

Extent of Fear of Crime among Students: The Case of a Kenyan University

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Abstract- This study aimed to explore the extent of fear of crime among students who are currently attending the Institute of Tourism and Hospitality Management (IToHM) within the Dedan Kimathi University of Technology. This research was conducted due to the absence of prior studies on this specific topic. The research employed a quantitative approach with a survey design, utilizing emotion-based measures to assess fear of crime among the participants. The sample size of 147 respondents was determined using Yamane's formula with a margin of error of 0.05, drawn from a population of 200 students divided into strata based on their program (Bachelor and Diploma students). The findings revealed a high level of fear of crime among IToHM students. The study identified property theft and robbery as the most feared crimes, with 86.6% and 84.9% of respondents expressing fear, respectively. Additionally, malicious property damage and burglary were reported to be feared by 78.1% of the participants. The fear percentages for assault and rape were 68.9% and 42%, respectively. Furthermore, there was a low frequency of fear of crime since most respondents stated that they had only experienced fear of crime once in the previous year. The results indicate a pressing need for the university to address the fear of crime among its students. By understanding the specific crimes causing fear and their respective frequencies, the university can implement targeted measures to mitigate this issue effectively. Moreover, the study recommends establishing a mechanism for annual data collection on fear of crime to monitor the situation and design appropriate interventions in the long term. Addressing the fear of crime among IToHM students will foster a safer and more conducive learning environment.

Keywords: Fear of crime, University students, Frequency of fear of crime, Intensity of fear of crime.

INTRODUCTION

The concept of fear of crime remains intricate and challenging to define consistently among researchers. It is often described as an adverse emotional reaction to crime or its associated symbols (Chadee & Ying, 2013). However, differing perspectives exist, with some scholars emphasizing the emotional aspect of fear rather than a purely cognitive one (Ferraro & LaGrange, 1992). The intensity and frequency of fear of crime have become crucial topics of study, particularly in developed countries, where a significant proportion of the population experiences this fear (Farrall, 1997).

Despite its prevalence, the frequency of fear of crime is not extensively explored in the existing literature, leaving a gap in our understanding (Farrall & Gadd, 2004). This study aims to shed light on the complex nature of fear of crime among university students, emphasizing its emotional underpinnings and the need for comprehensive research to determine its intensity and frequency. Understanding these aspects of fear of crime is essential for policymakers and researchers to develop effective interventions and strategies to address this significant societal concern.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Globally, populations have a pervasive fear of crime. Research in the United States based on data from the 2004 General Social Survey and the 2001 Census found that in a typical community, roughly 18% of people aged above 15 reported feeling very fearful or unsafe while alone after dark in their surroundings (Perreault, 2017; Britto et al., 2018). Another study analysed the British Crime Survey information from the 1994 database and discovered that a sizable proportion of the community was concerned about housebreaking and rape in their neighbourhoods (Farrall, 2004). Furthermore, the same poll found that 20% of the population feared burglary, and more so, respondents commonly expressed concern about street crime (Farrall & Gadd, 2004).

Africa is among the continents whose citizens are more fearful of crime in their environment. Research conducted in Africa in 20 countries to explore the intensity of fear of crime among citizens and how crime victimization affects the quality of life of people concluded that 44.5% of respondents in Ghana and 51% of respondents in Kenya were fearful of crime (Sulemana, 2015). As a result, Africans worry about crime in their neighbourhoods, just like people on any other continent. A study done among citizens in a gated community in South Africa concluded that high crime levels have manifested in many ways and have been characterized by a high fear of crime among the citizens in their neighbourhoods (Jurgens & Gnad, 2002).

A convergence of social and physical factors within the built environment influences the intensity and frequency of fear of crime. This combination creates an environment conducive to criminal activities, resulting in heightened fear among citizens. Research by Landman et al. (2018) highlights how some aspects of the built environment can foster criminal incidents, consequently amplifying the fear of crime experienced by the public. Understanding the relationship between the built environment and fear of crime is crucial in formulating strategies to address and mitigate the impact of this pervasive issue on communities.

