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# **MOTOR VEHICLE CRIME IN MAJOR TOWNS AND CITIES: AN ANALYSIS OF THE TRENDS, PREVALENCE AND IMPACT IN KENYA**

**OCTOBER – DECEMBER, 2014**

**Security Research and Information Center (SRIC)**

## **Table of Contents**

Acknowledgement .....	iv
List of Acronyms .....	v
List of Tables and Figures.....	vii
Chapter 1: Introduction and Justification.....	1
1.2 Objectives of the study .....	2
1.2.1 Specific Objectives.....	3
1.3 Methodology.....	3
1.3.1 Sample Size and Administration of Questionnaires.....	4
1.3.2 Key informant interviews.....	5
1.3.3 In-depth interviews.....	5
Chapter 2: Survey Findings and Discussions.....	6
2.1.0 Respondents' Profile .....	6
2.1.1 Sex .....	6
2.1.2 Resopondent Age Group .....	7
2.1.3 Level of Education.....	7
2.2. 0 Perceptions on Car Related Crimes in Kenya .....	8
2.3.0 The status of car thefts, robbery and loss of car accessory incidents.....	9
2.3.1 Victims of Motor vehicle crimes .....	13
2.3.2 Use of Force in Carjacking .....	14
2.4.0 Targeted Motor Vehicles.....	16

2.4.1 Model of Car mostly Targeted by Criminals.....	17
2.4.2 Purpose/ Use of Stolen Cars .....	19
2.5.0 Carjacking and Car Theft Trends .....	20
2.5.1 Most Vulnerable Groups .....	21
2.5.2 Month of the Year with Rampant Cases.....	23
2.5.3 Time of the day Car Related Crimes are likely to occur .....	25
2.5.4 Police Response .....	26
2.5.5 Fear of Car Related Crime Incidents .....	27
2.6.0 Impact of Motor vehicle crime in the Kenya .....	27
2.7.0 Precautionary Measures put in Place by Motorists .....	29
2.7.1 Interventions put in place to reduce/manage Motor vehicle crimes.....	30
3.1. Conclusion and Recommendations.....	33
3.1.1 Conclusion.....	33
3.1.2 Recommendations .....	34
References.....	43

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## **List of Acronyms**

AMVTU	Anti Motor Vehicle Theft Unit
ATU	Anti Terrorist Unit
CCTV	Closed Circuit Television
DCI	Department of Criminal Investigations
DCIO	District Criminal Investigation Officers
HCV	Heavy commercial vehicles
IPOA	Independent Police Oversight Authority
KNFP	Kenya National Focal Point on Small Arms
KPA	Kenya Ports Authority
KRA	Kenya Revenue Authority
LEA s	Law Enforcement Agencies
MV	Motor Vehicle
NDMA	National Drought Management Authority
NIS	National Intelligence Service
NPS	National Police Service
NSC	National Steering Committee on Peace-building and Conflict Management
NTSA	National Transport Safety Authority
PSV	Public Service Vehicles
SACCO	Savings and Credit Co-operative
SPSS	Statistical Package for Social Sciences
SRIC	Security Research and Information Centre
UN	United Nations
UNDOC	United Nations Office on Drug and Crime

UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
US	United States
VIN	Vehicle Identification Number

## List of Tables and Figures

Figure1: Sample Size	4
Figure 2: Gender of the respondents	6
Figure 3: Age Group of Respondents	7
Figure 4: Respondents Education Level	7
Figure 5: Status Crime Incidents	8
Figure 6: Carjacking and motor vehicle theft incidents causing major security problem	9
Figure 7: The status of car thefts, robbery and loss of car accessories	11
Figure 8: NPS statistics on Motor vehicle robberies, theft, loss of car parts, carjacking	12
Figure 9: Motor vehicle Insurance Company claims between 2007- 2013	13
Figure 10: Victim or witnesses of carjacking incidents	14
Figure 11: Type of Weapon used to commit car thefts/carjacking	15
Figure 12: Type of Weapon used to commit car thefts/carjacking per town	16
Figure 13: Model of Car mostly Targeted by Criminals	18
Figure 14: Reasons why some car models are preferred by criminals	19
Figure 15: Purpose of stolen cars	20
Figure 16: Carjacking and Car Theft Trends and Typologies	21
Figure 17: Most Vulnerable Groups	21
Figure 18: Complainants as per NPS Records (June, 2013 – August, 2014)	23
Figure 19: Month of the Year with Rampant Cases	24

Figure 20: Reasons why car theft and carjacking cases are more common	
During specific months in a year	24
Figure 21: Time of the day car theft or carjacking incident is likely to happen	25
Figure 22: Police Response time	27
Figure 23: Precautionary Measures put in Place by Motorists	30
Figure24: Intervention strategies put in place by NPS	32
Figure 25: Challenges faced by NPS	32



## Chapter 1: Introduction and Justification

Kenya, like most developing countries has experienced a rise in crime. The scope and magnitude vary with geographical variations, with urban areas being the most affected compared to rural areas. The crimes range from murders, motor vehicle robbery – popularly known as carjacking, car theft, robberies with violence, burglaries and break-ins, abductions, rape and defilements, muggings, armed livestock raids, highway banditry, domestic violence, and in the recent months terrorist related crime incidences<sup>1</sup>.

The security Research and Information Centre (SRIC) established that some types of crime such as carjacking and theft, robbery, mugging, "Snatch and run", robbery with violence and theft are more common in the urban towns and cities in Kenya<sup>2</sup>. SRIC's findings resonate with the Crime Victimization Survey report of 2010 by the United Nations Office on Drug and Crime (UNDOC, 2010)<sup>3</sup>, which indicated that urban citizens are more likely to become victims of car-related crimes while those in rural areas are likely to be at risk of livestock theft, sexual offenses and assaults.

It is against this backdrop that this study focused on carjacking and car theft as forms of crime which in the recent past have been gaining media popularity in Kenya. Carjacking formally known as motor vehicle theft is a form of crime that entails forceful stealing of automobiles from their owners or drivers. In most cases the victim is robbed of the car and other valuables at gunpoint or using crude weapons. Under the Kenya Penal Code<sup>4</sup> Chapter xxviii, Carjacking is classified under robbery and extortion. It is defined as "Any person who steals anything, and, at or immediately before or immediately after the time of stealing it, uses or threatens to use actual violence to any person or property in order to obtain or retain the thing stolen or to prevent or

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<sup>1</sup> Kyalo, M., Muthama, T., Waiya, N. & Kitiku, J. (2012). Nairobi region annual crime observatory report 2011/2012. Retrieved from: [http://srickenya.org/images/reports/Nairobi\\_Region\\_Annual\\_Crime\\_Observatory\\_Report\\_2011\\_2012.pdf](http://srickenya.org/images/reports/Nairobi_Region_Annual_Crime_Observatory_Report_2011_2012.pdf) on 6<sup>th</sup> August, 2014

<sup>2</sup> Consular Information Sheet: Kenya *Bureau of Consular Affairs*.

<sup>3</sup> UNODC, (2010). Victimization survey in Kenya. [http://www.unodc.org/documents/data-and-analysis/dfa/Executive\\_Summary\\_KENYA\\_final.pdf](http://www.unodc.org/documents/data-and-analysis/dfa/Executive_Summary_KENYA_final.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> Penal code is a document which compiles all, or a significant amount of, a particular jurisdiction's criminal law.

overcome resistance to its being stolen or retained, is guilty of the felony termed robbery”<sup>5</sup>. Carjacking is often seen as a crime of opportunity, an easy way to get a vehicle for quick money or to use it to perpetrate other forms of crimes. Car theft on the other hand is defined as the criminal act of stealing or attempting to steal a car or parts of an immobile car in the absence of the owner or driver. Car theft occurs mostly when the vehicle is stationary at parking or in traffic. Criminals employ different tactics when committing these types of crime.

