. Specifically, this was a predictor of homicide and self-reported assault in high income countries and a predictor of robbery and self-reported assault in low and middle-income countries (Wolf ,2013). Alcohol consumption was also found to be associated with non-fatal violence (i.e. self-reported assault rates). National wealth and social inequality in particular are two factors which relate to (combined gender) homicide rates worldwide (Ouimet, M. (2012). Rates are lower in high-income countries than middle- and low-income countries and have dropped more steeply in these countries in the first decade of the 21st. century. Even more importantly, high levels of inequality are persistently linked with high violence rates. Amongst countries which are members of the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Portugal and the USA are examples (relatively unequal and violent) at one end of the scale and Japan and Norway (relatively equal and low violence) at the other end (Moore,2008)

Femicide among young women typically intensifies when economic discrepancies exist. Victims from financially challenged backgrounds typically face challenges to afford both housing and transportation together with health care (Langley, 2014). Insecure financial situations make it necessary for vulnerable women to choose problematic lifelines such as inhabiting dangerous spaces or taking unhealthy connections to survive (Lagarde, 2010). Evidence demonstrates that females in unstable economic situations become more susceptible to partner violence and intimate violent assaults and all types of gender-based assault (Heise, 2011). The young women lifestyles where many resources are needed to survive away from close support from the families creates environments that increase female students' vulnerability to violent incidents including fatal violence toward women (Ongalo, 2019).

Housing instability is also a central predictor of economic disparity that disproportionately affects young women and makes them more vulnerable to femicide. The majority of young women, especially those living in low-income households, have challenges obtaining affordable and secure housing (Crenshaw, 2020). Lack of affordable housing often forces women to remain in abusive relationships as they cannot afford to leave or get more secure housing. Research has proven that housing instability is a critical risk indicator of femicide as it increases women's vulnerability to abusive partners and restricts their ability to leave violent situations which might end up as femicide cases (Mugisha, 2018). When women are forced by circumstances to live in unsafe, overcrowded, or temporary houses, the lack of privacy, security and stability often leads to heightened and possible chances to femicide (Twaine, 2008).

Moreover, women who face housing instability are typically trapped in a state of being financially vulnerable. This situation may be aggravated by the financial costs of housing rent, bills, and upkeep that most young women are unable to meet without the financial contribution of an intimate partner. In most cases, young women might tolerate or stay in violent situations simply because they are unable to afford living by themselves or lack an alternative housing arrangement (Rimza, 2022). Being unable to afford safe housing may also impede women from calling for assistance or reporting access to social support services as they may even deem the services to be costly, making it difficult for them to exit the violent relationship and cycle of violence (Cohen, 2013).

Gender job segregation is a historical form of economic inequality in the labor market where certain jobs are dominated by one gender, therefore often confining women to inferior, lower-paying, and less secure states. Occupational segregation manifests when women are disproportionately involved in the caregiving sector, teaching, or administrative jobs, which are traditionally low-paid and undervalued compared to male-dominated construction, technology, or financial sectors (Dale, 2017). This creates the gender wage gap and reinforces the economic vulnerability of young women. Because women are often steered into lower-paying jobs, they have greater financial vulnerability, making them less able to escape femicide situations. Economic vulnerability due to job segregation might trap women in situations which can increase risk of femicide (Reddy, 2019).

Women working in segregated jobs are also often subject to hazardous working conditions, limited opportunities for career advancement, and a lack of job security. These conditions contribute to their economic instability overall and render economic independence for women difficult to achieve (Karim, 2015). For young women, job segregation may be particularly damaging because it prevents them from being able to build a secure economic base. The long-term financial pressure of working in lower-paid, insecure jobs may render women more susceptible to staying in violent relationships (Stockl, 2014). Scholars have determined that women who live in financial hardship, in significant part due to job segregation, are more likely to stay in abusive relationships because they cannot afford to live independently (Kelly, 2014).

The gender wage gap is another central indicator of economic inequality as a result of job segregation that contributes importantly to the economic vulnerability of young women. Despite progress toward gender equality, women, on average, continue to earn less, with the gap persisting across nearly every sector and level of occupation (Hyde, 2018). The wage gap increases the economic vulnerability of women, and more so young women, on their intimate partners. When women are economically disadvantaged by the gender wage gap, they will find it harder to escape violent relationships as their financial state is eroded (Heise, 2018). The wage gap not only reduces the earning capacity of women but also their capacity to access resources that could allow them to leave violent relationships, such as affordable housing, legal aid, or counseling (Baker, 2018).

Economic inequality that arises from the gender pay gap is a key element in understanding why some women stay in violent relationships despite the potential femicide incidences. It has been proven that femicide is more common in instances where women are earning less and cannot support themselves fully and they maybe desire a high-class life, and therefore cannot leave the union, (Hotton, 2012). Among young women, this situation is particularly concerning since it hardens their ability to achieve the financial independence that allows them to make independent decisions free of the abuser (Hart, 2008).

To adequately solve the issue of femicide cases among young women in the country, further studies should be done focusing on other important economic inequality indicators such as young women economic dependency on men especially in these generation where young women choose not to work but wait for men to provide. Also, high rate of unemployment state amongst youths, young women being part and economic disparities

between men and women. By employing the recommended research methods and tools of this study the researchers intend to offer valuable knowledge on how these factors relate to femicide.

2.4 Cultural Victimization and Femicide

The frequency of femicide stems from fundamental culturally established victimizations that control gender relationships in communities (Kropp, 2012). Toxic masculinity stands as a substantial cultural factor because it pushes male dominance view coupled with control emphases and aggressiveness while forcing women into subservient positions relative to men (Connell, 2015). Social conformity tendencies in certain cultures sanction any female challenge of male authority either in intimate spaces or in public settings. Such women are considered to be crossing established social principles (Lewandowski, 2014).

Men may resort to violence for punishment because of women's perceived challenge to their authority and femicide acts as the fatal extreme case of this behavior (Dunn, 2018). Cultural traditions emerge into standards that approve physical aggression against women that helps sustain femicide cases. At its core, this devalues women's lives, treating them as expendable in service of maintaining male dominance (Plichta, 2015). This devaluation is evident in the cultural and institutional responses to femicide in Kenya, as victims usually are blamed for their own victimization, and perpetrators are not effectively taken responsible for or held accountable (Elliott, 2019).

Also, through objectification and dehumanization of women. Societies that present women only as male artifacts or personal expressions base a woman's value on her physical desirability combined with reproductive abilities (Johnson, 2011). When cultural views are to control women as belongings rather than free persons, they lose their capacities to decide or assert rights. Study findings demonstrate that cultures with objectifying views about young and women in general tend to accept and permit domestic violence on women (Elliott, 2019). Within this state, women can receive "corrective" punishment after disregarding traditional gender roles which serves to maintain a continuous cycle of mistreatment (Coradi, 2016). Social acknowledgments of family pride and familial prestige determine how much cultural victimization influences certain societies. The way women behave serves to directly represent family esteem in various cultures (Tertilt, 2019).

Deviations from standard gender roles through premarital sexual encounters or marital breakups or exit from abusive relationships can diminish family honor. The practice of murdering female family members for family honor ("honor killing") is recognized here as an acceptable form of femicide (Palma-Solis, 2010). Honor-based violence continues to survive because society views a woman's actions as threatening both her family's social standing while maintaining her personal dignity. Through cultural acceptance of violent acts against women we teach that women should maintain a subordinate position to male family honor preservation which frequently results in deadly consequences such as femicide (Karim, 2015).

Cultures that accept intimate partner violence for example domestic violence as typical tend to validate relationship violence until femicide becomes the fatal end result of abusive relationships (Russell, 2012). When men use their perceived "rights" of ownership over women and wives they reference as justification for controlling their partners' actions communities develop expectations of femicide becoming a predictable result (Webster, 2013). Research studies demonstrate that cultural standards that decrease or accept intimate partner violence (IPV) further promote violence escalation because partners believe violence includes permission to kill their female partners (Dutton & Nicholls, 2015). An environment develops where women experience minimized worth because violence obtains widespread acceptance, victim-shaming and silence from cultures which justifies municipal killings (Saghavi, 2019).

Gender inequality across multiple cultures creates conditions which raise the likelihood of femicide happening. Durability to both physical harm and financial disparities increases when women encounter restricted economic opportunities together with insufficient legal defense in their cultural setting (Dale, 2017). When cultures believe women to be naturally, less than men they enforce policies that restrict female independence alongside their freedom to leave abusive situations. Gender equality deficiency maintains men's superiority over women resulting in recurring violence that frequently culminates in femicide (Walby, 2015). These cultures ignore female worth so that death from defying male superiors becomes accepted as a normal outcome. Cultural transformation must happen to stop femicide so norms about gender equity require revision while society must reject the acceptance of abuse and women need spaces to make decisions without danger (Daly, 2018).

Although these past researchers analyzed important cultural factors they insufficiently explored issues of patriarchal structures in the society, cultural norms and gender expectations, and cultural practices in the society which adversely are crucial issues related to femicide. There is hence a need to explore more on the relationship between these factors and femicide and for this reason this study topic was developed.

2.5 Social Dysfunctions and Femicide

Social dysfunctional elements play a dominant role in femicide among young women because they allow violence, abuse and gender disparities to silently persist. The failure by social institutions to respond properly to gender-based violence stands as a major dysfunctional element (Cohen, 2013). The social institutional inadequacies combined with weak social support and agreements to fight femicide cases that occurs within the society is an important factor in femicide. Many young women especially those who face vulnerability feel unsafe and unsupported by the society hence increased chances of femicide (Twaine, 2012). The ongoing impunity of violent perpetrators exists because these environments provide them with complete assurance that their harmful acts will go unchecked. The absence of institutional responsibility gives abusive behaviors enough freedom to evolve into dangerous situations leading to femicide. According to Radford (2022), institutions with uncertain responses toward violence foster environments of silence and panic which push young women toward dangerous partner agreements and unsafeguarded violent encounters.

The social training process frequently establishes a setting that supports justifications for violence against women leading to discontinued interventions (Banyard, 2015). Members of these communities typically accept violence as a suitable means to manage conflict because it helps them maintain control yet this habitual behavior results in tragedies of femicide, when violence escalates beyond controlled levels. Gender stereotypes held by peer groups because males need dominance together with females needing obedience remain persistent according to (Tepperman, 2017). The harmful environment found in the social spaces creates settings that accept violent dynamics while reducing awareness around femicide cases.

Victim blaming notion enable the rapid dissemination of narratives that frame victims as responsible for their own murders. This is evident in high-profile femicide cases in Kenya, such as the deaths of Sharon Otieno and Ivy Wangeci. Sharon Otieno, a university student

who was brutally murdered in 2018, was vilified for her relationship with a married politician. Some labeled her as a "slay queen" and accused her of greed and immorality, effectively shifting blame from the perpetrators to her lifestyle choices (Mutua, 2020). Similarly, Ivy Wangeci, a medical student killed by a rejected admirer in 2019, faced posthumous scrutiny online. They suggested that her rejection of the perpetrator's advances and alleged material demands provoked her murder (Macharia J.2020). These narratives not only dehumanized her but also diverted attention from the act of violence to her perceived faults (Macharia, 2016).