Despite being considered safe by many (Nicoletti, Flintoft, Spencer-Thomas, & Dvoskina, 2018), universities are not immune to crime, and certain groups like students, faculty, and the organization may be particularly susceptible. Although most students feel secure on campus (Fuhrmann, Huynh, & Scholz, 2013), the open-access nature of campus compounds makes them vulnerable to

criminal activities (Agubokwu, 2016). Interestingly, society expects university settings to serve as centres of learning and refuge from the crimes prevalent in the broader population (Haskin & Jacobsen, 2017). However, acknowledging the potential for crime is essential to implement adequate safety measures and ensure a secure environment for everyone within the academic community. Across the globe, studies have consistently shown that students fear campus crime (Koseoglu, 2021). Notably, research conducted in the United States revealed that as much as a quarter of the student population has experienced a fear of crime while on campus (Maier & DePrince, 2020; Sani et al., 2020). One potential reason for this fear could be the specific locations students frequent within the university compound during their daily activities (Steinmetz & Austin, 2014). Identifying these vulnerable areas is crucial in devising effective safety measures for the campus community.

Interestingly, a European study examining fear of crime across the continent found variations in fear of crime levels. Estimates indicated higher fear in several South and East European regions than in Northern and Central Europe (Visser et al., 2013). Considering regional differences and challenges, this finding highlights the need to address the fear of crime on campuses.

Due to their susceptibility to crime, universities have become perceived as fear-of-crime zones. For instance, a study conducted in Sweden among university students revealed that women felt more vulnerable than their male counterparts, particularly concerning sexual assault crimes. The fear of becoming victims of such crimes, including the possibility of rape, heightened the fear experienced by female students (Mellgren & Ivert, 2019).

Understanding and addressing fear of crime on campuses is paramount to fostering a safe and secure learning environment for all students and faculty. By acknowledging these concerns and implementing appropriate measures, universities can alleviate the fear of crime and promote safety within their academic communities.

The vulnerability of universities to crime is a concern not only in the Western world but also in Africa. In South Africa, where gender inequality persists in particular societies and academic institutions, female students face higher crime vulnerability than their male counterparts. These crimes are often perpetrated by fellow students, contributing to the intensity of fear experienced on campus (Kruse & Surujlal, 2020).

Similarly, a study in Kenya revealed that students living off-campus are more susceptible to crime due to the increased distance they travel to attend classes. This finding of heightened vulnerability adds to the frequency of fear experienced by these students (Musyoka et al., 2020).

The evidence suggests that the fear of crime is prevalent among university students, regardless of gender. The intensity and frequency of this fear are influenced by various factors, such as gender-based violence within the campus community and the location of students' residences concerning the university (Kruse & Surujlal, 2020; Musyoka et al., 2020). Addressing these issues and implementing safety measures is crucial in reducing the fear of crime and promoting a secure learning environment for all students.

The impact of crime on college and university students has been evident, with a significant number of casualties reported in American educational institutions. A study in the USA revealed that more than half of the fatalities between 2001 and 2005 in colleges and universities were students (Hughes, Schaible & Jimmerson, 2020). This rising concern over high crime rates and their consequences has led to an increased fear of crime among students, prompting administrators and education stakeholders worldwide to address the issue.

Indeed, some students involved in illegal activities may also fall victim to crime (Waklata, 2013), further contributing to the fear of crime. The fear of crime is often triggered by personal victimization experiences, encompassing bodily harm, emotional trauma, material loss, or other social disadvantages (Gyong, 2010). The consequences of victimization can be severe, and it is considered the primary trigger of fear of crime, as evidenced by crime victimization studies (Truman, 2011).

Numerous studies have demonstrated the link between crime victimization and fear of crime since it is the major contributor to fear of crime in society (Sulemana, 2015; Jennings, 2007; Sani et al., 2020). Research in the USA highlights that college students, especially women, are at particular risk of sexual assault victimization, significantly contributing to the fear of crime (Lee & Hilinski-Rosick, 2012). Additionally, studies in India and Japan by Chockalingam and Srinivasan (2009) have shown that crime victimization and fear levels vary depending on respondents' location and the type of crime experienced. Previous victimization can trigger heightened fear of being victimized again (Wrigley-Asante & Frimpong, 2019).

Overall, the evidence indicates that crime victimization profoundly impacts fear of crime among college and university students. Addressing these concerns through preventive measures and support for victims is vital in fostering a safer and more secure campus environment.

In South Africa, research on women as respondents indicated that fear of sexual assault is widespread, particularly among women living in university hostels, with outsiders and male students being the most feared. In this study, out of 133 respondents, 56 percent feared strangers, while 44 percent were frightened of their male classmates (Singh et al., 2015; Caridade, 2022). As a result, it might be stated that women are more afraid of sexual-related crimes than any other type of crime in society or that any crime intended against them always ends as a sexual crime. Only female university students took part in this study.