There is a clear disparity in the existing literature on carjacking incidences in Kenya with reports from the National Police Service (NPS) indicating that carjacking and car theft cases have drastically reduced over the last one year<sup>6</sup> while consular reports and data from other different sources including hospitals and private security companies indicate that the numbers are still high. This study sought to bridge this gap by establishing the actual status of carjacking and car theft incidences across the major towns and cities in the country, police efficiency in responding to these incidences, types of motor vehicles targeted and plausible reasons for such, notorious carjacking and car theft areas, time and season, car theft and carjacking trends, variations and the level of fear among the motorists.

The aim of the study was to gather information, analyse and provide statistics that would offer a nuanced picture of the extent and magnitude of these types of crime. This study will be useful to motorists, members of the public who use PSVs, private security companies especially on advising their clients on routes/ roads to avoid and assist the NPS in updating their existing crime databases and also crafting car theft and carjacking mitigating strategies to be used across the country.

## **1.2 Objectives of the study**

The main objective of this study was to provide data on the nature, scope and extent of carjacking and car theft incidents in major urban towns and cities in Kenya.

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<sup>5</sup> Chapter xxviii of the Penal Code, Chapter 63 (Revised edition of 2012)– robbery and extortion, 295. Definition of robbery.

<sup>6</sup> The Nairobi report on carjacking. Police claim there are no carjacking cases in Nairobi. Retrieved from: <http://www.standardmedia.co.ke/entertainment/thenairobi/article/2000126972/unbelievable-police-claim-there-are-no-carjackings-in-nairobi> on 3rd August, 2014.

### **1.2.1 Specific Objectives**

1. To measure perceptions of motor vehicle related crimes in the country.
2. To determine the type of cars most susceptible to carjacking and theft.
3. To determine the impact of motor vehicle crime in the Kenya
4. To examine the strategies employed by both the public and the law enforcement agencies to mitigate motor vehicle related crimes.

### **1.3 Methodology**

The study targeted major urban towns and cities in Kenya. Nairobi, Mombasa and Kisumu were selected because of their large populace. Selection was also based on the frequency of reported cases of carjacking and car theft particularly through the media. Security Research and Information Centre (SRIC) keeps a repository of data on crime incidents reported in the country through the mainstream media and other media platforms. This data was used in the determination and selection of the study areas.

Besides, three other towns were sampled for the study. These were Kiambu, Nakuru and Busia. Kiambu was selected based on its vicinity to the Nairobi city. Previous studies had also indicated that trading in stolen car parts and other accessories was rife in the town<sup>7</sup>. Nakuru town was selected due to the fact that it is a transit town- located at the Northern Corridor leading to South Sudan, Uganda and other neighbouring countries. Like other rapidly expanding urban towns, Nakuru has encountered a number of challenges relating to crime and insecurity. Lastly, Busia town was selected based on its unique geographic location. Busia is a border town between Kenya and Uganda and presents the cross border dimension of car theft and carjacking and there have been unconfirmed assertions by various researchers that most stolen cars from Kenya are smuggled to Uganda through the town.

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<sup>7</sup> Musoi, Muthama, Kibor & Kitiku (2014). Nairobi metropolitan Area: Annual Crime Observatory report, P.44. Available at [www.srickenya.org](http://www.srickenya.org)

### 1.3.1 Sample Size and Administration of Questionnaires

In determining the sample size, the study used the Raosoft sample size calculator<sup>8</sup> with a 5% margin of error at 95% confidence level which puts into consideration the total population of people in the selected cities and town centres. The study therefore administered 2,427 questionnaires (as shown in figure one below) targeting motorists and members of the public who use PSVs. The respondents were randomly selected to ensure every unit (over 18 years) within the sample stood an equal chance of being selected for the survey. Gender balance was also taken into account during the administration of questionnaires and the survey at large.

**Figure 1: Sample Size**

<b>County</b>	<b>Population Size<sup>9</sup></b>	<b>Sample size</b>
Nairobi	3.039M	480
Nakuru	307,990	384
Mombasa	1.2M	406
Kisumu	409,920	390
Busia	51,980	382
Kiambu	335,006	385
<b>Total Sample</b>		<b>2,427</b>

<sup>8</sup> Available in <http://www.raosoft.com/samplesize.html>, retrieved on 13<sup>th</sup> March, 2013.

<sup>9</sup> Population size refers to total number of people living in the urban town centre as indicated in 2009 census data sheet. Retrieved from: <https://www.opendata.go.ke/Population/2009-Census-Vol-1-Table-3-Rural-and-Urban-Population/e7c7-w67t/1> on 2nd August, 2014.

### **1.3.2 Key informant interviews**

A total of three (3) key informant interviews were carried out in each city and town. The interviews targeted senior officers working in the insurance companies, National Police service and private security companies and aimed at interrogating statistics obtained in the targeted institutions.

### **1.3.3 In-depth interviews**

Three (3) in-depth interviews were conducted in every sampled town and city during the survey. The interviews targeted County commanders, Base commanders (traffic) and District Criminal Investigation Officers (DCIO). Collection of carjacking statistics was central during the interviews.

## Chapter 2: Survey Findings and Discussions

Based on the above methodology, the study generated both qualitative and quantitative data. The quantitative data was organized, cleaned, coded and analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) to help generate summaries in terms of tables and graphs for easy analysis and interpretation. The qualitative data was analyzed through interpretation of the responses from key informant and in-depth interviews and also analysis of secondary data on the subject matter.

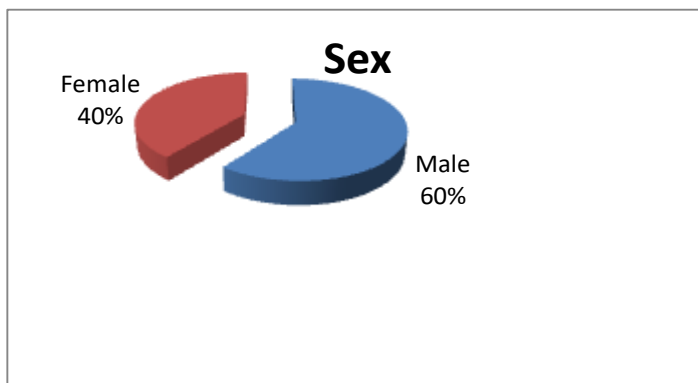
### 2.1.0 Respondents' Profile

In order to be able to correlate traits of the sampled population with the main parameters under the study, the general questionnaire included an administrative section, which sought to understand the sex of the respondents, age bracket and levels of education. The respondents' profile was as shown below.

#### 2.1.1 Sex

As the table below shows, 60% of the respondents were male while the remainder 40% were females. While the study set out to attain the highest possible sex representation (50:50) amongst the respondents, this could however not be achieved due to a number of factors, chief of which was that females tended to be rather shy and reserved, especially where “sensitive” matters like security were concerned. Their representation was further whittled down due to the fact that majority of motorists in virtually all the sites appeared to be predominantly male.

**Figure 2: Gender of the respondents**



*Source: Analysis from General Questionnaires*

### 2.1.2 Resopondent Age Group

The study considered the age of respondents an important factor in crime commission. For instance, previously done studies have shown that ages 18 – 35 years comprised the largest age bracket of both crime perpetrators and victims. In this study, three age groups (26-35, 36-45 and 46-55) accounted for slightly over three quarters of the total sample at 84.8%. Respondents aged fifty six (56) years and above represented an insignificant percentage of 3.5%.

**Figure 3: Age Group of Respondents**

Age Group	Frequency	Percent
18-25	283	11.7
26-35	885	36.5
36-45	763	31.4
46-55	410	16.9
56+	86	3.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>2427</b>	<b>100.0</b>

*Source: Analysis from general questionnaire findings*

### 2.1.3 Level of Education

The aim of establishing the level of education of respondents was to determine the correlation between the standard of education and motor vehicle crime commission. The analysis on the table below shows that, on the whole, the portion of the respondents with secondary, tertiary and university level of education together accounted for an overwhelming 90.1%. Respondents with primary education and below accounted for 9.5%.