Traditional platforms such as newspapers, television, and radio plays a crucial role in shaping public opinion and societal attitudes. However, in the context of femicide and victim blaming, they have often perpetuated harmful gender stereotypes and narratives (Mutua, 2020). By sensationalizing violence against women, misrepresenting victims, and framing cases in ways that excuse or obscure the role of perpetrators, they contribute to a culture that normalizes femicide and blames victims for their own deaths. Scholars argue that this focus on the victim's perceived morality or behavior undermines the gravity of the crime and shifts attention away from the perpetrator's culpability. (Gathara 2020) "The focus on the personal lives of femicide victims creates a narrative that justifies violence and absolves perpetrators, reducing systemic violence to individual misfortune."

Many social settings and communities encourage secrecy on subjects related to abuse and mental health assistance. This social preference persists in conservative social setting that discourage open discussion about abuse and mental health needs (Zoeli, 2010). The problems with violence survive because survivors face victim-shaming attitudes from others according to (Fregoso, 2010). When marginalized groups carry a burden of stigma about mental health and abuse, they may fail to seek help because they neither recognize nor admit the abusive dynamics in their pertinent social relationships more so intimate relationships (Kimani, 2021). Inside these societal messages young women often begin to underestimate their danger so exposure to violence becomes longer. Young women avoidance of reporting violence and seeking help occurs due to both their fear of social rejection by peer groups and family members (Webster, 2013). This self-application of stigma in societal settings facilitates environments that enable femicide through indifference where young girls suffer extreme vulnerability when violence dominates their unprotected situation (Gius, 2014)

Religious leaders and institutions like families and schools, though positioned to challenge femicide, sometimes perpetuate harmful narratives by encouraging women to endure abuse “for the sake of their families” or by framing femicide related situations as a private, domestic issue instead of a systemic problem. This complicity reinforces the patriarchal structures that enable femicide occurrences (Connell, 2015). For example, in cases involving spouse related violence that escalates to femicide, police officers have been known to trivialize the incidents as “family matters” or blame victims for provoking the violence. Such attitudes are rooted in patriarchal notions that prioritize male authority and minimize the seriousness of violence against women (Nyabola, 2018). Court rulings in femicide cases often focus on mitigating factors for the perpetrator, such as claims of provocation or emotional distress, rather than the systemic nature of gender-based violence (Nitsan, 2014). This sends a message that women’s lives are less valuable and that perpetrators of femicide can act with relative impunity.

Life pressures and the natural tendencies of young women to focus solely on their studies to make it in life creates an environment where social connection maintenance becomes pointless (Connell, 2015). Under such circumstances, they typically avoid asking for assistance or reporting instances of violence since they see themselves alone without support. Insufficient outside assistance makes it more probable that victims will be vulnerable to dangerous situations until the violence escalates toward fatal dimensions (Caputi, 2019).

Overlooking of the physical violence that gets worse represents the deadliest proof of destructive interpersonal conduct. When victims ignore and overlook initial violence in abusive relationships then it shifts to hitting or pushing or slapping (Campbell, 2012). Unresolved abusive situations that receive no action or intervention will frequently intensify into more dangerous forms of violence (Dobash, 2015). The abuser become increasingly driven by their confidence in avoiding repercussions thereby raising the possibility of fatal abuse. The abuser can use fatal violence to eliminate their victim if they either try to break free or begins to seek help from the abuse (Durfee, 2016).

Despite these important insights, there are also limitations in these analyzed factors and further studies are needed to explore more on issues of intimate relationships which is a crucial issue among young women, social media influences especially with the developed technological dynamics and also legal systems inadequacies and how these factors

interconnect to cause femicide among young women. Eventually, such studies will help to develop better strategies to fighting the issue of femicide.

2.6 Theoretical Framework

The study was guided by the following theories: Feminist theory by Bell hooks (2021) and Routine Activity theory by Cohen and Felson (1979).

2.6.1 Feminist Theory

Feminist theory was formulated by Bell hooks (2021). It is a major branch of sociology that shifts its assumptions, analytical lens, and topical focus away from the male viewpoint and experiences towards that of women. Feminist theory analyses the roles of the structures of power and gender inequalities in the incidence of violence to women. Femicide operates often under patriarchal arrangements that make violence against women not notable or acceptable.

The big ideas of this theory include power relations, as well as gender perceptions. Feminists' scholars say that femicide is not due to different random acts, but the consequence of the systematic murder reinforced by social structures, cultural norms, and institutional apathy. These dynamics are further compounded by other issues such as stress arising from economic demands, competitive social relations and youthful relations meeting with societal relations of power. In understanding femicide, the theory focuses on ways in which patriarchal beliefs are reflected in people's interactions.

Femicide is often rooted in patriarchal systems that normalize or perpetuate violence against women. This theory highlights power imbalances and the role of gender norms. Feminists' scholars argue that femicide is not as a result of isolated incidents but a result of culmination of systematic oppression, often reinforced by social norms, cultural beliefs and societal negligence. Within our social setting these dynamics are amplified by unique pressures such as relationships stress, competitive social hierarchies and the interactions of youthful relationships with societal power imbalances. In understanding femicide, the theory analyzes how patriarchal attitudes manifest in everyday interactions.

Patriarchal culture-where dominance, control, and aggression are considered appropriated symbols of masculinity also operates in universities. Such behaviors may result in very pathetic attitude that men have over women and end up forcing them into vulnerable positions. If a woman attempts to reject the man or is seen to be disobeying his orders, the

patriarchal units take it as a sign of rebellion that leads to far end femicide. Feminist theorists reveal such dynamics stating that femicide is not only a personal misfortune that occurred solely to these women, but is a public one that happened within collective context of cultures which frequently underestimate the worth of women's lives and voices. It also adequately captures how institutions collude with others to maintain the environments that propel femicide.

In many societies there are weak or no policies that deal with gender violence and femicide in general, little or no provision for survivors and lenient measures against perpetrators. They opine that such failures add to the helpless state of victims and boosts up the perpetrators. This is so because when social institutions do not act on cases of harassments or decides to dismiss violence as a personal issue then such a culture fosters a culture of impunity. They fight for programmatic changes such as gender strategies, effective reporting, and instructional materials in the community on gender and consent. This theory stresses the importance of intersectionality regarding femicide, this approach acknowledges that oppression like collectivism, racism, and aging interact with sexism making different groups of ladies endangered.

They insist that these inadequacies reinforce the powerlessness of victims and embolden aggressors. When an institution fails to take action against harassment or dismisses violence as a personal matter, it perpetuates a culture of impunity. They advocate for systematic reforms, including comprehensive gender policies, good reporting mechanisms, and education on gender equality and consent. The theory emphasizes the importance of intersectionality in understanding femicide, this perspective recognizes that multiple forms of oppression such as classism, racism, and ageism intersect with sexism to form a unique vulnerability for different categories of women. In conclusion, feminist theory offers a powerful lens to understand and address femicide among young women. It situates this violence within broader societal and institutional structures. It critiques the cultural and systematic factors that perpetuate it and advocates for transformative change.

This theory has several strengths that make it valuable for studying femicide. One of its main strengths is that it contextualizes such crimes in a society and institutions. It also analyses the cultural and systematic conditions, which contribute to such crimes and promotes social change. It is also not a perfect explanation as it has critiques for a variety

of reasons, including the idea that it's based on traditional gender roles, that it can't be generalized to all women, and that it over- or under values gender differences.

2.6.2 Routine Activity Theory

According to Cohen (2016) this is a criminological theory that try to explain how crime occur when a motivated offender, a suitable target and a lack of a capable guardian converge. They argue that for a crime situation to happen then the following are required; a motivated offender, suitable target and the absence of suitable guardians. Specifically, in the case of femicide of young women, it provides understanding of how the specific situational factors within the women's lives experience generate opportunities for violence against them. First, the theory reveals the existence of motivated offenders. The offender's motivation may include gender power relations, toxic masculinity or feeling that they have a right to control the decisions of women and even their deaths. For young women as victim's motivations may include conflicts in relationships, rejection, or perceived loss of control over a partner. It insinuates that, when there is availability of motivated offenders in that kind of a place, there is likelihood of a violent attack and consequently femicide.

Second, the theory focuses on a specific target that is suitable to be grown into a massive opportunity in the future. The theory insist that young women can become suitable targets because of their perceived weakness, absence or inadequate physical marking, or approachability to easy protection. For instance, the victims may regularly move around alone, participate in social activities late at night, and/or stay in insecure housing, thus they would be the targets of choice for possible sexual offenders. Besides, the Women may again be made more vulnerable by societal factors that include economic reliance on male partners, restricted access to capital or education, or prejudice against decrying domestic violence also makes them suitable prey according to the routine activity theory.

Thirdly and perhaps most importantly for femicide, a lack of capable guardianship perception is present. Professional safe stewardship is defined as a structure or people that are capable of preventing criminal conduct or taking care of possible victim. Lack of safety in society, poor formulated policies in social institutions, poor implementation mechanisms of protective measures and behavior reporting of gender – based violence form gaps in societal guardianship. Poor lighting both indoors and outside especially in parking lots, failure to attend to complaints of stalkers. The theory implies that their lack speaks to the probability of crime.

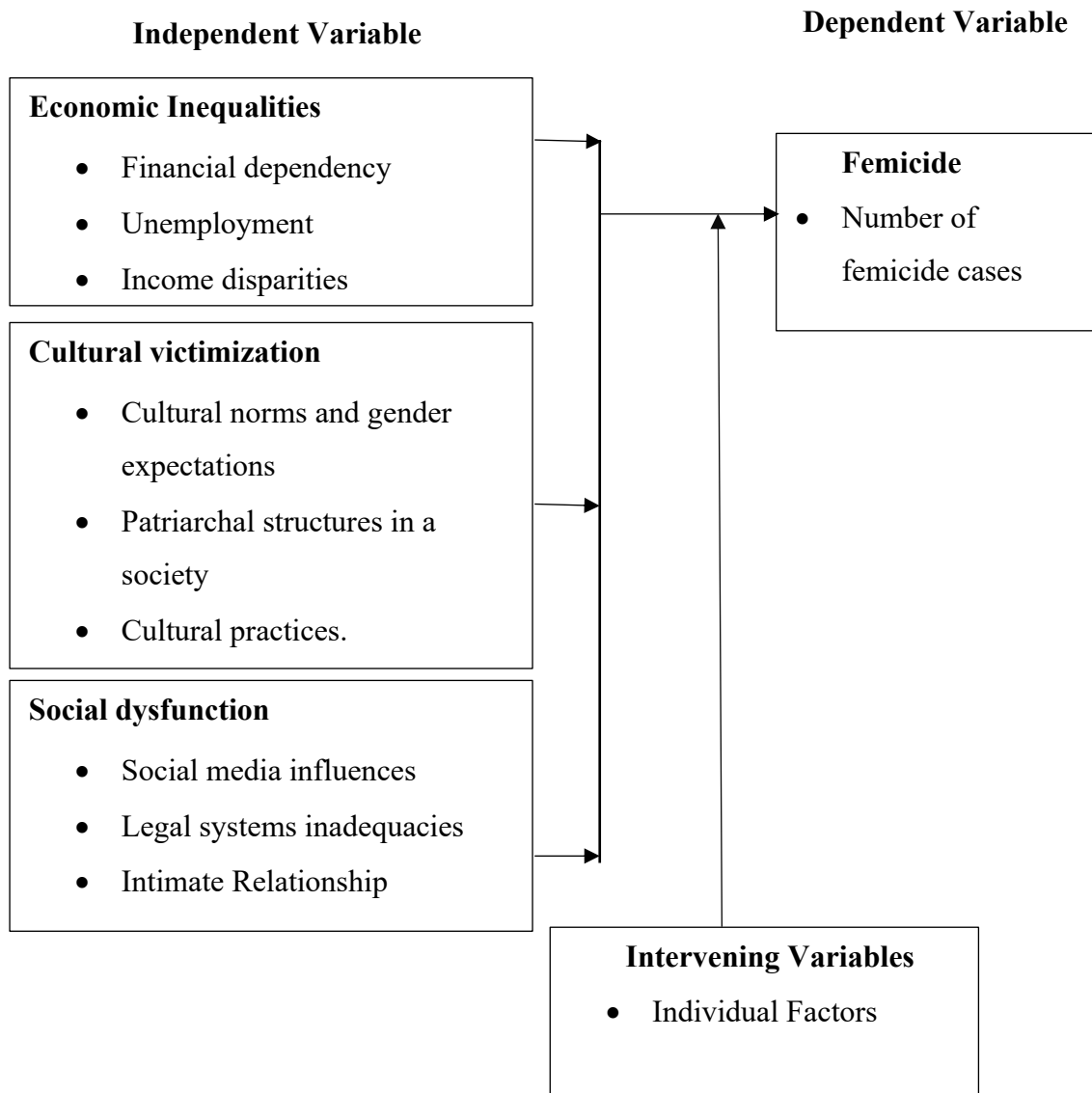
In conclusion, routine activity theory is very critical in addressing femicide as it highlights the need for preventative measures by addressing the institutions that can disrupt the cycle of femicide by implementing measures that reduce offender's motivation, strengthen capable guardianship and reduce target vulnerability. This might involve educating women about consent, providing enough counselling and support services for survivors and enhancing a culture of accountability where offenders face consequences for their actions. In as any other theory, Routine Activity has its own shortcoming. One major critique is it adequately consider the broader social-economic conditions that contribute to crimes. Focusing solely on opportunity may direct to interventions that overlook the root causes of criminal behavior.