In a study conducted by Farrall and Gadd in 2004, researchers found that approximately one-third of the surveyed participants reported experiencing fear of crime in the preceding year. This result meant that the measurement of fear of crime was based on one year, focusing on how frequently the respondents felt fearful. The research question employed in this survey was straightforward, inquiring about the fear participants felt about a specific crime in their residential area in the past year. Additionally, they were asked about the frequency of their fear concerning that particular crime during the same period. As the measurement of the intensity of fear, respondents were given options ranging from "not fearful at all" to "very fearful."

The previous study on the intensity of fear of crime indicated that 15% of the sample experienced heightened fear on a previous occasion. This finding revealed that only a tiny percentage of the population experienced high fear. Among those fearful individuals, approximately 8% encountered it more than once in a quarter of a year (Farrall and Gadd, 2004).

Given these insights, the current study aimed to analyse the level of fear of crime, specifically among IToHM students, considering both the intensity and frequency of their fears. By examining fear from these two aspects, the researchers sought a comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon.

In Kenya, a separate study conducted at a prestigious university in Nairobi involved 523 students. This research revealed that females and senior students tended to be more afraid of crime at school. This heightened fear was attributed to the university experiencing over 100 reported crimes in the previous year, leading to insecurity and fear of crime among the student population. The study suggested that university students in Kenya share similar concerns about crime as those in other affluent nations. However, this particular research focused primarily on crime rates and intensity, over students' fear of crime.

Consequently, a few researchers in Kenya have explored the frequency and intensity of fear of crime among university students. Their investigations revealed the existence of a significant prevalence of fear of crime on campuses, warranting the implementation of remedies to address this concern.

Against this backdrop, the current study aimed to investigate the extent of the fear of crime, specifically among IToHM students at the Dedan Kimathi University of Technology. By delving into the intensity and frequency of fear, this research aspired to contribute valuable insights and potential solutions to ensure a safe and conducive learning environment free from the fear of crime.

METHODOLOGY

The study utilized a quantitative survey design which uses large samples to describe the characteristics of an effective population, making the results statistically meaningful and generalizable. The study's target population was 200 students from the Institute of Tourism and Hospitality Management (IToHM). Yamane's (1967) formula was used to calculate the sample size with a margin of error of 0.05, yielding a sample size of 147 students.

The researcher divided the population into five strata. The researcher divided the population into academic-level groups of respondents in the current investigation. Following the determination of the criteria for stratification, an exhaustive list of all the elements (students) in each stratum was received from the Registrar's Office of Academic Affairs and Research. The participants were then picked from each stratum using a simple random sampling procedure, thus arriving at a sample size of 147. A structured questionnaire was used to collect the data. The questionnaire was designed on a Likert scale of 1 to 4. During questionnaire formulation, construct validity was factored in to cover all indicators, and measurements of fear of crime were carefully developed based on existing knowledge. A collection of survey variables in the questionnaire that were believed to have comparable features and were correlated with one another were evaluated in the study using Cronbach's alpha (1951), which also calculated the average inter-item correlation. According to Drost (2011), constructs used to measure the frequency of fear of crime produced a Cronbach alpha (α) coefficient of 0.868, and those used to measure the intensity of that fear produced a Cronbach alpha (α) coefficient of 0.849; both of which are above 0.70 and are regarded as excellent. The data were analysed using descriptive statistics using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) computer program for Windows 20.0 and presented in tables. Respondents' permission for research was obtained from the School of Graduate Studies & Research, which provided ethical approval, the Ethics Review Committee, and the National Commission for Science, Technology, and Innovation (NACOSTI).

Response rate

Respondents completed the survey in between ten and fifteen minutes; 119 people responded, yielding an 80.6 percent response rate. Fincham (2008) asserted in his study that most studies should aim for a response rate of about 60%. Therefore, the editor and associate editors of the journal should expect this percentage.

Demographics Characteristics

According to the results presented in Table 2, male respondents comprised significantly more of the sample (71.4%) than female respondents (28.5%). The study's 81.5% of research participants were under the age of 22, 1.7% were between the ages of 18 and 21, and 16.7% were between the ages of 23 and above. Therefore, the findings of this study indicated that all the respondents were over 18 years old and were deemed to be adults who could provide reliable information for the study to continue.