**Figure 4: Respondents Education Level**

Education Level	Frequency	Percent
None	28	1.2
Primary Level	202	8.3
Secondary Level	813	33.5

College Level	875	36.1
University Level	509	21.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>2427</b>	<b>100.0</b>

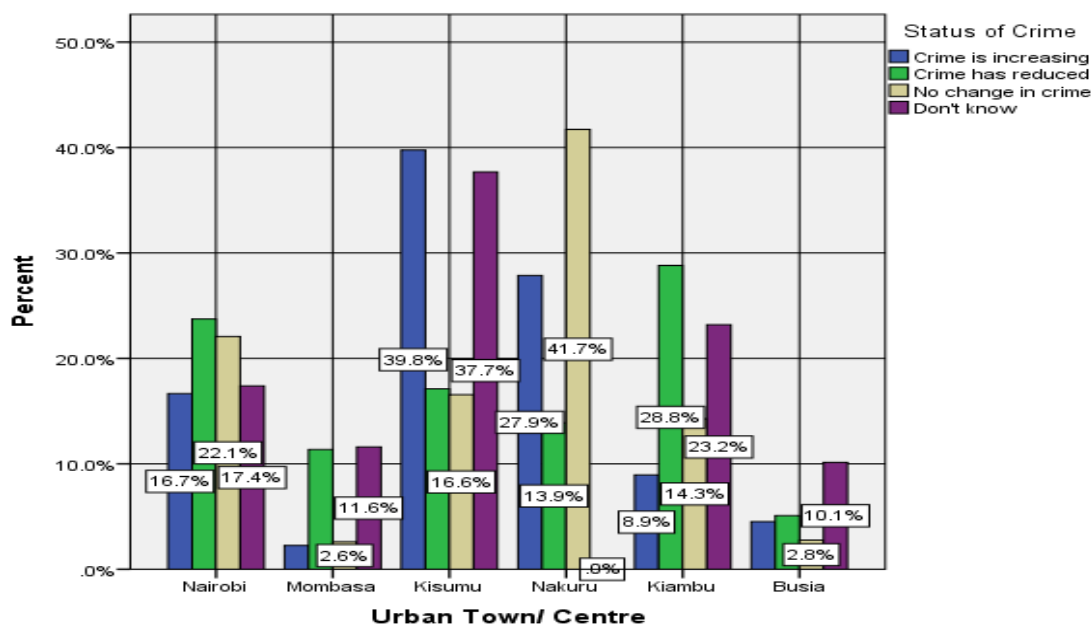
Source: Analysis from general questionnaire findings

## 2.2.0 Perceptions on Car Related Crimes in Kenya

As already stated, the selection of the sample cities and towns was informed to a large extent by a number of factors; reported cases in the mainstream media, volume of vehicular traffic, geographic locations relative to Kenya’s international borders, noted for their porosity.

Respondents were asked how they perceived car related crime in their areas of resident. Figure 5 below gives the respondents’ general view of car related crime. The findings indicated that only in Kisumu did respondents feel that crime was on increase, 39.8%. Nakuru registered the highest number of people who felt that crime levels had remained unchanged as indicated by 41.7% of the respondents. Comparatively, Kiambu and Nairobi reported a significant reduction in crime incidents. Mombasa and Busia recorded the lowest levels of crime over the last one year; 11.6% and 2.8% respectively.

**Figure 5: Perceptions of Motor vehicle Crimes**

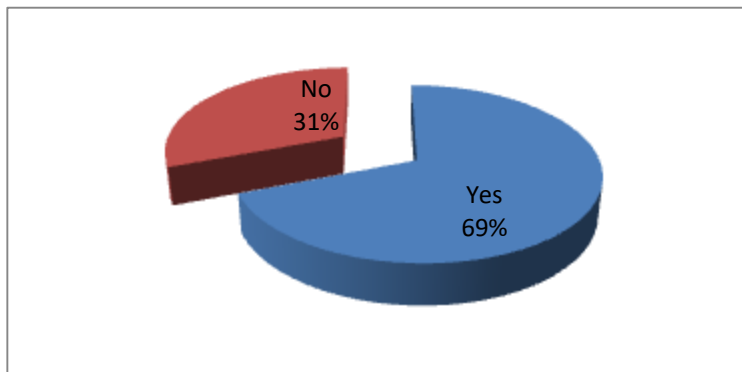




*Source: Analysis from general questionnaire findings*

On whether carjacking and motor vehicle theft was a major security problem, a majority, 69%, of the respondents across the six towns and cities were affirmative while 31% were of the contrary view.

**Figure 6: Do you think Carjacking/theft is a major security problem in this city/town?**



*Source: Analysis from general questionnaire findings*

### **2.3.0 The status of car thefts, robbery and loss of car accessory incidents**

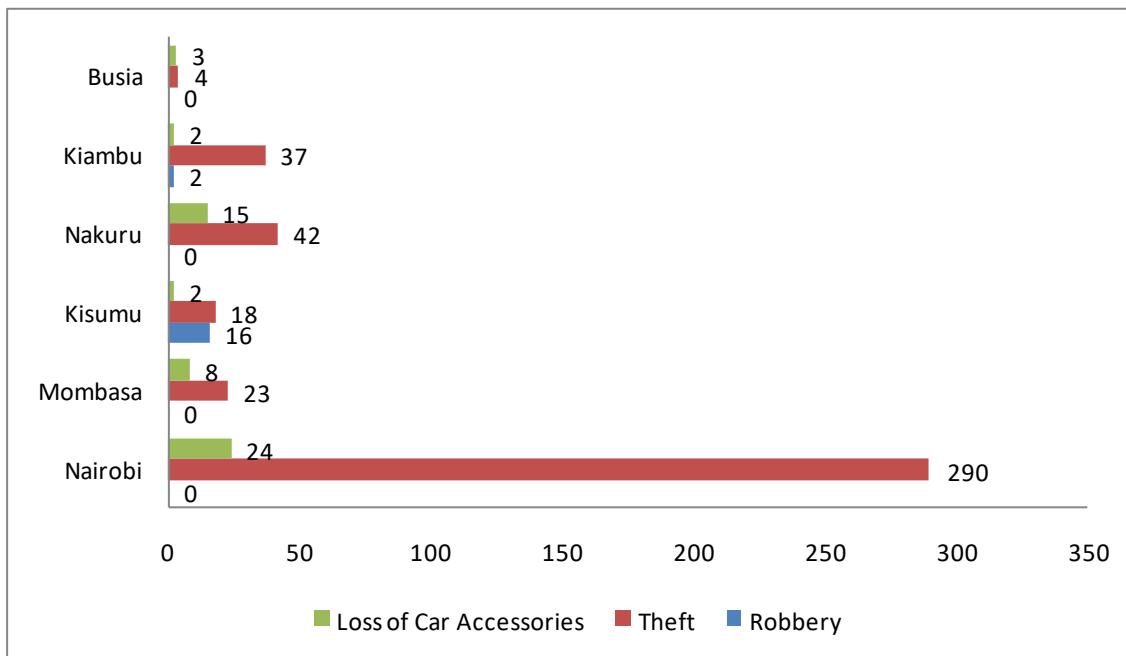
To buttress the empirical data obtained in the process of the survey, raw data on carjacking, loss of motor vehicle parts/ accessories and motor vehicle theft was also collected from the National Police Service and Insurance companies, the details of which are graphically presented in figure 7, 8 and 9. This information was deemed critical in the sense that it provided useful insights into the extent of the problem from administrative realities.