2.7 Conceptual Framework

This framework shows the specific factors which explores femicide incidents amongst young women. Three main factors of cultural victimization, economic inequalities and social dysfunctions served as the basis for analyzing femicide. Analysis combined questionnaires from general respondents and interview guides for the key informants.

Figure 1:

Conceptualization of Contextual Risk Factors



CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter describes the location, research design, population of study, sampling procedure and sample size, research instruments, piloting, Reliability, validity, data collection tools, data analysis, and the ethical considerations that this research used to study the relationship between contextual risk factors and femicide cases among young women at Juja sub-county.

3.2 Location of the Study.

This study was carried out at Juja sub-County in Kiambu County, Kenya. The target population was 300,948 residents of Juja sub-county as per the official demographic statistics (Census, 2019). This sub-county has five wards; these are Murera, Theta, Juja, Witeithie and Kalimoni ward. The study involved all the five wards from the area so that the sample will represent the whole population. The reason for choosing the sub-county is that it captures the economic, cultural and social experiences of young women in Kenya whereby femicide cases are also often reported. Kiambu and Nairobi Counties have reported the highest incidences of femicide-related killings (Amnesty International Kenya, 2021). According to African Data Hub (2024) records 2024 alone, 56 femicide cases were reported in Kiambu County with 16% of these cases from Juja sub-county

3.3 Research Design

The study used a mixed-method research design called embedded design. Research design are the various approaches that the researcher uses in answering research questions (Creswell, 2019). In this design, quantitative and qualitative components were combined at the same time. One method is given less priority, either quantitative or qualitative and then it will be embedded within the dominant method (Greene & Caracelli, 1997). The quantitative method was dominant and qualitative method was embedded in this study. Quantitative method worked to investigate numeric occurrence patterns and qualitative design was conducted along to gather descriptive social patterns in femicide. The initial research method employed quantitative methodology involving the distribution of structured questionnaires that assessed residents' femicide-related insights. The study involved a complex phenomenon in the society influenced by all the factors analyzed above so embedded design allowed the researcher to capture both statistical trends

(quantitative) and deeper social experiences (qualitative) aspects. In addition, to the survey questionnaires, the qualitative method supplemented the quantitative component. The researchers used interview schedules to the key informants to gather deeper information on the topic.

3.4. Population of the Study

Saunders (2007) defines the target population as the members of the real and hypothetical set of people, objects or events that the researcher intends to generalize the results of the research. The target population for this research was 300,948 total population of Juja sub-county as per the 2019 Kenya Population and Housing Census. The accessible population was 200,510 adult populations of Juja sub-county.

It consisted of both male and female gender. The population comprised respondents from different locations in the sub-county among the five wards. A sample size of 278 respondents was used in this study. 10 key informants from all the wards were purposively selected, comprising of the security officials i.e., police, and the community activists who provided a complementary insight on femicide.

3.5 Sampling Procedure and Sampling Size

This study used stratified random sampling method to select respondents. This method provides a more representative sample from the population and ensures that each stratum of the population is adequately represented and eliminates the possibility of ignoring any significant part of the population thus produces less variability (Neyman, 1934). A sample of 278 respondents was selected for the questionnaire and 10 key informants for the interview schedules, totaling to 288 respondents for the study.

From the accessible population of 200,510, a sample size was drawn using Slovin's formulae (Slovin, 1960):

$$n = \frac{N}{1+Ne^2}$$

$$n = \frac{200510}{1+200510(0.06)^2}$$

$$n = \frac{200510}{722.836}$$

$$n = 277.393$$

Thus, the sample size is 278 respondents

Where: n = required Sample size,

N = accessible Population size,

e = Standard error.

$e = 0.06$ and $N = 200,510$

Sample size of the expected questionnaire to be responded were distributed as shown below.

Table 1:

Distribution of Sample Size

Ward	Gender	Target population	Accessible population	Sample expected
Murera	Female	50,189	40,011	58
	Male	25,800	25,995	20
Theta	Female	61,200	30,010	33
	Male	30,125	10,502	12
Juja	Female	59,450	13662	40
	Male	25,500	15,030	15
Witeithie	Female	21,250	18,100	36
	Male	13,600	9,000	15
Kalimoni	Female	42,000	27,000	33
	Male	35959	11,200	16
Total		300,948	200,510	278

During the conduction of the quantitative part, a sample of 278 respondents was established. Utilizing the stratified random sampling method, 78 respondents were targeted at the Murera ward, 45 respondents at Theta ward, 55 respondents at Juja ward 51 respondents at Witeithie and 49 respondents at Kalimoni ward to give 278 respondents. The sample was randomly distributed in terms of gender basis where 200 were females and 78 were males. Within each ward, a proportionate number of the female respondents and the male respondents were randomly selected with the female gender being dominant. The sample of female respondents in each ward was randomly distributed as, 58 respondents in Murera, 33 in Theta, 40 in Juja, 36 in Witeithie and 33 respondents from Kalimoni totaling to 200 female respondents. The sample of male respondents was

randomly distributed as, 20 respondents from Murera, 12 respondents from Theta and 15 respondents from Juja, 15 from Witeithie and 16 respondents from Kalimoni ward.

In addition, through purposive sampling method the researcher selected 1 security official i.e., officer commanding station from each ward and 1 community gender activist from each ward. This translated to 10 key informants for the interview schedules. The officers and the community gender activists were purposively selected as they were assumed to have more knowledge on the topic.

3.6 Research Instruments

The study utilized questionnaires, interview schedule guide and check list to collect data.

3.6.1 Questionnaire for respondents

The source of data collected for this research was through structured questionnaire as it is the appropriate for data collection from a large sample. The researcher used this instrument to get data from 278 respondents. The interview contained a 5-Point Likert-scale, and closed-ended questions. They were split into parts to contain background information in section A, sections B captured data on economic inequalities, section C cultural victimizations and section D was social dysfunction factors. The questionnaires were well analyzed and aligned towards the goals of the study to ensure validity.

3.6.2 Interview Schedule for Key Informants

Interview schedules were used in gathering qualitative information from the key Informants in this study. This supplementary data was obtained from 1 OCS from each ward and 1 community activist from each ward. An open-ended system of interview questions structured the interview guide. The interview purposed to explore details on opinions in regards to the relationship between the selected factors and femicide among the young women. Private spaces in consideration of respondent comfortability were used to conduct the interviews to enhance confidentiality and conduciveness.

3.6.3 Check Lists for Data Collection on Femicide Figures

A checklist is a written list of items, tasks, or criteria that researchers use to collect data in an organized and systematic manner. Checklists were used in this study to ensure systematic and unbiased data gathering on the number of femicide cases reported in the sub-county. The data on the femicide cases reported were collected as per the five wards of Juja sub-county.

3.7 Piloting

A pilot study was done at Nairobi County. 10 percent of the sample size number was used for this purpose. A pretest sample of 28 respondents was used. Five interview schedules were conducted, 3 on security agencies and other two on community gender activists. Nairobi County was chosen because it has similar characteristics with the primary study area and also, its proximity to Kiambu County for easier logistics.

3.7.1 Reliability

To test the internal consistency, the researcher used the Cronbach alpha coefficient. This is a statistic coefficient (a value between 0 and 1) used to rate the reliability of an instrument. The pilot sample was 10% of the sample size. Therefore, 28 respondents answered the questionnaires at the pilot stage. Split half reliability was utilized. Results obtained were spilt into two and measured in the Cronbach's alpha. For each category, a score for respondents was calculated from each half of the scale. And a score of 0.816 was determined which surpass the allowed value of 0.7, showing that the instruments used were reliable (Malhotra, 2010). The findings were then compared to confirm that the instruments can generate reliable result. If the results were consistent, the study process and tools were deemed reliable. Reliability shows the capacity and stability of the research instrument to give consistent findings each time they are utilized (Mugenda, 2013).

Table 2:

Reliability Tests

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.816	28

3.7.2 Validity

A research instrument is considered valid when it effectively measures the intended variables and accurately capture how these variables interact and influence one another (Bryman, 2016). To ensure the internal validity of the research instrument, the research proposal was given to supervisors for expert judgement and after the feedback was incorporated to align the tools used with the study objectives. Content validity for this study was ensured by seeking opinions from experts in the field of this research in various

faculties of Tharaka University who reviewed the instruments and ensured they are fair and comprehensive to cover the topic of this study. Face validity was achieved by ensuring that the respondents conveniently read, understand and respond to questions appropriately. Face validity was also determined by using appropriate font size, line spacing, and logical arrangements of items and clarity of information. External validity for this study was achieved through using real life-settings and ensuring that the sample represents the population of the study. Data source triangulation was achieved by combining data from questionnaire and interviews to improve the comprehensiveness of the findings.

3.8 Data Collection Procedures

An introductory letter was obtained from Tharaka University board of postgraduate studies which assisted in obtaining a research permit from the National Council for Science, Technology, and Innovation (NACOSTI) after receiving approval from the ethics committee at Tharaka University. With a valid study permit, the researcher sought for clearance from the Kiambu county commissioner. After approval, she arranged convenient meeting time with the Juja sub-county Officer Commanding Station who also gave clearance and further directives.

The researcher then visited the wards and reported to the administrators, who granted permission and logistics for issuing data collection instruments. Through the guidance of assigned chiefs of different locations, the researcher proceeded to administer data collection instruments to the sampled respondents. The target respondents filled out and returned their questionnaires. Interview schedules were developed as per the research objectives of the study. Interviews were administered in a private and comfortable setting of respondent's choice to ensure confidentiality.