Most respondents (67.2%) lived off-campus, 21.8% on-campus, and 10.9% at home with their parents or in another type of residence. A sizable portion of the respondents (26.9%) were first-year undergraduate students, followed by third-year undergraduate students (25.2%), fourth-year undergraduate students (21.8%), second-year undergraduate students (16.8%), and respondents from diploma programs (9.2%). The Dedan Kimathi University of Technology had the highest favourability rating in Kenya for the 2019–2020 academic year, with 98% of students' placements (KUCCPS Placement List, 2020). Due to the large population, campus hostels could not house all enrolled students. Initially, most universities built their hostels during their inception based on the number of students they intended to accommodate. As the universities gain popularity and the country's population increases, these facilities lack enough space for the new enrolment of students joining these campuses annually (Ndung'u, 2015). As in this study, DeKUT had no new hostels built to accommodate the substantial number of students enrolled on this campus. This condition might have allowed students to seek alternative housing outside the university compound, as shown in Table 1.

Most respondents (89.1%) were single, with married people coming in second (5%), cohabiting people coming in third (4.2%), and separated people coming in fourth (1.7%). The primary socio-demographic characteristics in the sample distribution accurately reflected the demographics of the Dedan Kimathi University of Technology's student body and the broader university landscape in Kenya.

Table 1: Distribution Frequency of Respondents' Demographics Characteristics

Features		Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Female	34	28.6
	Male	85	71.4

	Total	119	100.0
Age	18	2	1.7
	19	24	20.2
	20	27	22.7
	21	21	17.6
	22	25	21.0
	23	8	6.7
	24	7	5.9
	25	2	1.7
	27	1	.8
	28	1	.8
	32	1	.8
	Total	119	100.0
Residential Area	On-campus	26	21.8
	Off-Campus	80	67.2
	Live with parents	7	5.9
	Other	6	5.0
	Total	119	100.0
Academic Status	Diploma	11	9.2
	First Year	32	26.9
	Second Year	20	16.8
	Third Year	30	25.2
	Fourth Year	26	21.8
	Total	119	100.0
Marital Status	Single	106	89.1
	Married	6	5.0
	Separated	2	1.7
	Cohabiting	5	4.2
	Total	119	100.0

RESULTS

Extent of Fear of Crime Among IToHM Students at Dedan Kimathi University of Technology

Since the fear of crime is believed to be an emotional response to crime or criminal symbols, the perceived fear of crime was expected to correlate positively with the crimes mentioned. On a four-point Likert scale, from (1) = not at all fearful, (2) = somehow fearful, (3) = fearful, (4) = very fearful, fear of crime was defined emotionally and coded. Respondents were asked to rate their fear of crime regarding six categories: burglary, robbery, theft, malicious destruction of property, assault, and rape and results are presented in Table 2 below.

Fear of property theft

Using a four-point Likert scale, responses to a question on property theft were rated as either not at all fearful, somewhat fearful, fearful, or very fearful. The results indicated that the majority of students with 32.8%, said they were fearful, closely followed by those who were a little bit fearful with 29.4%, and those who were very fearful with 24.4%, and 13.4%, who were not fearful at all, as shown in Table 2. These findings suggested that most respondents feared their possessions would be stolen in their residential areas. Therefore, the Dedan Kimathi University of Technology's IToHM students demonstrated a significant fear of crime, particularly concerning property theft.

Fear of malicious damage to property

A question was asked on how fearful the respondents were of malicious damage to property in their residential area. In this case, it is expected that when the idea of malicious property destruction is brought up, people become afraid since they do not want their property destroyed by anyone. After examining the data gathered, it was discovered that most respondents reported being a little bit fearful (31.9%), closely followed by those who were fearful (31.1%), as shown in Table 2. These results suggested that most respondents feared their belongings would be damaged while living in their residential areas.

Fear of assault crimes

The assault was evaluated to ascertain how respondents feared this specific crime. This assessment served as a construct of the student population's fear of crime in their residential areas. In most cases, people worry about being assaulted by strangers or people known to them. The findings of this analysis indicated that most of the respondents expressed that they were a little bit fearful, fearful, and very fearful (28.6%; 24.4% and 16.0% respectively). Also, some were not fearful at all (31.1%), as shown in Table 2. This study showed that IToHM students at DeKUT feared being assaulted in their residential areas.

Fear of rape crime

A question was posed to the respondents about whether they had ever felt fearful of rape crimes in their neighbourhoods. According to the findings, after the analysis of rape, most participants stated that they had never experienced fear of rape while in their residential areas at the university. Most respondents (58.0%) reported no fear at all, followed by those who indicated that they were a little bit fearful (15.1%), then by those who indicated that they were fearful of this crime (14.3%). Also, we had those who indicated they were very fearful (14.6%), as shown in Table 2. This type of crime received fewer respondents who claimed to be fearful since a more significant percentage of the respondents were male. Under normal circumstances, rape is reported as the most common and fearful crime among students and citizens in society (Singh et al., 2015).