As shown in Figure 7, Nairobi city registered the highest car theft cases, 290, in the last one year period (August 2013-July 2014). Other towns and cities combined reported a cumulative number of 123 theft cases. Other towns which recorded high numbers of car theft cases included Nakuru (42) and Kiambu (37). Loss of car accessories was reported in all the towns under study with Nairobi still recording the highest cases (24), followed by Nakuru (15) and Mombasa (8). [The study established that people preferred not to report loss of car parts and accessories to either the police or even insurance companies since chances of recovery were very minimal and also the requirement by insurance companies to pay “excess fee” in order to be compensated.](#)

On car robbery, the study established that the cases were very minimal with only Kisumu and Kiambu recording 16 and 2 cases respectively. No case of car robbery was reported in the other four towns/cities, including Nairobi City. Busia town recorded the lowest carjacking, motor vehicle theft and also loss of car parts/ accessories. According to reports from key informants, the reason for this low numbers was that motor vehicles recovered in the town were mostly stolen from other counties but impounded in the town as criminals made attempt to exit to Uganda and other countries.

The study also found that Mombasa's geographic position as an island, with three main patrolled entry/exit points (Makupa Causeway, Likoni Ferry crossing channel and the Nyali Bridge) can safely be cited as being particularly instrumental in controlling motor vehicle theft and carjacking incidences in the town and its outlying environs and could be said to explain the relatively few cases of carjacking and motor vehicle theft. [The findings point to a trend in which motor vehicle thieves are increasingly discarding the use of 'brute force', which hitherto used to be their \*modus operandi\*, in preference to more subtle means, which exposes them to less risk of apprehension by the police. The findings also corroborate remarks and continued assertions by the National Police Service that carjacking cases had remarkably reduced over the last one year \(between 2013 and 2014\)](#)

**Figure 7: The status of car thefts, robbery and loss of car accessories**

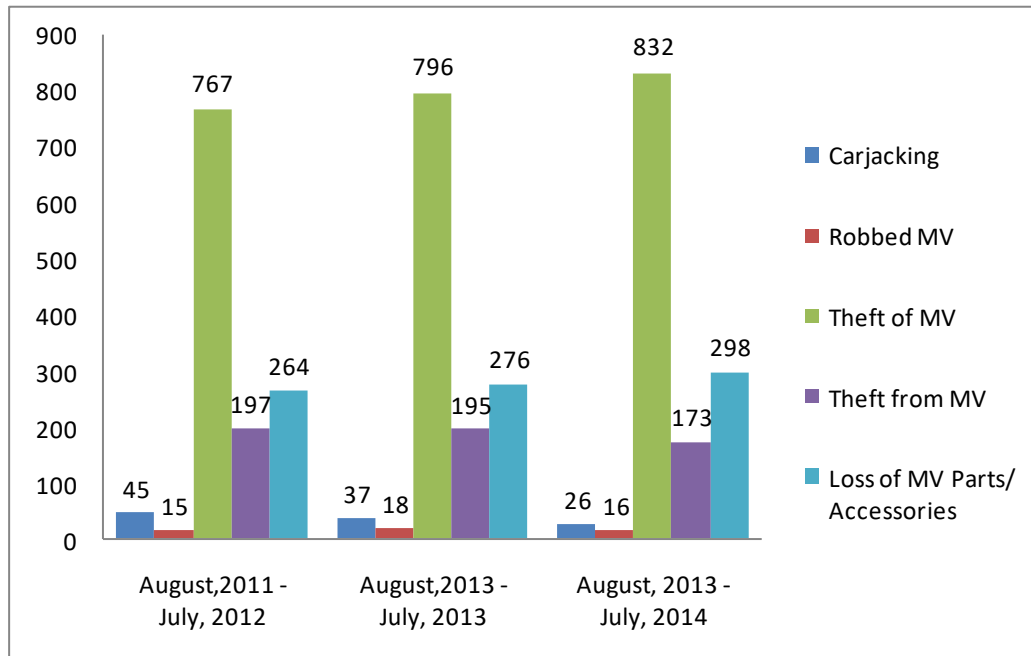


*Source: Analysis from actual statistics collected from National Police Service*

The study also sought to establish the general status of motor vehicle crime across the country and as shown in the figure 8 below, same trends already established in the sampled urban towns were replicated in the general analysis. Motor vehicle theft seemed to be on increase since 2011 followed by loss of motor vehicle parts and accessories while theft from motor vehicle seemed to have remained the same over the 3 years period covered in this particular analysis. It was also worth noting that carjacking cases and motor vehicle robbery cases were on decrease over the same period studied.

This further reaffirms the fact that carjacking and robbery cases did not present a serious security threat in Kenya as other motor vehicle related crimes. The rise in motor vehicle theft cases can be attributed to the evolving technology and general insecurity in Kenya where criminals are able to disable security gadgets, such as car alarms, cut outs, installed in motor vehicles while still able to maintain their anonymity from the general members of the public.

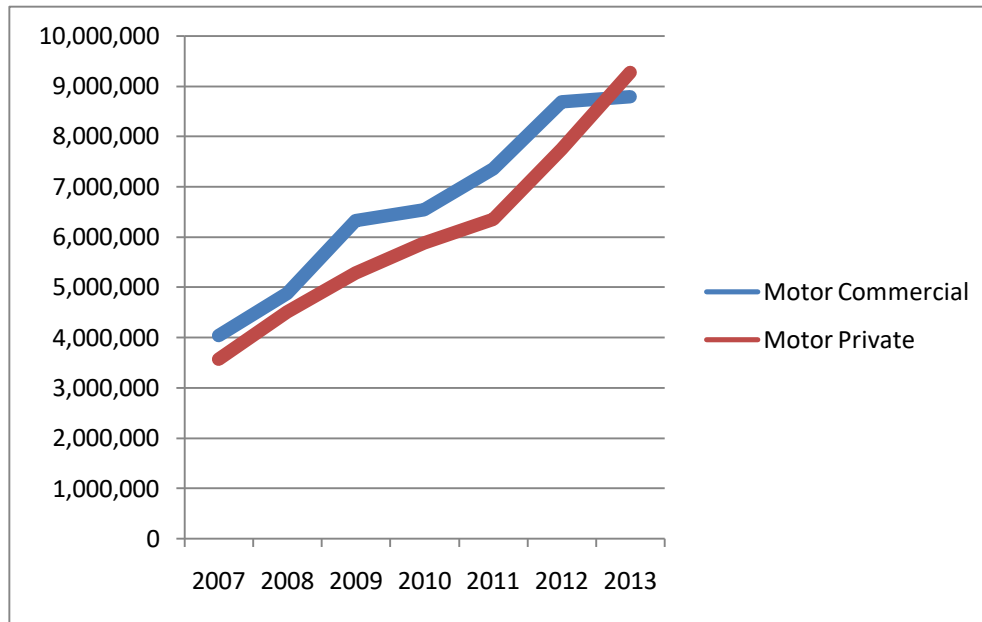
**Figure 8: NPS statistics on Motor vehicle robberies, theft, loss of car parts, carjacking**



*Source: Analysis from Actual Statistics obtained from NPS*

As it can be seen in the graph below, generally, claims received by motor vehicle insurance companies have been on increase since the year, 2007. This can be interpreted to mean that either the motor vehicle crime cases have been on the increase or may be due to the evolution in the IT industry, insurance companies have been able to properly document/ manage their businesses more effectively and therefore able to give clear records of all their transactions. Based on other findings obtained from other sources consulted during this study, it was clear that car theft cases and loss of car parts/ accessories (though to a small degree) have been on increase and therefore the reason for the high cost of claims recorded by insurance companies.