3.9 Data Analysis

Quantitative and qualitative techniques analyzed data. The Poisson regression analysed the quantitative data with the help of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 26.0 software. The questionnaire was referenced and items in the questionnaire coded to facilitate data entry. Qualitative data was analysed through thematic content analysis where the audio recorded interviews were transcribed and coded thematically utilizing MAXQDA tool version 24.7. Objective one investigating the relationship between economic inequalities and femicide existed in two stages: Poisson and thematic analysis. The analysis of quantitative data obtained from questionnaires were conducted

by computing statistical information to understand economic inequalities trends. The collected information from interviews received thematic analysis for their qualitative data assessment. Objective two explored the relationship between cultural victimization and femicide. The analysis of quantitative data was done via Poisson regressions demonstrated how particularly cultural victimization factors link to femicide. Thematic content analysis was done to gather the descriptive information. Objective three relating to the relationship between social dysfunctions and femicide was analyzed through Poisson regression statistical approach for quantitative results and thematic content analysis for the qualitative data. The table below summarizes the data analysis process for the study.

Table 3:

Data Analysis Table

NO	Objectives	Independent variables	Dependent variable	Statistical procedures and tests
	To determine the relationship between economic inequalities and femicide cases among young women	Economic inequalities	Femicide	Poisson Regression Thematic content analysis
	To determine the relationship between cultural victimization and femicide rate among young women	Cultural victimization	Femicide	Poisson Regression Thematic Content Analysis
	To assess the relationship between social dysfunctions and femicide among young women	Social dysfunctions	Femicide	Poisson Regression Thematic Content Analysis

3.10 Ethical Considerations

The study process was conducted with due respect to ethical considerations in research. First, the researcher obtained ethical clearance from Tharaka University Research Committee, which aided in obtaining a permit from the National Commission for Science Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI), and then she got permission from the Kiambu County Commissioner and proceeded for clearance from the sub-county Directors. The researcher sought clearance from various security agencies as femicide is a sensitive topic. Informed consent of the respondents to participate in the study was ensured. The process was transparent and all the details concerning the research objectives, the risks and benefits were well explained.

The researcher sought consent to interview several young women and other respondents in the area as well as various key informants to gain more insight on the topic. The researcher ensured that the participants verbally expressed informed consent even after receiving consent and permission from the authorities. The right to decline participation from the study at any point without consequences was clearly explained to the participants.

Respondent's privacy was protected and all the data was treated with total confidentiality. Only the researcher and the supervisors freely accessed the data and strict protection and safe storage was ensured on the data. To ensure anonymity the researcher removed personal identifiers and no photos or videos which were taken. To ensure no biasness in the collection of data the sample selection was done in a way that ensures equal representation without stigmatizing of any specific group. The questions were formulated in a way that avoided causing physical or psychological harm to anyone, either by being embarrassing or irrelevant questions, using threatening language or making respondents nervous. Respondent's views were treated with respect and utmost confidentiality.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the results and interpretation of data collected on the relationship between contextual risk factors and femicide cases among young women in Juja Sub-County, Kenya. The analysis is guided by the specific objectives, focusing on economic inequalities, cultural victimization, and social dysfunctions. The study employed a mixed-method approach, specifically the embedded design. Quantitative data gathered through structured questionnaires were analyzed using descriptive statistics, correlation, and regression analysis with the aid of SPSS Version 26.0. Qualitative data obtained from interviews with key informants were analyzed thematically using MAXQDA tool to capture key narratives, patterns, and emerging themes.

4.2 Respondents Response Rate

A sum of 278 questionnaires was distributed to residents across the five wards of Juja Sub-County. Out of these, 245 were successfully filled and returned, representing a response rate of 88.1%, which is within the acceptable range of 80%–100% as recommended for research standards (Morton, 2012). In addition, all 10 key informants purposively selected for interviews comprising 5 gender activists and 5 security officials fully participated, giving a 100% response rate for the qualitative component. This strong response enhanced the reliability and completeness of the study findings. The response distribution is summarized in Table 3 below.

Table 4:

Response Rate Summary

Respondent	Sample	Responses	Percentage (%)
Residents	278	245	88.1
Informants	10	10	100
Total	288	255	88.5

4.3 Bio Data Analysis

This subsection presents the demographic characteristics of the respondents who participated in the study. The analysis includes variables such as age and education level,

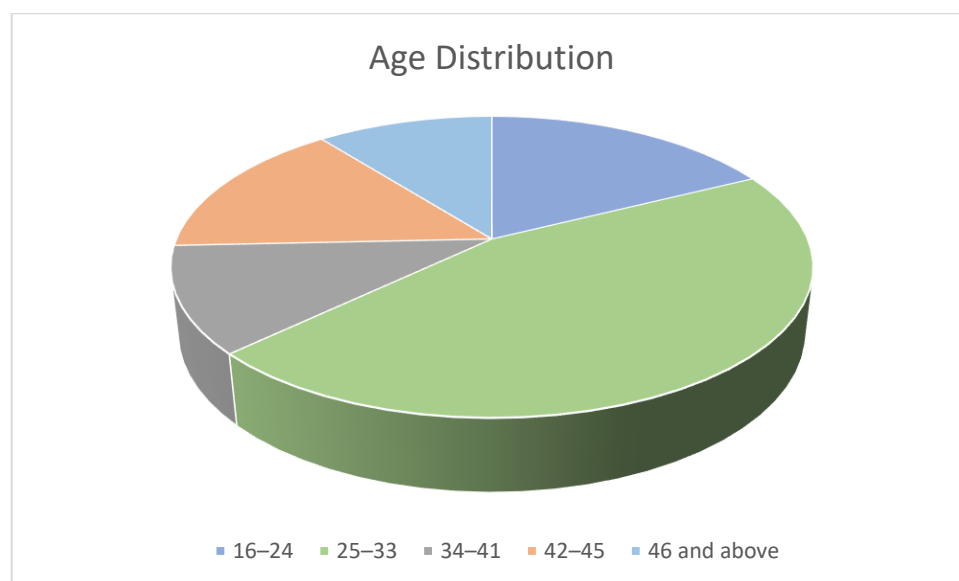
which were considered relevant for understanding the composition of the sample. These characteristics provides insight into the background of the participants and help in drawing meaningful conclusions and generalizing the study findings to the wider population.

4.3.1 Distribution of Respondents by Age

This subsection presents the age distribution of respondents who participated in the study. Out of the 245 participants, the majority were within the 25–30 age group, representing 45.3% of the total sample. The age group with the fewest respondents was 46 and above, accounting for 10.6% of the sample. This distribution reflects the focus of the study on young women and the population dynamics within the sub-county. Compared to some international trends for example, a study by Bronson (2017) that noted a higher prevalence of certain age groups in violent crime victimization in the U.S. This study’s findings show a higher concentration of affected individuals to be young, aligned with the Kenyan femicide trend among women aged 16–35. The age data are summarized in figure below.

Figure 2:

Distribution of Respondents by Age



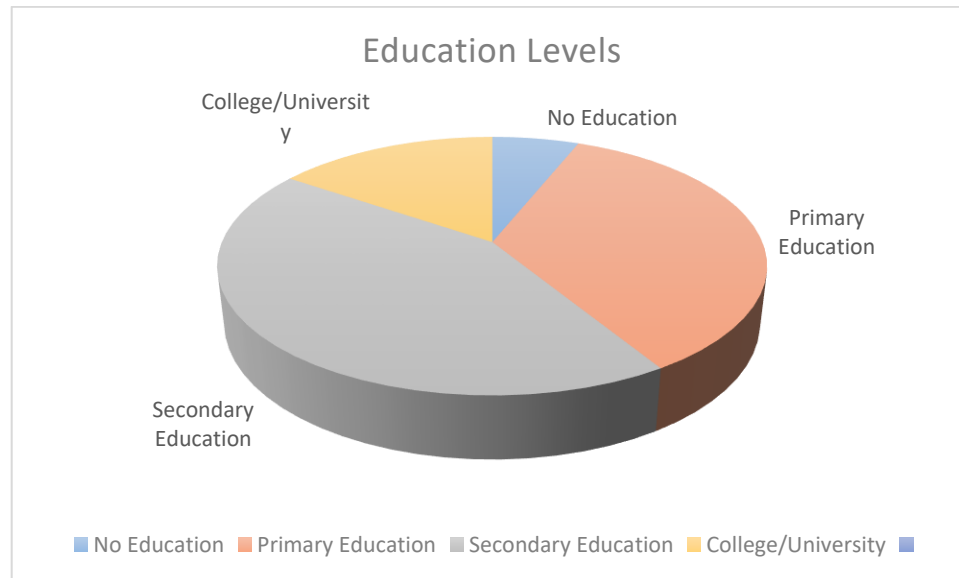
4.3.2 Distribution of Respondents by Education Levels

The majority of respondents had completed secondary education, accounting for 43.3% of the sample. This reflects the dominant educational attainment among young women in the area and suggests a basic level of literacy and awareness. The second most common level was primary education, representing 35.1%, while college or university graduates

made up 15.5%. A small portion (6.1%) of the respondents had no formal education, which may point to disparities in educational access within the sub-county.

Figure 3:

Distribution of Respondents by Education Levels



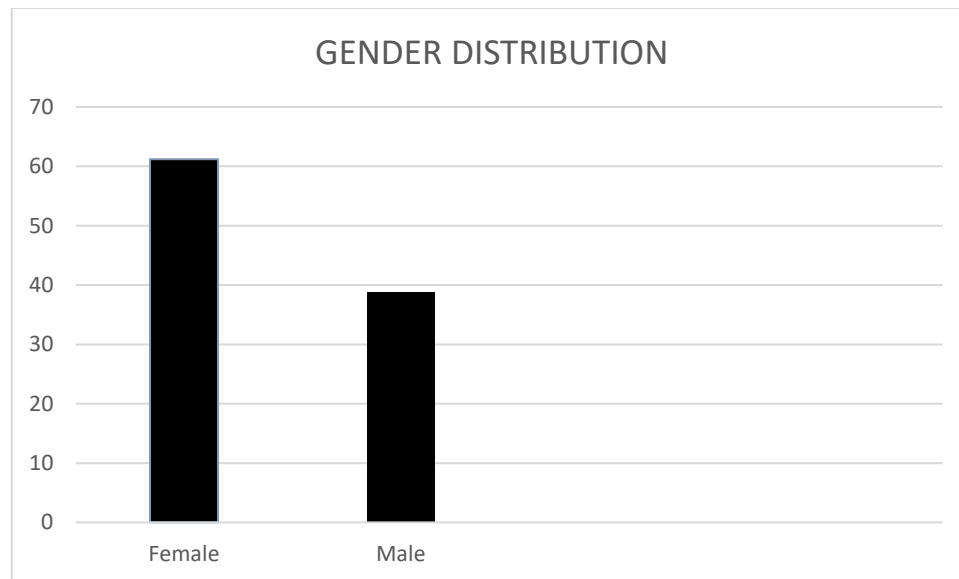
4.3.3 Distribution of Respondents by Gender

While the main focus of the research was on femicide cases among young women, male respondents were also included to provide a broader community perspective on the contextual risk factors contributing to femicide in Juja Sub-County.