Fear of robbery

Robbery is one of the terrible crimes that people do fear most. As a result, it was anticipated that respondents to this research would fear this specific crime in their residential areas. Following data collection, this crime was analysed to determine how respondents felt about it in their neighbourhoods. The participants were then asked to respond to the statements about robberies, and the majority of them reported were a little bit fearful (31.9%), followed by those who indicated being very fearful (26.9%) and also fearful (26.1%) within that range. Also, we had those who indicated they were not fearful (15.1%), as shown in Table 2. The results of this study indicated that IToHM students at DeKUT were aware and fearful of robbery crime in their residential areas.

Fear of Burglary Crime

The researchers occasionally use the terms "burglary" or "housebreaking" interchangeably (Khoza, 2019). The difference is only in timing: Housebreaking occurs during daylight, whereas burglary occurs at night. Students studying IToHM at the Dedan Kimathi University of Technology were also supposed to respond in line with the researcher's expectation that burglary is one of the most feared crimes in society. The data was analysed to determine the respondents' fear of this specific crime in their residential areas. According to the results, the majority (36.1%) reported feeling a little bit afraid, with 21% reporting being fearful and 21% being very fearful. Also, we had those who indicated they were not fearful (21.8%), as shown in Table 2. It can be concluded from the results that Dedan Kimathi University-IToHM students had an intense fear of crime and feared burglary crime in their residential areas.

Table 2: Descriptive Analysis of intensity of Fear of Crime among IToHM students at Dedan Kimathi University of Technology

Response	Property Theft Crime n (%)	Malicious Damage n (%)	Assault Crime n (%)	Rape Crime n (%)	Robbery n (%)	Burglary n (%)
Not fearful at all	16 (13.4%)	26 (21.8%)	37 (31.1%)	69 (58.0%)	18 (15.1%)	26 (21.8%)
A little bit fearful	35 (29.4%)	38 (31.9%)	34 (28.6%)	18 (15.1%)	38 (31.9%)	43 (36.1%)
Fearful	39 (32.8%)	37 (31.1%)	29 (24.4%)	17 (14.3%)	31 (26.1%)	25 (21.0%)
Very fearful	29 (24.4%)	18 (15.1%)	19 (16.0%)	15 (12.6%)	32 (26.9%)	25 (21.0%)
Total	119 (100%)	119 (100%)	119 (100%)	119 (100%)	119 (100%)	119 (100%)

According to the survey, not all offenses received the same participants' reactions. There were some crimes that students feared more than others. After excluding the respondents who said they were not fearful of all of the crimes provided in the survey, the findings revealed that theft of property was most feared (86.5%), followed by robbery (84.9%) respondents, malicious property damage and burglary with (78.1%) each respondent, assault (68.9%) participants, and lastly rape with (42%) respondents who indicated that they were fearful.

Descriptive Analysis of Frequency of Fear of Crime among IToHM students at Dedan Kimathi University of Technology

Frequency of being fearful of the theft of property

Another level at which the extent of fear of crime was examined was the frequency of fear of crime among IToHM students at the Dedan Kimathi University of Technology. The statements used were intended to determine the frequency with which the respondents feared a specific crime in the past year. This study measured this variable using a 9-point Likert scale, where 1 = only once to 9 = nine or more times. Responses to questions about how frequently they feared property theft, malicious property damage, assault, rape, robbery, or robbery were recorded and analysed within one year. The first type of crime that was analysed was property theft. Theft on campus is generally considered a common crime (Sani et al., 2022). First, participants reported the frequency of fear of theft in their neighbourhood, with the majority (28.6%) reporting the frequency of being fearful of theft crime just once in the past year, followed by 16% who had three times, 15.1% who had two times, and 13.4% with four times according to Table 3 below. The results showed that IToHM students at DeKUT were not constantly afraid of property theft in their residential areas since most had feared this type of crime between once and four times in one year.

Frequency of being fearful of malicious damage to property

Secondly, the frequency of fear of malicious damage to property crime was analysed among the respondents in their residential areas. The respondents were asked how often they had feared malicious damage to property crime in their residential areas for the past year. Results are presented in Table 3. The majority indicated that they had been fearful of this particular crime, with the majority (31.9%) responding just once, followed by (18.5%) with two times, (16%) with three times, and (11.8%) with four times in the past year. The results of this study indicated that IToHM students at DeKUT were not in a constant state of fear in their residential areas since most of them had feared malicious damage to property between once and four times in the past year.