**Figure 9: Motor vehicle Insurance Company claims between 2007- 2013**



*Figure 9: Analysis from IRA reports on incurred claims between 2007 and 2013<sup>10</sup>.*

### **2.3.1 Victims of Motor vehicle crimes**

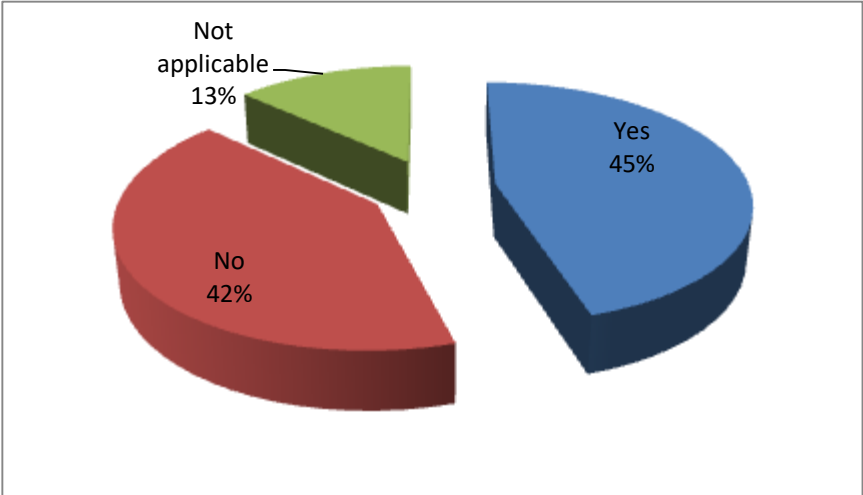
In order to determine the extent of crime, the survey sought to collect information on residents' knowledge of or interaction with victims, who could be their kin, friends, acquaintances or neighbours. As Figure 10 below depicts, majority of respondents had witnessed or fallen victim to car related crime, 45%. Others indicated that they had never witnessed or been involved while others opted to leave the question answered as indicated by 42% and 13% of respondents respectively. When asked whether they had personally witnessed carjacking or motor vehicle theft incident, the study learnt that close to half of the respondents (47%) answered in the affirmative.

The minimal cases of carjacking and car theft can either be attributed to the National Police Service responsiveness in stumping out the vices or the precautions motorists and members of public had opted to in ensuring personal safety. Such precautions could include measures such as

<sup>10</sup> See more in IRA website at: <http://www.ira.go.ke/index.php/articles-publications/annual-insurance-industry-report>. Accessed on 2nd November, 2013.

increased sense of consciousness on personal security, installation and fitting of car tracking devices and security features and, crucially, desisting from driving within the vicinities known or suspected to be crime hotspots. Most fundamentally, it could be inferred that, despite the statistically diminished depiction in the magnitude of this crime, the “actual situation” could well be a lot worse, and that the heightened surveillance and increased rates of motor vehicle recovery, coupled with frequent roadblock interceptions by police and other law enforcement agencies (LEAs) has possibly helped to mitigate the situation.

**Figure 10: Victim or witnesses of carjacking incidents**



*Source: Analysis from general questionnaire findings*

**2.3.2 Use of Force in Carjacking**

On use of force, a majority of respondents reported that in all the cases they had witnessed or fallen victim to, there was extensive use of force. The figure 11 below shows the preferred weapon of choice by criminals. [The most preferred weapon used in the perpetration of carjacking was firearm notably AK47 and pistols, accounting for 38.4%.](#) In this regard, it can be safely posited that this apparent preference is grounded on practical considerations on the part of the criminals such as their degree of portability and the fact that the weapons were easily concealable. In any case, the mere “sighting” of those weapons by potential victims is usually enough to make motorists to “cooperate” and submit to the demands or “orders” of the criminals.

Further, it was found that use of offensive crude traditional weaponry and ‘drugging’<sup>11</sup> were minimal at 14.4% and 1.0% respectively across all the sampled towns and cities.

**Figure 11: Type of Weapon used to commit car carjacking/Theft**

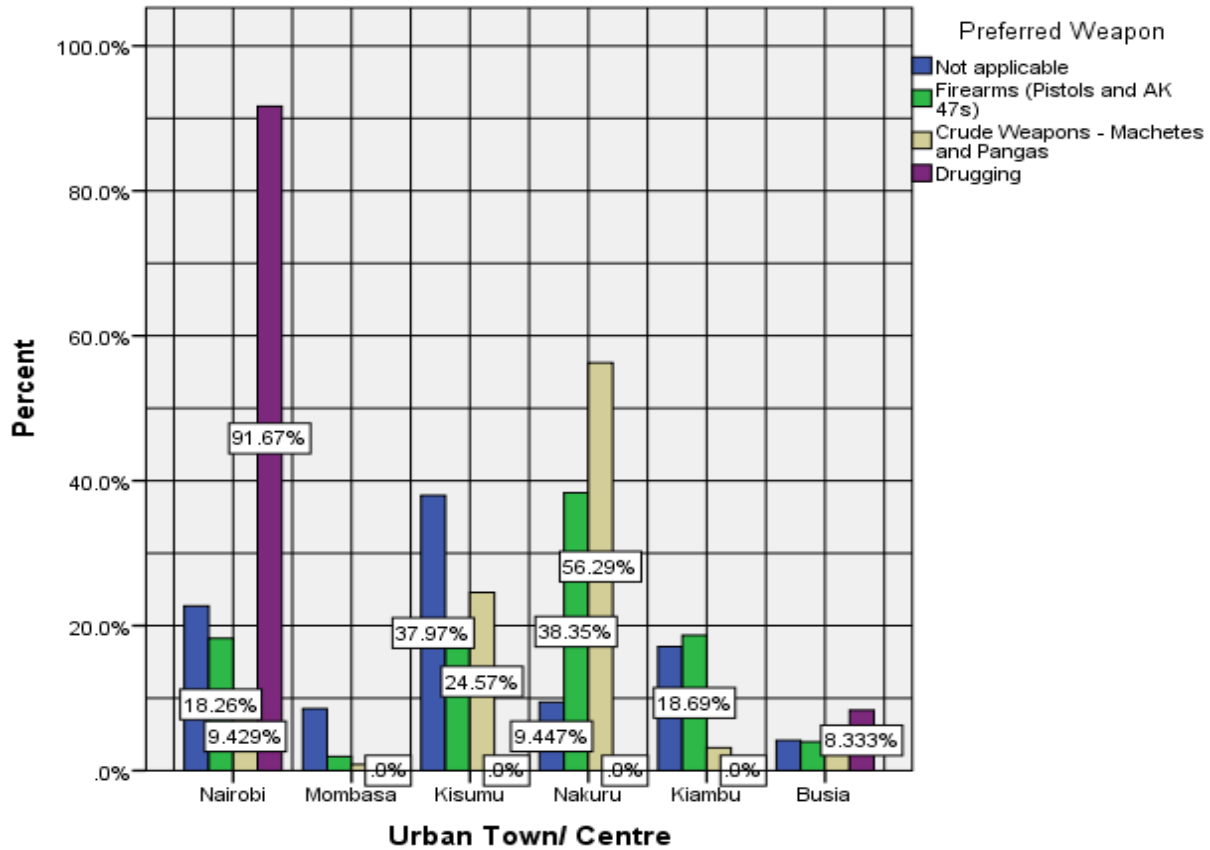
<b>Type of Weapon</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Not applicable	1122	46.2
Firearm (AK 47 & Pistols)	931	38.4
Crude Weapons - Machetes and Pangas	350	14.4
Drugging (in PSVs especially)	24	1.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>2427</b>	<b>100.0</b>

*Source: Analysis from general questionnaire findings*

The study also sought to determine the preferred weapons in the commission of carjacking/theft across the four towns/ cities. It was found that crude weapons were more preferred in Nakuru Town 56.29%. Criminals in Kisumu seemed to prefer using firearms although use of crude weapons was also perceived to be rampant. On the other hand, Nairobi accounted for majority (over 90%) of all ‘drugging’ cases while in Kiambu, criminals were perceived to prefer using firearms though to a lesser extent as compared to Nairobi, Nakuru and Kisumu. Mombasa and Busia were perceived to be relatively safer as far as carjacking and car theft cases were concerned. This is explained by the relative low usage of weapons in the commission of crime.