Out of the 245 respondents who successfully returned the questionnaires, approximately 61.2% were female, and 38.8% were male. This was consistent with the sampling design, which prioritized the inclusion of young women due to their direct relevance to the study topic. The presence of male respondents added value by offering insights into societal norms, gender dynamics, and community awareness surrounding femicide cases. The distribution is summarized in the figure below.

Figure 4:

Distribution of Respondents by Gender



4.4 Normality Test

To determine whether the dataset met the assumptions required for parametric statistical analysis, a normality test was conducted using the Kolmogorov–Smirnov.

Table 5:

Normality Test

Factor	W-statistic	p-value	Interpretation
Eco_Mean	0.894	0.377	Data is normal ($p > 0.05$)
Cul_Mean	0.777	0.052	Data is normal
Social Mean	0.900	0.409	Data is normal ($p > 0.05$)

According to the findings, the data for each of the three factors i.e Eco_Mean, Cul_Mean, and Social Mean does not substantially deviate from a normal distribution, with p-values greater than 0.05 for each. The assumption of normalcy is strongly supported by the p-values of 0.377 and 0.409 for Eco_Mean and Social Mean, respectively. The p-value for Cul_Mean was 0.052, which is acceptable for parametric testing.

4.5 Analysis of the Research Objectives

This section contains the analysis of the data on the research objectives for both questionnaires and interview schedules.

4.5.1 Relationship between Economic Inequalities and Femicide

This subsection analyzes how economic inequalities relate with femicide cases among young women in Juja Sub-County. Both quantitative data and qualitative data were used to illustrate how economic inequalities increases vulnerability to femicide. Respondents were asked to respond to statements framed on a 5-point Likert scale, where: (1 = *Strongly Disagree*, 2 = *Disagree*, 3 = *Neutral*, 4 = *Agree*, 5 = *Strongly Agree*). Statements focused on economic dependency, Unemployment and Income disparities. Table 8 provides a summary of the questions asked for instance.

Table 6:

Relationship between Economic Inequalities and Femicide

Statement	1 (%)	2 (%)	3 (%)	4 (%)	5 (%)	Mean	SD
Men have higher income levels as compared to women	16 6.4%	30 12.2%	20 8.2%	108 44.1%	71 29.1%	3.8	1.18
Young women are highly dependent on men for economic support	14 5.9%	22 8.8%	34 13.9%	94 38.3%	81 33.1%	3.8	1.15
Young women do not receive enough economic assistance and resources when in need.	25 10.2%	13 5.3%	48 17.6%	98 40.0%	66 26.9%	3.7	1.21
The community does not provide better economic opportunities for young women	30 12.2%	22 9.0%	32 13.1%	87 35.5%	74 30.2%	3.5	1.32
There are no adequate levels of economic empowerment initiatives among young women	12 4.9%	24 9.8%	48 19.6%	74 30.2%	87 35.5%	3.7	1.16
Women experience significant obstacles when obtaining social and legal protection against violence due to financial constraints.	28 11.4%	28 11.4%	33 13.5%	93 38.0%	63 25.7%	3.6	1.30

Average Mean = 3.7, Average SD =1.22

When asked whether men have higher income levels as compared to women, 73.2% of the respondents agreed that men have more opportunities and income as compared to women and this state of income disparities increases women's exposure to risky situations that may escalate to femicide. Only 18.6% of respondents disagreed with this statement, while a minority 8.2 % remained neutral.

The data further revealed that 71.4% of the respondents believed that young women are highly dependent on men for economic support while a small percentage of respondents 14.7% disagreed with this statement. This state significantly limits the young women ability to escape femicide risk situations. This supports the view that financial dependency is a major contributing factor of femicide.

A majority portion of respondents 66.9% moderately agreed and strongly agreed that young women do not receive enough economic assistance and resources. Consequently, 15.5% of respondents disagreed with this statement while 17.6% were neutral on this issue. The responses suggested that many victims of femicide were first economically vulnerable before becoming physically endangered. The average agreement is moderate (mean = 3.5)

Regarding whether the community provides better economic opportunities for young women, 65.7% of the respondents strongly agreed and 13.1 % were neutral on these issues while 21.2 disagreed to this statement. Average agreement appeared to be in favor of disagreement.

Lack of economic empowerment through provision of job opportunities and financial programs was majorly related to femicide cases among young women with a substantial percentage of respondents (65.7%) agreeing and strongly agreeing that they have not observed adequate levels of economic empowerment initiatives in the area. In contrast, 14.7% of respondents disagreed with this idea, while 19.6% were neutral.

Furthermore, 63.7% of respondents agreed that young women experience obstacles when obtaining social and legal protection against violence due to financial constraints. In contrast, only 22.8% of the participants disagreed with the idea that women undergo

hardship if they lack finances, suggesting that the majority recognize the strong correlation between financial security and femicide.

In summary, the findings from this section highlight that economic inequalities is a risk factor to femicide cases, emphasizing the role of financial disparities, unemployment, and dependency in exposing young women to femicide. This is consistent with feminist theory, which identify poverty as both a risk factor and a barrier to escaping violent situations.

To determine the strength of the relationship between economic inequalities and femicide, a Poisson regression Test was conducted. The analysis showed no statistically significant relationship between economic inequalities and femicide

Table 7:

Economic Inequalities and Femicide

Parameter	Value	df	Significance (p-value)	Interpretation
Economic	2.167	1	.141	The relationship between economic inequalities and femicide is not statistically significant.

The p-value for the Economic variable was .141, which is above the standard significance threshold of .05. This finding challenges the notion that economic disparity alone is a primary driver of femicide and suggests that other interconnected variables must be considered to understand this complex issue.

To better understand the relationship between economic inequalities and femicide in Juja Sub-County, the researcher asked informants questions related to how economic dependence and lack of financial resources may contribute to femicide. The responses revealed a range of insights surrounding female economic vulnerability and dependency, economic disparities including male dominance in resource control, and community barriers to women's economic empowerment.

Most informants agreed that economic dependence on male partners significantly increases the vulnerability of young women to femicide. Economic inequalities, especially those rooted in patriarchal control of wealth, were identified as both a trigger and a sustaining factor of femicide. According to many of them, women often stay in femicide risky places due to lack of income, housing, or economic support, making them vulnerable to fatal outcomes when disputes arise.

They also noted that enhancing women's economic independence through vocational training, education, employment, and financial literacy could reduce the risk of femicide. Economic empowerment would not only provide women with the means to escape abuse but also would shift power dynamics that currently favor male economic control and entitlement. Some of their responses included:

"Many girls here drop out of school early and have no jobs. They become fully dependent on their partners. If that man becomes violent, she cannot easily walk away. She has nowhere to go, no money. That's how some die"

(Informant A, Female, 19th July 2025)

"The issue is power. Men feel like because they provide everything, they own the woman. And if the woman tries to leave, he can kill her. Economic inequality is the root of this entitlement."

(Informant B, Male, 20th July 2025)

They added that community and public policy do little to protect economically vulnerable women. Even though there are legal protections against femicide, enforcement is weak and access to legal aid is limited for poor women. Some said that female entrepreneurs face barriers in accessing government funds, loans, or land resources which could give them autonomy and reduce dependence. Many are usually trapped in sexual manipulation and exploitation. One respondent who was a security official affirms that:

"If we had more shelters and emergency funds for abused women, we would prevent many of these deaths. Right now, many stay at risk because they cannot even afford bus fare to go back to their rural homes."

(Informant C, Female, 20th July 2025)

Previous studies have been done which supports these findings. For instance, Nicolaidis (2003) notes that the majority of intimate partner femicides happen in situations where the woman is financially dependent and unable to exit the relationship. Barberet (2020) highlight that economic constraints remain a key reason why many women fall victims of femicide. Mcphedran (2018) also added that among female homicide victims, a majority (approximately two thirds) are killed by a current or former intimate partner, making the reduction of intimate partner homicide (IPH) a key priority for addressing lethal violence against women more broadly. Dawson (2021) noted that unless there is a fundamental change in attitudes towards women, especially on the part of men, violence against women

and femicide will continue to be major challenges and will remain to be properly addressed by lawmakers. In a related study by Brysk (2008), it was found that 76% of women who are killed lacked stable income, and of those, 31% reported threats of death if they attempted to leave their partners.

In summary the findings from both quantitative and qualitative analysis strongly suggest that economic inequalities are risk factors associated with femicide cases. But the model revealed that addressing femicide will require multi-faceted approaches as economic inequalities are not significantly related to femicide cases.

4. 5.2 Relationship between Cultural Victimization and Femicide

The second objective of the study focused on how cultural victimization relates to femicide. All research instruments were applied consistently to this objective. The questionnaire used a Likert scale to measure the degree of agreement, ranging from 1 to 5, where: 1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Agree, and 5 = Strongly Agree. Additional views were collected through in-depth interviews with gender activists and local police officers. The study sought to examine how cultural victimization contributes to the rising cases of femicide among young women in Juja Sub-County, Kiambu County. Cultural victimization, in this context, refers to the oppressive social norms, traditions, and belief systems that restrict women's rights, dignity, and agency within the community. Participants were asked to respond to a series of Likert-scale questions relating to cultural expectations, gender norms, and the normalization of violence in their societies. The responses from 245 participants revealed deep-rooted cultural patterns that increase femicide cases.

Table 8:

Relationship between cultural victimization and Femicide

Statement	1 (%)	2 (%)	3 (%)	4 (%)	5 (%)	Mean	SD
Women behavior are dictated by cultural norms and cultural gender expectations	9 3.7%	14 5.7%	18 7.4%	103 42.0%	101 41.2%	4.1	1.02
Women are culturally not viewed the same and equal to men in my community	18 7.3%	9 3.7%	26 10.6%	85 34.7%	107 43.7%	4.0	1.16
Traditional gender roles make women feel obligated to be submissive and obedient to male figures	7 2.9%	14 5.7%	39 15.9%	112 45.7%	73 29.8%	4.1	1.01
Women who question cultural practices and rules are condemned and not well received	9 3.7%	12 4.9%	34 13.8%	107 43.7%	83 33.9%	3.9	1.07
Patriarchal institutional rules and violence against women is normal and accepted	14 5.7%	12 4.9%	55 22.4%	74 30.3%	90 36.7%	3.9	1.09
Women are not respected and treated as special human beings but as mere properties in my community	12 4.9%	15 6.1%	29 11.8%	106 43.3%	83 33.9%	3.9	1.07
Average Mean = 3.62, Average SD = 1.05							

The first item assessed whether women's behaviors and roles are dictated by cultural norms and expectations. A high proportion of respondents (83.2%) agreed or strongly agreed, yielding a mean of 4.1 while 9.4% disagreed or strongly disagreed, and 7.4% were neutral. This reveals that women in the community are expected to conform to traditional gender roles, limiting their choices and freedoms. Such cultural conditioning not only

strips women of freedom but also predisposes them to coercion, control, and to greater levels murder.

The statement that women are viewed culturally not equal to men received strong agreement from most participants. 78.4 % of respondents accepted the notion of cultural gender inequality, while only 11.0% disagreed and 10.6 were neutral. This perceived inferiority leads to systemic neglect and violent treatment, where women are devalued to the extent that their lives are considered expendable, and can lead to femicide.

Another notable finding was that women are expected to be submissive and obedient to male figures. 75.5% of respondents agreed with this statement, giving a mean of 4.1, 8.6% disagreed, and 15.9% were neutral. Cultural expectations of female submissiveness foster power imbalances in the society and discourage women from speaking out when facing abuse. This unequal power dynamic often traps women in cycles of violence that can ultimately result in lethal outcomes, especially in intimate partner contexts.