Frequency of being fearful of assault crime

The third question touched on the frequency of being fearful of assault crime in their residential areas among the respondents. The results indicated that most respondents indicated that they had been fearful just once in the past year (30.3%), followed by those who indicated that they had been fearful of assault crimes twice in the past year (19.3%), and 16% indicated three times, and 12.6% indicated four times in the past year. The results in Table 3 of this study indicated that IToHM students at DeKUT were not in a constant state of fear in their residential areas since most of them had feared assault crimes between once and four times in the past year.

Frequency of being fearful of rape crimes

The fourth question dealt with the frequency of being fearful of rape crimes among the respondents in their residential areas for the past year. The participants indicated their responses in Table 3: Following those who indicated two times a year (10.9%), and 52.9% were only afraid once in the past year. Also, some indicated they had been fearful three and four times in the past year, respectively (14.3% and 5.9%). It is believed that those who might have responded to this crime were female respondents. As the results indicated, the majority indicated that they were fearful of rape crimes between just once and three times in the past year; hence the students were not in a constant state of fear.

Frequency of being fearful of Robbery Crime

The other question touched on the fourth type of crime: robbery. The respondents were asked how often they had been afraid of robbery crimes in their neighbourhoods the previous year. The majority (27.7%) according to Table 3 reported they have been fearful just once in the past year, followed by those who indicated two times (18.5%), those with three times (10.9%), and those who indicated four times in the past year (9.2%). The results showed no constant fear among the students in their residential areas as per this crime since the responses were between just once and four times in the past year.

Frequency of being fearful of Burglary Crime

The last question asked on the frequency of being fearful of burglary crime among the respondents in their residential areas. However, although the offense's timing differs, this study was specific to burglary, a crime committed at night, which could heighten fear among students in their residences. Table 3 results indicated that most of the respondents reported having been fearful just once in the past year in their residential areas (27.7%), followed by those who indicated two times (13.4%). Also, some indicated they had feared this crime three times in the past year (18.5%) and five times in the past year (10.9%). The results showed that this type of crime was among the most feared crimes among the students in their residential areas since respondents indicated that they were fearful just once and six times in the past year.

Table 3: Descriptive Analysis of Frequency of Fear of Crime among IToHM students at Dedan Kimathi University of Technology

Responses	Property Crime n (%)	Malicious Damage to property n (%)	Assault Crime n (%)	Rape Crime n (%)	Robbery n (%)	Burglary n (%)
Just once	29 (28.6%)	30 (31.9%)	25 (30.3%)	26 (52.9%)	28 (27.7%)	25 (27.7%)
Twice	16 (15.1%)	17 (18.5%)	16 (19.3%)	5 (10.9%)	19 (18.5%)	12 (13.4%)
Three times	16 (16.0%)	15 (16.0%)	13 (16.0%)	7 (14.3%)	13 (10.9%)	17 (18.5%)
Four times	14 (13.4%)	11 (11.8%)	10 (12.6%)	3 (5.9%)	9 (9.2%)	6 (6.7%)
Five times	9 (8.4%)	9 (9.2%)	7 (8.4%)	3 (5.0%)	6 (5.9%)	10 (10.9%)
Six times	4 (4.2%)	10 (10.9%)	8 (9.2%)	3 (5.0%)	7 (6.7%)	8 (8.4%)
Seven times	6 (5.9%)	1 (.8%)	3 (3.4%)	3 (5.9%)	9 (9.2%)	4 (4.2%)
Eight times	2 (1.7%)	1 (.8%)	1 (.8%)	-	8 (7.6%)	6 (6.7%)
Nine times and more	7 (6.7%)	-	-	-	4 (4.2%)	3 (3.4%)
Total	103 (100%)	93 (100%)	82 (100%)	50 (100%)	101 (100%)	93 (100%)

DISCUSSION

Intensity of fear of crime among IToHM students at Dedan Kimathi University of Technology

The study aimed to assess the fear of crime among students of IToHM at the Dedan Kimathi University of Technology, focusing on specific crimes such as theft of property, malicious damage to property, rape, assault, burglary, and robbery. The findings were divided into two parts, examining the intensity and frequency of fear of crime in their residential areas. In this study, a four-point Likert scale ranging from (1) "not at all fearful" to (4) "very fearful" was used to measure fear of crime intensity. Fear of crime was conceptualized as an emotional reaction and assigned specific codes for analysis.

When analysing property theft, most respondents expressed various levels of fear, with 29.4% feeling a little bit fearful, 32.8% being fearful, and 24.4% feeling very fearful. This fear could be attributed to students possessing valuable items like laptops, smartphones, and other commodities, which makes them worry about potential theft within their residential areas. These findings were consistent with previous research by Lane and Fox (2013) and Mrozla (2022), which indicated widespread concern about property theft.