<sup>11</sup> Drugging is administration of a drug to (someone) in order to induce stupor or insensibility. In this case it is used to mean drugging someone to induce insensibility so as to rob them their valuables.

**Figure 12: Type of Weapon used to commit car thefts/carjacking per town**



Source: Analysis from general questionnaire findings

#### 2.4.0 Targeted Motor Vehicles

The need to establish the kind of motor vehicles mostly targeted by criminals was considered crucial in this study. The information would assist in designing targeted measures in addressing the problem.

The study found that personal cars and taxis were the most targeted. Statistics from the NPS and reports from key informant interviews indicated that majority of all carjacking cases seemed to involve public service vehicles (PSV) where passengers would be robbed of their valuables at gunpoint or through use of threats. The finding is consistent with previously done reports and crime database maintained by SRIC. Personal cars and taxis are especially smuggled out of the



country or otherwise get cannibalized for their spare parts and accessories, which are then sold in motor vehicle repair garages and spare part dealers. On the other hand, robbery of PSVs could be motivated mainly by criminals' urge to rob passengers and crew of money and other valuables.

#### **2.4.1 Model of Car mostly Targeted by Criminals**

The study also sought to determine the model of car mostly targeted by criminals. It was found that Toyota was the single most targeted brand, accounting for almost half (42.8%) of all motor vehicles types that were said to be likely to be stolen followed by the Nissan, 16.6%. It was also found that Mercedes Benz was also targeted although by a minority 10.5%. Other car models such as Volkswagen, BMWs, Subaru and Lorries were mentioned by very few respondents, a clear indication that they were least targeted.

The findings appear to suggest that “big” cars are rarely targeted by criminals. This could be because such cars were likely to be easily recovered due to likelihood of being fitted with track and trace and other security gadgets. The other reason could be that the sales turnover of spare parts from such cars was likely to be low due to the cars' limited number in the market. Moreover, the European and American automobiles such as Mercedes Benz, BMW, Range Rover and Volkswagen tend to be relatively expensive and are owned by the crème-de-la-crème of society, and hence highly conspicuous.

These findings were in consonance with assertions by an Interpol report (2014)<sup>12</sup> on global perspective of motor vehicle crime which indicated that vehicles principally targeted by transnational organized crime groups were car makes and models that have a wide distribution range in the legitimate trade (both as vehicles and as spare parts) and therefore have a relative larger number of consumers<sup>13</sup>. The report further mentioned that large car manufacturers, such as Toyota were a good example of this wide legal distribution system for both cars and spare parts<sup>14</sup>.

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<sup>12</sup> See more on the motor vehicle crime in a global perspective report by Interpol (2014), available in [https://www.google.com/?gws\\_rd=ssl#q=Motor+vehicle+crime+in+global+perspective](https://www.google.com/?gws_rd=ssl#q=Motor+vehicle+crime+in+global+perspective) on 18<sup>th</sup> November, 2014.

<sup>13</sup> McDonold, Christopher T. *The Changing Face of Vehicle Theft*, The Police Chief 78, July 2011

<sup>14</sup> *ibid*

**Figure 13: Cars mostly Targeted by Criminals**

<b>Car Model</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Not applicable	513	21.1
Toyota	1052	42.8
Nissan	403	16.6
Mitsubishi	33	1.4
Mercedes Benz	256	10.5
Motor bike	31	1.3
Volkswagen	3	.1
Pick-ups	16	.7
Lorries	4	.2
Tuk Tuk	4	.2
BMW	36	1.5
Any type/model	64	2.6
Subaru	14	.6
Range rover	8	.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>2427</b>	<b>100.0</b>

*Source: Analysis from general questionnaire findings*

In explaining the reasons for the preference of the Toyota make, majority of respondents indicated that the main reason revolved around the issues of demand-supply dynamics in the motor industry. This included the seemingly ready market for Toyota as indicated by 46.4% of the respondents. It was felt that Toyota was more common in the Kenyan market and therefore easily concealable even with slight remodelling or manipulation. It was also felt that the spare parts were readily available. Other reason given for preference of Toyota was that it was perceived to consume less fuel than other car models.

Overall, the specific models that were found to be in the highest demand by criminals across all the towns and cities include Noah/Voxy, Probox/ Succeed, Fielder and other similar models which seemed to be mostly preferred due to the Boot Capacity. Heavy commercial vehicles (HCV) such as Lorries and vans were the least targeted, most probably because thieves reckoned that they were very conspicuous, are hard to manoeuvre in treacherous terrain during get-away and are hard to conceal, meaning tracing them is a lot easier than the salons, vans and pick-up tracks and also the fact that the models were perceived to be relatively more expensive and therefore hard to sell.

**Figure 14: Reasons why some car models are preferred by criminals**

<b>Reason for Targeting Models</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Do not know	498	20.5
Most common in the town	139	5.7
Ready market	1125	46.4
Spare parts are readily available	302	12.4
Goods on transit	42	1.7
Less fuel consumption	229	9.4
Expensive compared to others	23	.9
Cheaply available	12	.5
Carjackers board with passengers	14	.6
Used as a Gate-away vehicles by criminals	43	1.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>2427</b>	<b>100.0</b>

*Source: Analysis from general questionnaire findings*

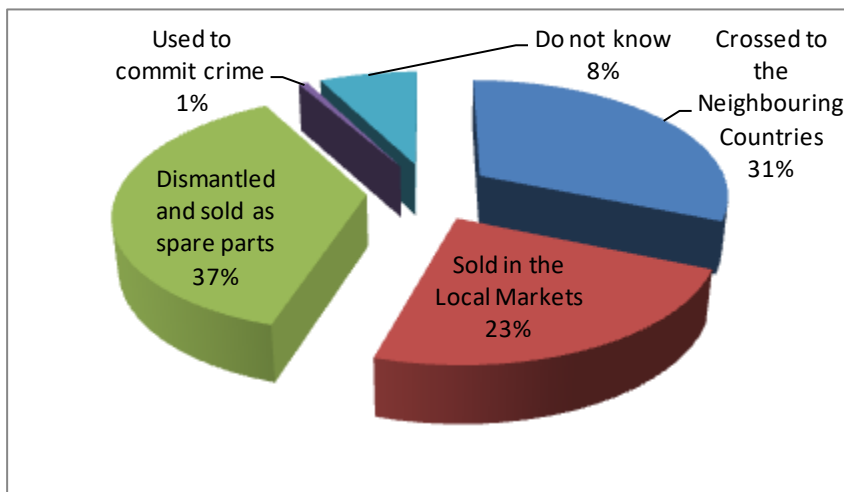
#### **2.4.2 Purpose/ Use of Stolen Cars**

The study sought to establish where most of the stolen cars were taken. As shown in Figure 15 below, a majority of respondents (37%) felt that the stolen vehicles were dismantled and sold as spare parts while almost a similar portion (31%) intimated that the stolen cars were crossed to the neighbouring countries such as Uganda and Tanzania. On the same, 23% of the respondents felt

that the cars were sold in the local markets while a paltry 1% felt the stolen cars were simply being used by criminals to commit other forms of crime.

These findings corroborated similar assertions by Interpol global report on motor vehicle crime which indicated that majority (70%) of motor vehicles stolen within the Interpol member countries were either sold as second hand or disassembled for spare parts. The report further indicated that 30% of these vehicles were illegally exported to neighboring countries while 15% felt that the same are used to commit other crimes.