The study also found that women who question or challenge cultural practices are condemned and not well received. A significant 77.6% of participants agreed that such women face community backlash and are viewed as outcasts. However, 8.6% disagreed or strongly disagreed, and 13.8% were neutral, implying a significant proportion of respondents who perceive that women who challenge cultural practices are not well received. This reflects a hostile environment toward female empowerment and autonomy. When women are discouraged or punished for challenging oppressive norms, they are denied the tools and support needed for self-protection. This cultural rejection creates both psychological and physical vulnerability, increasing their risk of femicide.

The belief that patriarchal institutional rules and violence against women are normal and accepted in the community was also strongly supported with 67.0% of respondents agreeing while 10.6% disagreed, and 22.4% were neutral. When physical or emotional abuse is culturally justified or ignored, perpetrators are emboldened, and victims are silenced. This environment enables continued femicide cases.

Finally, whether women are not respected and treated as special human beings but as mere property had a mean of 3.9, with about 77.2% of respondents agreeing or strongly agreeing while 11.0% disagreed or strongly disagreed, and 11.9% were neutral. These

results suggest that many people in the community still view women as commodities under the ownership or authority of men. This belief system is perhaps the most dangerous: when women are objectified, their lives are perceived as expendable, and acts of extreme violence including murder become an expression of reclaiming control or punishing disobedience from men.

In summary, the data paints a clear picture that cultural victimization plays a critical role in fostering the conditions under which femicide can occur. The combination of harmful gender roles, the lack of cultural equality, the normalization of violence, the viewing of women as property and the societal punishment of defiant women collectively contribute to a dangerous cultural view. These cultural dynamics do not merely influence attitudes; they enable violence and cost lives.

To test the strength and significance of the relationship between cultural victimization and femicide, a Poisson regression Test was conducted. Findings revealed that no statistically significant relationship between cultural factors and femicide

Table 9:

Cultural Victimizations and Femicide

Parameter	Value	df	Significance (p-value)	Interpretation
Cultural	2.193	1	.139	The relationship between cultural factors and femicide is not statistically significant.

The p-value for the Cultural variable was .139, exceeding the .05 significance level. This result indicates that, within the scope of this model, cultural factors do not independently predict the rate of femicide. It prompts a deeper inquiry into how cultural norms might intersect with other factors to foster an environment conducive to violence.

The findings from the key informant interviews conducted revealed that femicide among young women is significantly sustained by deeply rooted cultural views and societal conventions, particularly those revolving around rigid gender roles, patriarchal dominance, and a normalized acceptance of violence against women. The informants provided rich insights into how cultural structures have normalized, and in some cases, silently sanctioned, acts of extreme violence against women who defy or resist traditional expectations. Several of them expressed concern that from a very young age, women in

the community are socialized to accept subordination and submissiveness. The notion that a woman must be submissive to a man whether her father, brother, or partner is deeply ingrained in local traditions. This cultural conditioning often portrays assertive or independent women as rebellious and immoral, thereby justifying control or punishment, including femicide.

“In our culture, a woman’s place is still considered to be in the kitchen or behind a man. If she tries to act bold or independent, she is seen as disrespectful or wayward. That’s how the community justifies violence against her.”

(Informant D, Female, 22nd July 2025)

This reveals the underlying belief that male authority must not be challenged, and any form of female autonomy may provoke backlash in the form of emotional, physical, or even fatal violence.

The issue is further compounded by a culture of tolerance surrounding gender-based abuse. Informants noted that physical abuse within households is often considered a private matter. Women are regularly advised by elders and religious leaders to endure, forgive, and stay silent for the sake of family unity or respectability.

“There are still elders who advise women to be patient and tolerant even when they are being beaten. When a woman dies, only then do people pretend to be shocked. But this culture of silence enables it

(Informant E, Female, 25th July 2025)

This normalization of abuse creates a dangerous environment where violence escalates over time without any social or legal deterrent. This effectively desensitizes communities to the signs and risk factors of femicide. Moreover, it was observed that women who challenge harmful norms such as rejecting early marriage, choosing their own partners, or refusing to submit to male control are often stigmatized.

“When a young woman says no to early marriage or chooses her own path, the community attacks her character. She is seen as a disgrace. Sometimes she is even harmed physically or killed.”

(Informant J, Female, 20 July 2025)

In such cases, societal condemnation not only isolates the woman but may indirectly give her abuser the moral license to punish or eliminate her. This pattern reinforces the cultural notion that women who do not conform to cultural practices deserve to be disciplined or silenced.

When asked about the role of prevention and cultural change in reducing femicide, nearly all informants emphasized that legal reforms alone are not enough. They agreed that lasting change must come from reshaping the cultural narratives that place women in subservient positions.

“We need to start from schools and churches, educating people that women are not lesser beings. Cultural reform is the vaccine against femicide.”

(Informant G, Female, 22nd July 2025)

Education was seen as a key tool in deconstructing harmful stereotypes and challenging patriarchal values. The informants called for integrated community programs that engage not only women but also men, elders, chiefs, and religious leaders to promote a new, gender-equitable model of coexistence.

These findings reflect a broader reality noted by scholars such as (García-Moreno, 2020), who emphasized that femicide is often the end result of long-standing social systems that normalize control and violence against women. Similarly, (Jewkes, 2015) argued that femicide is enabled by a permissive environment where male entitlement is embedded in everyday culture. Local studies in Kenya, such as that of Mwangi (2019), support these views, showing that the murder of women often stems from retaliation when they seek autonomy in a patriarchal society.

Overall, the interviews demonstrated that cultural victimization remains a strong drive for femicide. By shaping how women are valued, how men are empowered, and how violence is interpreted, culture becomes more than just background it becomes a structural force that either enables or prevents femicide. In the case of Juja Sub-County, unless these cultural beliefs are addressed through education, dialogue, and community-based transformation, efforts to end femicide will likely fall short, regardless of legal or institutional reforms.

Several studies across Africa and beyond reinforce the findings from Juja Sub-County, highlighting culture as a critical risk factor of femicide. Julius (2025), emphasizes that

gender, identity, and violence in Kenya are deeply embedded within cultural systems, noting that legal frameworks alone are insufficient unless positive cultural values are mobilized to challenge patriarchal practices. Similarly, Mutambo.M (2023) found that cultural norms often treat abuse as a private family issue, discouraging women from reporting violence and thereby perpetuating femicide. Madan (2013) further support this, revealing that cultural attitudes such as beliefs that wife beating is justified if a woman refuses sex are significant predictors of intimate partner violence among women. A report by Cayli Messina (2022), also points to retrogressive cultural beliefs and community silence as central to the persistence of femicide, with victims often silenced or shamed when they seek justice. The Africa Data Hub femicide report echoes this reality, noting that many Kenyan femicide cases remain unreported due to stigma and cultural normalization of violence against women.

Kreft, A.K (2023) study show that machismo culture normalizes male dominance and legitimizes violence against women who are perceived to challenge traditional roles. Loza (2022) observed that rigid cultural scripts around honor and family reputation often justify violence against women, with honor killings being one of the most extreme manifestations. Murvarian (2024) found that despite stronger legal protections, cultural stigma and victim-blaming still silence many survivors of intimate partner violence, showing that culture intersects with institutional responses even in high-income settings. Kersten (1996) argue that cultural ideals of masculinity and control remain linked to lethal violence against women, particularly in intimate relationships.

The findings confirm that cultural victimization is an important risk factor for femicide in Juja Sub-County. Taken together, the respondents views, African and global studies demonstrate that cultural beliefs and practices are not passive traditions but active structures that shape gender relations, silence victims, and normalize violence. This confirms that addressing femicide requires not only legal and institutional reforms but also deep cultural transformation through education, dialogue, and community engagement.

4.5.3 Relationship between Social Dysfunctions and Femicide

The third objective focused on the role of social dysfunctions in relation to femicide. All research instruments were consistently applied to this objective. The questionnaires used a Likert scale to measure the degree of agreement, ranging from 1 to 5, where: 1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Agree, and 5 = Strongly Agree. Additional views

were gathered from key informant interviews with gender activists and police officers. The analysis of the findings is presented as follows:

Table 10:

Relationship between Social Dysfunctions and Femicide

Statement	1 (%)	2 (%)	3 (%)	4 (%)	5 (%)	Mean	SD
Social media facilitates deceptive approaches	27 11.0%	19 7.8%	35 14.3%	65 26.5%	99 40.4%	3.8	1.20
Young women lured via social media	17 6.9%	20 8.2%	34 13.8%	92 37.6%	82 33.5%	3.9	1.18
No strict law enforcement measures	23 9.4%	39 15.9%	41 16.7%	80 32.7%	62 25.3%	2.6	1.26
Legal process delays for women's cases	14 5.7%	21 8.6%	30 12.2%	96 39.2%	84 34.3%	3.9	1.09
Intimate partner conflict observed	10 4.1%	17 6.9%	26 10.6%	101 41.2%	91 37.2%	4.0	1.03
Jealousy, control in marriage	13 5.3%	22 9.0%	31 12.7%	89 36.3%	90 36.7%	3.9	1.10
Average Mean: 3.67		Average SD: 1.14					

In regard to social media facilitating deceptive romantic approaches. The mean score for this item is 3.8, indicating a high level of agreement among respondents. About 66.9% agreed or strongly agreed that social media platforms are used to deceptively approach young women. Only 18.8% disagreed, while 14.3% were neutral. This reflects a strong perception that digital platforms are playing a role in exposing young women to risky relationships that may escalate to femicide.

A majority of 71.1% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed with this claim that young women are lured into dangerous spaces via social media. The mean score is 3.9, showing strong agreement. Just 15.1% of respondents disagreed and 13.8% were neutral. These findings affirm the concern that social media is an active tool in drawing young women into exploitative or dangerous interactions.

On the statement that there are no strict law enforcement measures, only 14.3% disagreed or strongly disagreed, while a much larger 73.0 % agreed or strongly agreed. The mean score of 3.5 and relatively high SD of 1.28 reveal a weak perception of law enforcement effectiveness in protecting women. These results suggest systemic legal inadequacies that could enable femicide.

A substantial 73.5% agreed or strongly agreed that legal delays are common in cases concerning young women. The mean score of 3.9 further supports this concern. Only 14.3% of respondents disagreed. These delays may reduce access to justice and increase victim femicide vulnerability.

A strong 78.4% of participants agreed or strongly agreed that violence is present in many young women's relationships, with a mean of 4.0. This validates the frequent connection between intimate partner violence and femicide. These conflicts combined with poor decision making, poor self-control and lack of experience lead to poor solving of issues with physical abuse being involved and to extreme levels femicide.

In regards to experiences of jealousy, control and possessiveness, most 72.8% agreed or strongly agreed while 14.3% disagreed or strongly disagreed, and 12.9% were neutral. With a mean of 3.9, this suggests that toxic behaviors such as control, unfaithfulness, and jealousy are prevalent and likely contributing factors to femicide. This aligns with prior findings that femicide is often preceded by emotional abuse and coercive control. The data clearly shows that social dysfunctions in the immediate environment of young women plays a crucial role in shaping violent tendencies that may eventually lead to femicide.

The Poisson regression was calculated to measure the strength of the relationship between social dysfunction indicators and femicide. The analysis also found no statistically significant relationship between social factors and femicide as described in the table below

Table 11:

Social dysfunctions and femicide

Parameter	Value	df	Significance (p-value)	Interpretation
Social	.814	1	.367	The relationship between social factors and femicide is not statistically significant.