As to the malicious damage to property, the results revealed that a considerable proportion of respondents were fearful in their residential areas. Specifically, 31.9% were fearful, 31.1% were fearful, and 15.1% were very fearful. This fear could be explained by the accessibility of valuable resources in their residential areas, making students vulnerable to vandalism or property damage. Similar findings were reported in previous studies by Cook and Fox (2011) and Britto et al. (2018), highlighting vandalism as one of society's most feared crimes.

Regarding assault, a substantial number of respondents exhibited fear in their residential areas, with 28.6% feeling a little bit fearful, 24.4% being fearful, and 16.6% feeling very fearful. This fear might stem from concerns about potential assaults when students return from evening classes or within the residential areas. These results aligned with previous studies by Sani et al. (2020) and Cook & Fox (2011), demonstrating that assault was among the most feared crimes by citizens in society.

In the case of rape, the findings were unexpected, as only a tiny percentage of respondents expressed fear. Specifically, 15.1% were a little bit fearful, 14.3% were fearful, and 12.6% were very fearful. This discrepancy could be attributed to the overrepresentation of male respondents in the study, as suggested by Kariuki & Barkhuizen (2021). Previous research, such as the study conducted among female students in South Africa by Singh et al. (2015), supported the idea that women are more likely to fear rape incidents. Moving to the analysis of robbery, most respondents exhibited fear in their residential areas. With 31.9% a little bit fearful, 26.1% fearful, and 26.9% very fearful, robbery emerged as one of the most feared crimes among IToHM students. These results aligned with previous research by Lane & Fox (2013) and Luo & Lu (2021), which also identified robbery as a significant fear among the general public.

Lastly, burglary was analysed, and the results showed that many respondents feared this crime in their residential areas. Specifically, 36.1% were fearful, 21% were fearful, and 21% were very fearful of burglaries. These findings were consistent with Kim and Park's (2020) research, indicating that residents fear burglaries, particularly in homes without security.

In conclusion, the study demonstrated that IToHM students at Dedan Kimathi University displayed significant fears of crimes such as theft, malicious damage, assault, robbery, and burglary. In contrast, the fear of rape was comparatively lower. The intensity of fear varied based on the type of crime, with students showing a more significant concern for protecting their belongings and personal lives in their residential areas. These findings highlight crime-related fears among university students and affect campus safety and security measures.

Frequency of fear of crime among IToHM students at Dedan Kimathi University of Technology

The analysis of fear frequency among IToHM students at DeKUT revealed valuable insights into their concerns about crimes in their residential areas. The study measured this variable using a 9-point Likert scale, where 1 = only once to 9 = nine or more times. Responses the statements about how frequently they feared property theft, malicious property damage, assault, rape, robbery, or robbery within one year. The findings demonstrated that property theft crimes were a common source of fear, with most respondents (28.6%) reporting fear just once in the past year, followed by 15.1% fearful twice. These results were consistent with Caridade et al. (2022), who discovered that 44.4% of their study participants feared property theft crime on campus. Therefore, it can be inferred that IToHM students at DeKUT experienced a moderate level of fear regarding property theft crimes in their residential areas. Similar patterns emerged for fear of malicious damage to property crimes, where 31.9% reported fear just once, and 18.5% reported fear twice in the past year. These findings were consistent with Cook & Fox (2011), who found that most students feared malicious damage to property on campus. Hence, the students' fear of this crime within their residential areas was noticeable but not constant.

In terms of assault crimes, most respondents (around 50%) reported fear just once in their residential lives. 19.3% indicated fear twice, and 16% reported fear three times in the past year. Compared to Caridade et al. (2022), who concluded that 55.5% of their respondents frequently feared assault crimes on campus, the fear among IToHM students at DeKUT seemed less prevalent, suggesting that they did not exhibit high frequency of fear towards this particular crime in their residential areas as opined by Farrall and Gadd, (2004).

Regarding fear of rape crimes, 52.9% of respondents reported fear just once, while smaller percentages reported fear two or three times in the past year. The study acknowledges the possibility that the remaining respondents who indicated fear might have been predominantly female, given that women commonly fear sexual crimes and rape. Caridade et al. (2022) reported a rate of 31.6% for this fear on campus, further supporting the notion that fear of rape crimes was not a commonly shared fear among IToHM students at DeKUT in their residential areas as a reflection of Farrall and Gadd, (2004).