**Figure 15: Purpose of stolen cars**

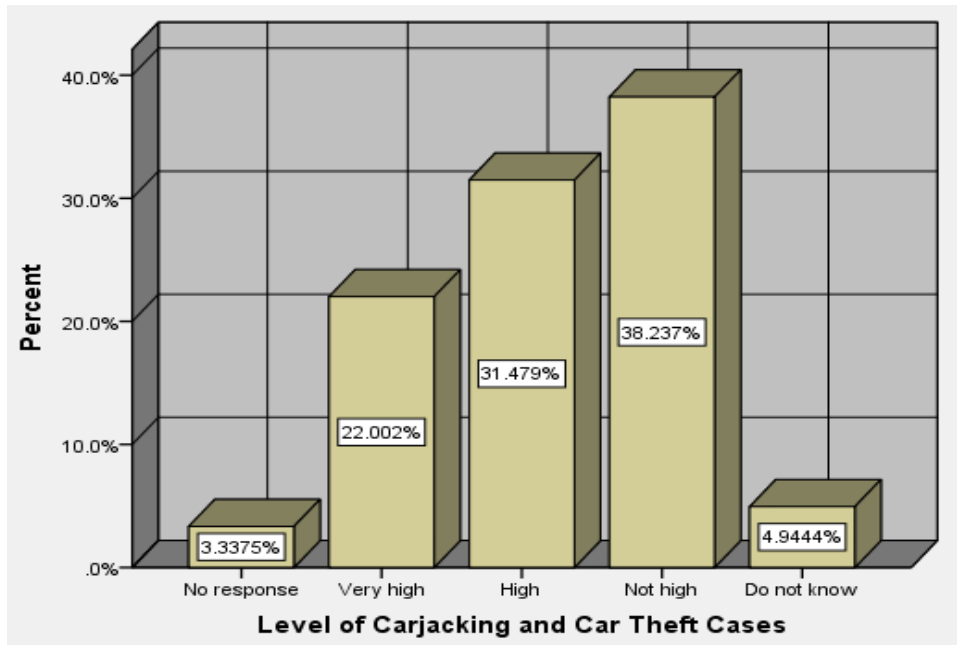


*Source: Analysis from general questionnaire findings*

### 2.5.0 Carjacking and Car Theft Trends

On the extent of car related crimes across the six towns and cities, a [majority of respondents were of the view that the levels were not high, as indicated by 38.23%](#) while 31.48% and 22% of the respondents indicated that the vices were high and very high respectively. This could be interpreted to mean that although incidences of carjacking and theft were manageable across the six cities and towns, members of the public were still not sure of their safety. Indeed, cases of loss of car parts and accessories were reportedly common across the towns and cities.

**Figure 16: Carjacking and Car Theft Trends**



*Source: Analysis from general questionnaire findings*

### 2.5.1 Most Vulnerable Groups

Contrary to common assumption, males were found to be more vulnerable to carjacking/theft than their female counterparts at 35.7% and 31.5% respectively. This differential sex-based crime vulnerability rate could be a function of the facts that most car owners – and presumably motorists - are men, and that men tend to generally stay outdoors late into the night, which has been associated with increased vulnerability to crime. Moreover, men were more likely to stay outdoors late into the night in entertainment spots and driving taxis than females, owing to differential gender roles in a patriarchal society such as that found in practically all Kenyan communities. The study further found that it was easier to steal a car with someone with keys in it than parked cars without drivers.

**Figure 17: Most Vulnerable Groups**

Groups	Frequency	Percent
Don't know	206	8.5
Female occupants	764	31.5

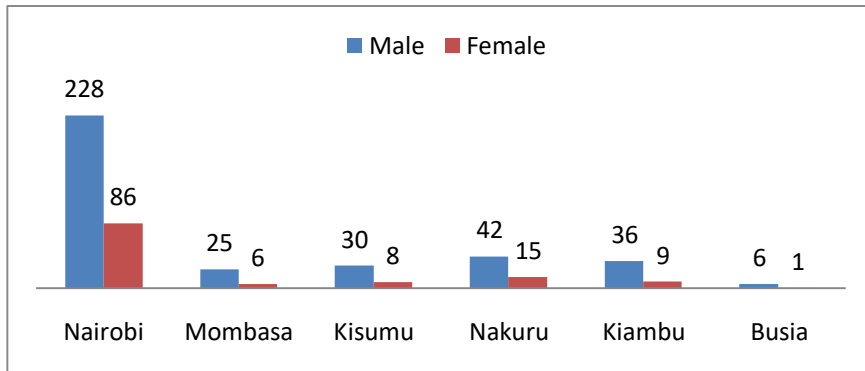
Male occupants	866	35.7
People with disabilities	24	1.0
Foreigner/ tourists	138	5.7
All cars	367	15.1
Couples	62	2.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>2427</b>	<b>100.0</b>

*Source: Analysis from general questionnaire findings*

On the other hand, there is also the probability that women, being fully conscious of their greater vulnerability to physical and sexual violence, retreat to the safety of their homes before dusk and hardly venture out until after dawn. This was especially observable in Mombasa, a Muslim-majority city where Muslim etiquette requires that women be accompanied. Other groups within the society which seemed to be targeted or considered vulnerable included foreigners, as indicated by 5.7%, couples (2.6%) and lastly people with disabilities who accounted for a paltry 1%. It was also evident that there were some criminals who would target any group in the society as indicated by 15.1% of respondents. This meant that the criminals were hardly concerned with the occupant of the vehicles but the model of the vehicle.

In order to buttress this observation, data was also collected from the NPS on the gender of the complainants of car theft and carjacking across the six towns. As indicated in Figure 19 below, males comprised the majority of those who lodged complaints at police stations relating to motor vehicle theft in all the sampled towns and cities outnumbering their female counterparts by over 60%.

**Figure 18: Complainants as per NPS Records (June, 2013 – August, 2014)**

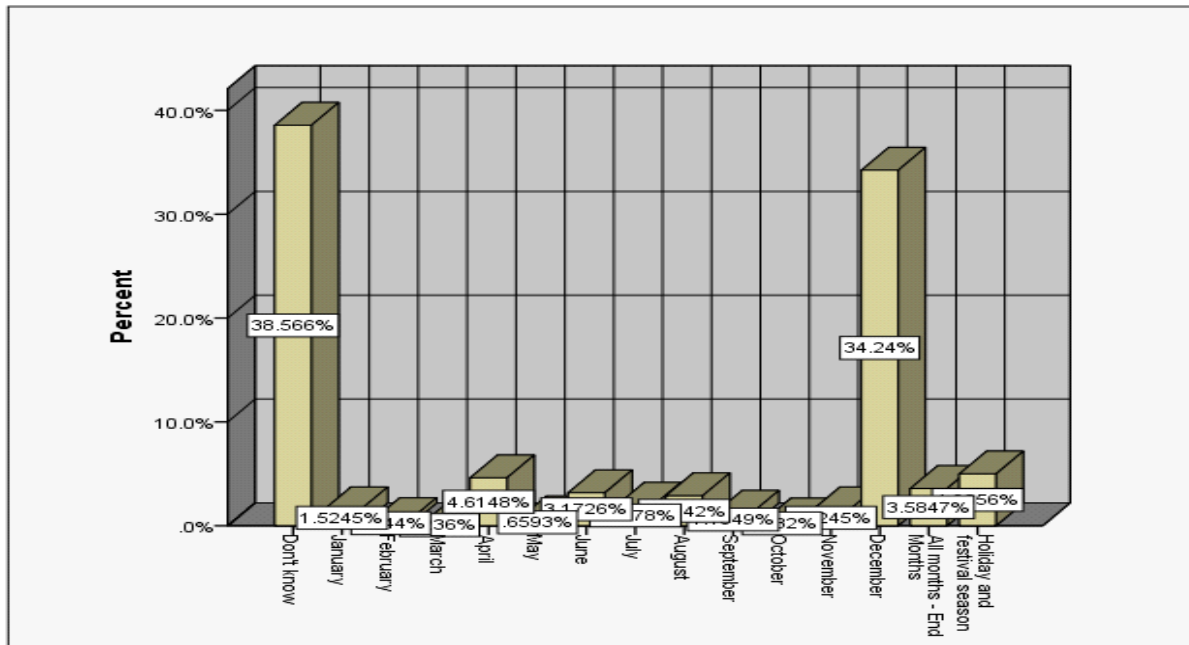


*Source: Analysis from actual statistics collected from National Police Service*

### **2.5.2 Month of the Year with Rampant Cases**

The month of December, which ordinarily coincides with the longest festive season, was associated with the ‘most rampant’ cases of car theft and carjacking in the sampled towns and cities, 34.24%. When asked to suggest probable reasons for the extra-ordinary crime bulge in December, 36.8% of respondents saw a direct link between the crime spike witnessed around the month of December and “desperate” attempts by criminals/ gangs to resort to criminal means of “raising” cash with which to also “celebrate” Christmas like others. It was observed that some car owners hired their vehicles during the December festivities and therefore becoming easy ‘preys’ to criminals.