With a p-value of .367, well above the .05 threshold, our model indicates that social variables do not have a direct, independent effect on the number of femicide cases. This outcome suggests that social dynamics contributing to femicide may not be easily isolated but are instead part of a larger systemic issue.

To better understand how social dysfunctions contributed to femicide among young women, the researcher interviewed gender activists and police officers within Juja Sub-County. The responses were categorized according to three key themes: social media influence, legal system inadequacies, and relationship-related risks.

These themes reflected the indicators in the conceptual framework. Interviewees were asked to share their perspectives and lived experiences dealing with cases of femicide, gender-based violence, and systemic challenges. Their insights provided in-depth qualitative context to the statistical results captured from the questionnaire.

Informants observed that social media has increasingly become a deceptive gateway through which young women are trapped into relationships that expose them to harm, including femicide. According to both gender activists and police officers, platforms like Facebook, WhatsApp, and Instagram are commonly used by perpetrators to present false identities, offer fake job opportunities, or lure women with material promises. Here are some of the views.

“We have had many cases where young women were contacted online by men pretending to be offering jobs or relationships, only for them to end up in abusive environments—some were found dead days later. It’s becoming common, especially where young women are desperate for work or attention.”

(Informant D, Female, 22nd July 2025)

“There are real cases we’re following right now where the victim was last seen going to meet a man she met on Facebook. These digital interactions are not being monitored well, and many young women fall for them.”

(Informant A, Male, 16th July 2025)

These responses indicated that media platforms vulnerability, especially in emotionally unstable situations, can expose young women to fatal outcomes. Social media creates easy access for predators, especially when the victims lack digital literacy or oversight.

In discussing how laws and law enforcement contribute to or prevent femicide, most respondents were critical of the effectiveness and implementation of gender protection laws in Juja Sub-County. While Kenya has a legal framework in place (e.g., the Sexual Offences Act, Protection against Domestic Violence Act), enforcement was described as slow, dismissive, and under-resourced.

“We do have laws, yes, but most officers are not properly trained to handle femicide cases. Sometimes, reports are treated as ‘domestic misunderstandings’ until it’s too late and someone dies.”

(Informant E, Male, 17th July 2025)

“Young women file complaints, but due to case backlog, lack of legal aid, and sometimes corruption, the suspects are released and end up harming or killing more women. The system does not protect them.”

(Informant G, Female, 21st July 2025)

Some respondents also noted that delayed investigations and poor witness protection discourage many survivors from reporting threats or abuse, even when their lives are at risk. These sentiments align with questionnaire findings where over 70% of respondents agreed that legal delays contribute to femicide vulnerability. A major consensus among them was that intimate partner relationships are the leading drivers of femicide cases in the area. They noted a pattern: most femicide cases are not random acts of violence, but rather final escalations of long-term abuse, control, jealousy, unfaithfulness and emotional manipulation.

“We’ve lost too many girls because they were trying to leave abusive relationships. The boyfriends couldn’t handle rejection and decided to kill them. It always starts with control, checking her phone, isolating her, threatening her and it ends in death.”

(Informant B, Female, 12th July 2025)

“The hardest part is that most of these killings were predictable. There were no reports. Some felt ashamed, others feared being judged.”

(Informant E, Male, 13th July 2025)

The findings in this study are supported by various international and regional studies. For instance, an exploratory study on young adult intimate partner femicide by Nagle (2023) found that lethal outcomes are linked to controlling behavior, jealousy, and the presence of unhealthy social media influences. Similarly, Kropp (2014) demonstrated that stalking, threats, and following behaviors were consistent precursors to attempted or actual femicide, highlighting the importance of recognizing early warning signs. Also (Nicolaidis, 2003) reported that many women often do not recognize risk escalation until it is too late, with separation, jealousy, and substance abuse being common triggers. (Ekeh, 2025) revealed identifiable patterns in escalation toward femicide, with machine learning tools offering predictive insights for early interventions. The predictive value of such warning signs has also been confirmed in more recent research, which emphasizes the need for systems to respond to “red flags” before abuse escalates to femicide. Another study revealed that social media, messaging apps, and online harassment now serve as platforms for stalking, threats, and humiliation, which can escalate to femicide (Frye, 2023).

Regionally, Ramakoele (2021) found that media narratives around femicide often reinforce patriarchal norms and victim-blaming, thereby normalizing violence instead of challenging it. In Kenya, Mburuki (2024) showed that intersecting narratives of patriarchy, media framing, and institutional silence contribute to escalating femicide cases, echoing Juja’s experiences of cultural and systemic enablers. From digital deception, systemic failure, to toxic intimacy, these conditions put young women at risk of femicide.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the research summary, conclusions, and recommendations arranged according to the study objectives. It also outlines policy interventions and future research suggestions informed by the key findings on femicide among young women in Juja Sub-County.

5.2 Summary

The following were the key findings of this study

The study achieved a fairly balanced representation across the targeted areas, with respondents drawn from Juja Sub-County and its constituent wards. Out of the 245 respondents who completed and successfully returned their questionnaires, the gender distribution revealed that female respondents were slightly more represented, constituting approximately 61.2%, while males accounted for 38.8%. This slight female majority reflects the gender sensitivity of the study, which aimed to center the experiences of young women in relation to femicide. In terms of age distribution, the majority of respondents (57.1%) were aged between 18 and 35 years, highlighting that the research largely engaged the youth, who are most vulnerable to femicide in the region. With regard to education, the respondents were generally informed. Over 75% of participants had attained either secondary education or university-level education, suggesting a relatively high level of awareness and capacity to respond meaningfully to the study questions. The study also incorporated data from key informants such as police officers, gender activists.

The study established that both quantitative and qualitative findings over scored how unemployment, financial dependency, and income disparities between genders contribute to women's vulnerability to femicide. Quantitative results revealed that more than 70% of respondents agreed that women are economically vulnerable hence can fall victims of femicide. The average agreement score (mean = 3.7, SD = 1.22) across all items confirmed strong agreement with these issues. Qualitative interviews echoed these findings. Informants noted that economic dependence creates situations where women are unable to leave abusive relationships. They described how male partners often assert control due to their economic provision, which fosters entitlement, coercion, and, in extreme cases

femicide. They emphasized that the lack of employment opportunities, financial assistance, and access to property or legal aid further deepens the vulnerability of young women. A Poisson regression with a p-value of .141 was determined, which is above the standard significance threshold of .05 indicating a no statistically significant positive relationship between economic inequality and femicide risk.

The study revealed that cultural victimization is a key risk factor to femicide among young women in Juja Sub-County. The analysis demonstrated that entrenched patriarchal norms, traditional gender roles, and the normalization of violence within cultural contexts significantly increase the risk of femicide. Quantitative findings from 245 respondents showed that a majority (83.2%) agreed that women's behaviors are dictated by cultural norms, with a mean score of 4.1, indicating strong conformity to traditional gender expectations that limit female autonomy. A Poisson regression was performed giving a p-value of .139, exceeding the 0.5 significance level hence no direct relationship between cultural factors and Femicide. Qualitative insights highlighted that rigid gender roles, male entitlement, and cultural justifications for abuse enable environments where femicide can occur. Many women are socialized from an early age to be submissive, and obedient while assertiveness is punished through stigma or physical harm.

Social dysfunctions particularly social media manipulation, weak legal enforcement, and toxic romantic relationships were revealed to be a major contributor to femicide. The majority of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that social dysfunctions play a significant role in femicide. Specifically, 66.9% agreed that social media manipulation contribute to femicide, while 72.8% agreed that intimate relationship issues is also a major risk in femicide cases. Moreover, a majority cited delays in legal proceedings as persistent problem in causing femicide. The overall mean score for this objective was 4.02, indicating a strong collective relationship of social dysfunctions. The Poisson regression was performed to test the relationship between social dysfunctions and femicide. A p-value of .367 was established, which is above the .05 threshold, the model indicated that social variables do not have a direct, independent effect on the number of femicide cases. This outcome suggests that social dynamics contributing to femicide may not be easily isolated but are instead part of a larger systemic issue. Qualitative data from interviews further reinforced these findings. They highlighted how jealousy, control, and infidelity were recurring indicators in femicide cases.

5.3 Conclusions of the Study

The Study concentrated on understanding the contextual risk factors that might have been related to femicide cases among young women. This study focused on factors such as economic inequalities, cultural victimization and social dysfunctions which the results have established that they are real risk factors in regards to femicide. The research was carried out in Juja sub-county, Kiambu County, Kenya.

It was concluded that young women's economic dependence on male partners limits their ability to escape risky situations, increasing femicide vulnerability. Unemployment and income disparity create conditions that enable financial manipulation and control by abusers. Hence the study affirmed that economic inequalities are a major risk factor to femicide. The results of this study emphasized the need of understanding the gap formed by economic factors and suggested increased access to economic opportunities for women, including youth enterprise funds, vocational training, and micro-loans targeting young women.

Femicide cases were also found to be influenced by the cultural victimization issues. The Cultural gender norms and expectations upholding submissiveness, shaming, and tolerance of abuse among women at large puts women at risk of even legal crimes such as femicide. These norms reduce help-seeking behavior and often justify male aggression in intimate settings, contributing to rising femicide cases. This research emphasized on Community-based sensitization which should be prioritized challenge harmful cultural norms and foster embracing of positive cultural factors and disregarding of those that are harmful.

Through this study femicide was also strongly linked to social dysfunctions. Social media was concluded to have been increasingly used to deceive, manipulate, and exploit young women. Inadequate legal enforcement and toxic romantic relationships characterized by jealousy and control also create an environment where femicide thrives. The study findings notes the pressing need for increased public awareness to young women on social media safety, healthy relationship dynamics and the need for increased governmental support on issues involving the female gender.

5.4 Policy Recommendations

In light of the study findings, this part outlines the various recommendations aimed at addressing the critical contextual risk factors related to femicide cases among young women. These recommendations are designed to guide policymakers, key stakeholders and the public in general in making informed decisions to enhance the overall well-being of young women in the society and the community at large. They include:

- i. There should be increased access to economic opportunities for women, including youth enterprise funds, vocational training, and micro-loans targeting young women in informal settlements.
- ii. Community-based sensitization should be prioritized to challenge harmful cultural norms and foster positive cultural practices. This can be implemented through churches, mosques, schools, and digital platforms.
- iii. Public campaigns targeting both young women and men should be promoted to create awareness on digital safety, healthy online relationships, and how to detect manipulative behaviors online.
- iv. Law enforcement agencies should fast-track investigations and prosecutions related to femicide cases. Gender desks in police stations must be strengthened and made youth-friendly and survivor-centered.
- v. The county government and NGOs should invest in psycho-social support, particularly for couples and young people and it should be made available and free for all citizens. Relationship education should be integrated into youth programs, churches, and social media platforms.
- vi. Create a centralized system at county level to track all femicide cases reported through police, hospitals, and media. This will aid in evidence-based policymaking and prevention strategies.