The analysis of fear frequency for robbery crimes revealed that most respondents (27.7%) were fearful just once in the past year, followed by 18.5% fearful twice. The results were consistent with a previous study (Caridade et al., 2022), which found that 23.0% of respondents reported fear of robbery crime in their environment. Although the fear element was noticed, it was not a constant state for IToHM students at DeKUT in their residential areas, as in the study of Farrall and Gadd (2004).

Lastly, the study explored the frequency of fear regarding burglary crimes among IToHM students at DeKUT. The findings showed that 27.7% of respondents were fearful just once, 18.5% three times, and 13.4% twice in the past year. These results aligned with Caridade et al. (2022), who reported that 67.7% of participants from their neighbourhood study expressed fear of burglary in their residential areas. It can be inferred that burglary crimes gained more attention and fear from the students compared to other crimes

analysed, influenced by the university's location near the animal sanctuary, which may make it a potential hiding place for criminals. From the finding, it can be deduced that the respondents were not in a constant state of fear, as was found in the study of Farrall and Gadd (2004).

In summary, the analysis demonstrated that while IToHM students at DeKUT reported fears of various crimes in their residential areas, the frequency of these fears varied. Property theft crimes and malicious damage to property crimes were moderately feared, assault crimes were less prevalent in terms of fear, and fear of rape crimes was not a commonly shared fear. Robbery and burglary crimes gained more attention in terms of fear, but the fear was not constant. The findings from this study offer valuable insights into the frequency of fear of crime among respondents. The results indicate that the participants did not experience constant fear. These findings serve as a crucial turning point in formulating interventions to address students' specific fears and concerns within their residential areas. By understanding the varying levels of fear, authorities, and policymakers can design targeted strategies to enhance safety and security, creating a more conducive environment for students to thrive.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the study's findings, the university stakeholders must proactively address the prevalent fear of crime among IToHM students at DeKUT. To achieve this, one of the key recommendations is the practical assessment of the extent of fear of crime on campus. This recommendation can be accomplished by collecting data on the types of crimes students perceive as threatening within the campus environment. By gathering this data, the university can gain valuable insights into students' fears and concerns, enabling them to devise appropriate strategies to tackle the issue.

The process of analysing the collected data holds immense importance. Through careful examination and interpretation of the data, the university can better understand the factors contributing to the fear of crime among its students. This analysis will help identify patterns, hotspots, and prevalent crime types that students are most fearful of, such as robbery, theft, malicious damage, assault, and rape. Armed with this knowledge, the university can develop targeted mitigation measures that address the specific concerns of the students and create a safer environment on campus.

As the regulator of the university, the management should play a significant role in this process. It is essential for the university management to actively participate in collecting and analysing data on the fear of crime among students. Embracing a data-driven approach will empower the management to make informed decisions about campus security and safety measures. By understanding the level of fear and the types of crimes that most concern students, they can implement measures tailored to address the identified issues effectively.

In conclusion, the study underscores the need for the university to prioritize the issue of fear of crime among its IToHM students. By taking proactive measures and gathering data-driven insights, the university can work towards creating a safer and more conducive learning environment. Additionally, future research should explore a broader scope of criminal activities to develop a comprehensive understanding of the various aspects of fear of crime on campus. The university can significantly reduce fear and foster a sense of security among its students through concerted efforts and evidence-based strategies.

CONCLUSIONS

The study reveals that fear of crime is prevalent among IToHM students at DeKUT. However, it is essential to note that the students' fears were not constant but occasional and not pervasive. This result indicates that while there is a significant concern about crime, it is not a constant state of anxiety for most students.

The research findings shed light on the types of crimes that IToHM students at DeKUT fear the most. The study shows that these students have experienced fear of crimes ranging from just once to three times. The crimes that topped the list of their fears were robbery, theft, malicious damage, assault, and rape, in that order. This finding highlights concerns about personal safety and security on campus.

While the study provides valuable insights into the fear of specific crimes among students, it also emphasizes the need for future research in this area. The researchers recommend exploring the fear of crime for other criminal activities beyond those examined in the current study. By broadening the scope of research, the university can gain comprehensive insights into the various aspects of fear of crime, thereby paving the way for developing more effective and all-encompassing strategies to ensure the safety and security of its students.

In conclusion, the study underscores the significance of addressing the fear of crime on DeKUT's campus to create a conducive learning environment. By accurately assessing the concerns of the students and implementing appropriate measures, the university can foster a sense of security and effectively reduce fear among its students. Initiative-taking measures, backed by data-driven insights, will be instrumental in developing targeted strategies to address the identified issues and create a safer campus environment for all students.

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