5.5 Suggestions for Further Research

This study may not have exhaustively addressed all the complex dimensions of femicide and its underlying risk factors. Therefore, the following areas are recommended for future research:

- i. Conduct further research on femicide patterns in other counties across Kenya to compare regional factors and inform national policies.
- ii. Influence of mental health and trauma on femicide risk among young women.
- iii. Role of digital spaces and social media in enabling, exposing, or preventing femicide cases.
- iv. The role of men in femicide cases prevalence, including their involvement in shifting patriarchal narratives favoring them and victim blaming.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX I: Introductory Letter

Dear Respondent,

I am Winfred Kagwiria, I will be conducting research on femicide among young women from Tharaka University through the Department of social sciences as part of my Master's Degree program in Criminology and security studies. My research will be examining the essential case of femicide among young women to identify the relationship between contextual risk factors and femicide cases among young women. The analysis will focus on economic inequality factors, cultural victimization and social dysfunctions factors. Through this request, I ask you to provide answers to the research questions based on your individual thinking and practical knowledge. The research will provide no direct advantages for study participants although gathered information will add to society's knowledge. All contributed information in this study will remain fully confidential and your identity has absolute protection throughout the research process.

Thank you.

APPENDIX II: Questionnaire for Respondents

General Information

This questionnaire is confidential. You are requested to give honest opinion to show how these factors relate to femicide. Please do not mention your identity in this questionnaire.

SECTION A: BACKGROUND INFORMATION

This section requires you to give personal information.

Kindly indicate the following:

- **Age bracket in Years**

16-24 [] 25-33[] 34-42[] 42-46 [] 46 and above []

- **Your gender?**

Male []

Female []

- **Current academic level**

Primary []

Secondary []

Tertiary []

Others []

SECTION B: ECONOMIC INEQUALITIES AND FEMICIDE.

The following statement relates to the relationship of economic inequality factors and femicide: Tick using a scale where;

1- Strongly Disagree, 2- Disagree, 3- Neutral, 4- Agree and 5- Strongly Agree.

S/N	Statement/ Question	1	2	3	4	5
1.	In my community, men have higher income levels as compared to women.					
2.	In my observation, young women are highly dependent on men for economic support.					
3.	Young women do not receive enough economic assistance and resources when in need in my area.					
4.	My community does not provide better economic opportunities for young women.					
5.	There are no adequate level of economic empowerment initiatives (e.g., job training programs, financial literacy programs) among young women in my area.					
6.	In my area young women experience significant obstacles when obtaining social and legal protection against violence due to financial constraints.					

SECTION C: CULTURAL VICTIMIZATION AND FEMICIDE.

The following statement relates to cultural victimization factors that are related to femicide: Tick using a scale where;

1- Strongly Disagree, 2- Disagree, 3- Neutral, 4- Agree and 5- Strongly Agree.

S/N	Statement/ Question	1	2	3	4	5
1.	In my community women behavior and roles are dictated by the cultural norms and cultural gender expectations in the community.					
2.	In my culture, women are culturally not viewed the same and equal to men.					
3.	In my community women are culturally expected to be submissive and obedient to the male figures.					
4.	Young women who question and challenge the accepted cultural practices in my area are not well received in the community.					
5.	In my culture, patriarchal institutional rules and violence against women is normal and accepted in the community.					
6.	Women are not respected and treated as special human beings and but as mere properties in my community.					

SECTION D: SOCIAL DYSFUNCTIONS FACTORS AND FEMICIDE AMONG YOUNG WOMEN.

The following statement relates to the relationship between social dysfunctions and femicide: Tick using a scale where;

1- Strongly Disagree, 2- Disagree, 3- Neutral, 4- Agree and 5- Strongly Agree.

S/N	Statement/ Question	1	2	3	4	5
1.	Social media facilitates deceptive romantic approaches to young women in my area					
2.	I have seen young women being lured into dangerous spaces through social media.					
3.	There are no strict law enforcement measures against women abuse in my area.					
4.	I have experienced\observed delays in legal processes on cases concerning young women.					
5.	I have observed conflict or violence within intimate or romantic relationships of young women					
6.	I have experienced jealousy, control, unfaithfulness and possessiveness in my marriage.					

THANK YOU FOR YOUR COOPERATION IN COMPLETING THE

QUESTIONNAIRE

APPENDIX III: Checklists for Femicide Figures

Sub-County	No of Female Cases (Jan 2023-Aug 2025)	WARDS	No. of Femicide cases (Jan 2023-May 2025)
JUJA	32	JUJA	12
		WITEITHIE	6
		THETA	2
		KALIMONI	3
		MURERA	9
Totals	32		32

APPENDIX IV: Key Informants Interview Schedule

Interview schedule for gender activists in the community

The researcher will introduce herself to the respondents by a brief introduction. The respondents will be informed the purpose of the study, the privacy and confidentiality that will be maintained in this research. The following will be the guiding questions;

1. Can economic dependence on a partner or lack of financial resources enhance the chance of femicide, If yes how?
2. Do you think that enhancing women's economic independence (through education, career opportunities, etc.) can help minimize femicide?
3. How is femicide among young women sustained by deeply rooted cultural views and societal conventions (such as gender roles and patriarchy)?
4. What part does the prevention of these damaging gender stereotypes and social norms play in lowering femicide against women?
5. How effective are the present laws and law enforcement tactics in preventing femicide?
6. How can social media facilitate deceptive approaches into relationships and luring of young women into dangerous space such as those causing femicide?
7. Do you think there is a connection between relationship issues and femicide, if yes, how?
8. Is there a societal perception that justifies and normalizes violence against women, if so, how does it manifest in this area?
9. In your own view, what are the most urgent interventions needed to reduce femicide in Juja-sub county?

APPENDIX V: Interview schedule for security officials i.e., police

The researcher will introduce herself to the respondents by a brief introduction. The respondents will be informed the purpose of the study, the privacy and confidentiality that will be maintained in this research. The following will be the guiding questions;

1. Do police officers get training on femicide related issues? If yes, is there an emphasis on victim care, power dynamics, and cultural sensitivity?
2. What are some of the difficulties or obstacles that the police encounter while attempting to investigate or prevent femicide?
3. In your own observations does economic inequalities such as women dependency on men have anything to do with femicide among young women, if yes, how?
4. Do you think that enhancing women's economic independence (through education, career opportunities, etc.) can help minimize femicide?
5. How is femicide among young women sustained by deeply rooted cultural views and societal conventions (such as gender roles and patriarchy)?
6. What part does the prevention of these damaging gender stereotypes and social norms play in lowering femicide against women?
7. Have you observed any link between social media and femicide, if so, how?
8. In your own view, are there any societal norms and attitudes that discourage women from reporting violence which can later escalate to femicide.?
9. How effective are the present laws and law enforcement tactics in preventing femicide?

APPENDIX VI: Introductory Letter

THARAKA

P.O BOX 193-60215,
MARIMANTI, KENYA



UNIVERSITY

Website: <https://tharaka.ac.ke>
Social Media: [tharakauni](#)
Email: info@tharaka.ac.ke
Phone : +254745 838 353

OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR BOARD OF POSTGRADUATE STUDIES

REF: TUN/BPGS/PL/07/25

7th July, 2025

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

Dear Sir/Madam,

RE: WINFRED KAGWIRIA ADMISSION NUMBER AMT17/10073/23

Ms. Winfred Kagwiria is a postgraduate student at Tharaka University undertaking a Master of Arts degree in **Criminology and Security Studies**. The student has completed her coursework and is expected to proceed for collection of data after successfully defending her proposal at faculty level. The title of the study is "*Relationship between Contextual Risk Factors and Femicide Cases among Young Women in Juja Sub County, Kenya.*"

Any assistance accorded to her will be highly appreciated.

Thank you in advance.

Yours faithfully,


THARAKA UNIVERSITY
DIRECTOR BOARD OF POST
GRADUATE STUDIES
07 JUL 2025
P. O. Box 193-60215
MARIMANTI, KENYA
Dr. Ambrose Vengi, Ph.D.
Director, Board of Postgraduate Studies

TUN is ISO 9001:2015 Certified...



Education for Freedom/Elimu ni Uhuru

APPENDIX VII: Institutional Ethics Permit

THARAKA

P.O BOX 193-60215,
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Telephone: +(254)-0202008549
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Social Media: tharakauni
Email: info@tharaka.ac.ke

INSTITUTIONAL SCIENTIFIC AND ETHICS REVIEW COMMITTEE

2nd July 2025

REF: TUNISERC/NSEC/ M056

Dear, WINFRED KAGWIRIA

RE: RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CONTEXTUAL RISK FACTORS AND FEMICIDE CASES AMONG YOUNG WOMEN IN JUJA SUB COUNTY, KENYA

This is to inform you that *Tharaka University ISERC* has reviewed and approved your above research proposal. Your application approval number is *ISERC04023*. The approval period is

2nd July 2025 to 2nd July 2026.

This approval is subject to compliance with the following requirements;

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

Prior to commencing your study, you will be expected to obtain a research license from National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI)

<https://research-portal.nacosti.go.ke> and also obtain other clearances needed.

Yours sincerely,

Dr. Fidelis Ngugi
Chair, ISERC Tharaka University

APPENDIX VIII: NACOSTI Research Permit

 REPUBLIC OF KENYA Ref No: 533449	 NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY & INNOVATION Date of Issue: 15/July/2025
RESEARCH LICENSE	
	
This is to Certify that Miss.. Winfred Kagwira of Tharaka University, has been licensed to conduct research as per the provision of the Science, Technology and Innovation Act, 2013 (Rev.2014) in Kiambu on the topic: RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CONTEXTUAL RISK FACTORS AND FEMICIDE CASES AMONG YOUNG WOMEN IN JUJA SUB COUNTY, KENYA for the period ending : 15/July/2026.	
License No: NACOSTI/P/25/4176605	
Applicant Identification Number 533449	Ag. Director General NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY & INNOVATION
Verification QR Code 	
NOTE: This is a computer generated License. To verify the authenticity of this document, Scan the QR Code using QR scanner application.	
See overleaf for conditions	

APPENDIX IX: Juja Sub-County Permit

Winfred Kagwiria
Tharaka University
PO Box 193 - 60215

8/08/2025

Officer commanding Station,
Juja , Kenya

Dear Sir/Madam,

**SUBJECT: REQUEST FOR AUTHORIZATION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN
JUJA SUB-COUNTY IN KIAMBU COUNTY**

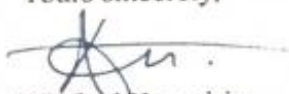
I trust this letter finds you in good health. I am writing to formally request your esteemed authorization to conduct research data collection in 5 wards in Juja Sub-county, Kiambu. This request is a crucial part of my masters research on "Relationship between contextual risk factors and femicide cases among young women."

In Juja Sub-County, my intention is to collect data from 278 respondents from the following wards: Kalimoni, Theta, witeithie, Murera and Juja ward. I anticipate that my presence at each ward will require approximately 1 day.

I am pleased to inform you that I have obtained a research permit from the National Commission for Science, Technology, and Innovation (NACOSTI) for this study (NACOSTI/P/25/4176605). I have attached a copy of the NACOSTI research permit to this letter for your reference. I would like to assure you that my research activities will be conducted with the utmost professionalism, adhering to all the rules and regulations governing these areas of residence. The information collected will be used exclusively for academic and research purposes and will not be disclosed or shared beyond the scope of this study.

I wish to extend my heartfelt appreciation for the continuous support that you have provided to researchers in their pursuit of knowledge. Upon the completion of the research and subsequent write-up, I will ensure that a comprehensive report is made available to your office for your review. Once again, I thank you for considering my request.

Yours sincerely,


Winfred Kagwiria