**Figure 19: Month of the Year with Rampant Cases**



Source: Analysis from general questionnaire findings

Other times of the year mentioned included holiday seasons, end months, harvest seasons and rainy seasons. According to key informants, rainy seasons tend to cause heavy traffic snarl-ups in virtually all the towns under study and therefore rendering motorists more vulnerable to situational crimes such as loss of car parts and accessories.

**Figure 20: Reasons why car theft and carjacking cases are more common during specific months in a year**

Reason	Frequency	Percent
Don't know	1030	42.4
Most people hire vehicles for Christmas	202	8.4
During the rain seasons (Causes traffic jams)	186	7.7
Unemployment	57	2.3
Higher demand for money-during festivities	359	36.8
Harvesting Seasons	51	2.1



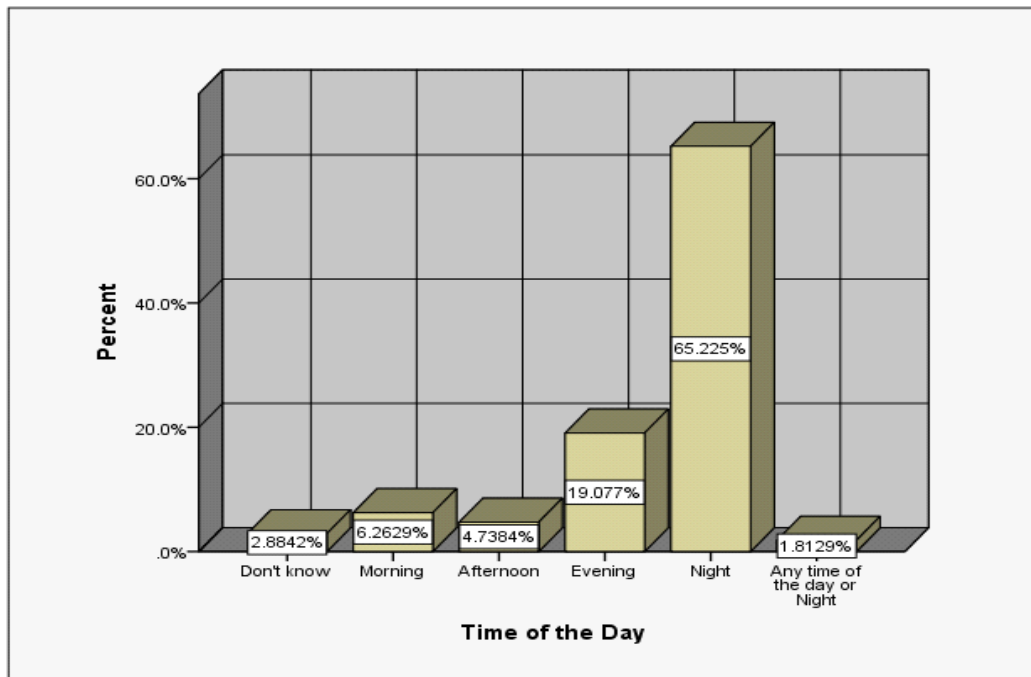
Coincides with release of inmates by the president	7	.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>2427</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: Analysis from general questionnaire findings

### 2.5.3 Time of the day Car Related Crimes are likely to occur

Previous studies conducted by SRIC<sup>15</sup> and others have consistently indicated that most crimes are committed at night. Similarly, this study found that cases of carjacking and theft are mostly committed at night, 65.2%, in the evening, 19%, and in the morning 6.3%. In comparative terms, crime was found to be most rampant along unlit streets and alleys, forested areas and, conversely, statistically low in well-lit highways, residential neighbourhoods across all major urban centres in the country.

**Figure 21: Time of the day car theft or carjacking incident is likely to happen**



Source: Analysis from general questionnaire findings

<sup>15</sup> See more reports at: [www.srickenya.org](http://www.srickenya.org) on the most crime vulnerable times of the day

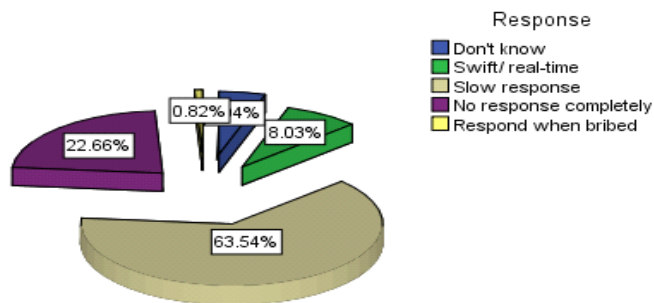
#### **2.5.4 Police Response**

An attempt was made to determine motorists' as well as passengers' perception of police' response to distress calls whenever cases of motor vehicle theft or carjacking were reported to them. As can be deduced from Figure 22 below, an overwhelming majority, 63.54%, of the respondents were of the opinion that the response was 'slow', a further 22.66% was categorical that there was in fact 'No response' at all from the law enforcers; while a minority (8.03) felt the officers were providing 'swift response'.

From police officers perspective, the NPS were emphatic that they had instituted a number of interventions in trying to control carjacking and motor vehicle theft cases. According to the officers interviewed for this study the interventions put in place by law enforcers seemed to be bearing fruits as carjacking cases were highly minimal and were working on eradicating the vice completely. Some of the interventions put forth by police included a set of and mutually-reinforcing factors which ranged from, a 24-hour police surveillance (beats and patrols along the major highways) in the city and its environs; efficient information-sharing and coordination mechanism between various specialized police units and other law enforcement agencies, particularly the National Intelligence Service (NIS), Department of Criminal Investigations (DCI), the Flying Squad, Anti Terrorism Unit (ATU) as well as other critical law enforcement agencies such as the Kenya Ports Authority (KPA), Customs Department of the Kenya Revenue Authority (KRA) and the Highway Patrol Units.

To this end, it is instructive to note that the police themselves maintained that their response capacity had improved markedly in tandem with their enhanced mobility. From all indications, the challenge would appear that while there is an acknowledged improvement in police logistical support, a great deal more still needs to be done, including boosting the daily allocation on fuel per vehicle while taking into account the expansiveness of their command jurisdictions.

**Figure 22: Police Response Time**



*Source: Analysis from general questionnaire findings*

### **2.5.5 Fear of Car Related Crime Incidents**

The study sought to measure the level of fear by the motorists and categorized the sections into; when driving alone, driving in a group, when using public service vehicles such as *matatus* and *Taxis*.

It was observed that the level of fear of being carjacked increased with a decrease with the number of occupants in the car so that it's maximum when driving alone. Indeed, 70% of respondents felt unsafe when driving alone. Generally travelling as a group or in a convoy appears to confer an intrinsic sense of protection and 'group<sup>16</sup> insurance'. It was also observed that, over 20% of respondents were not afraid of being carjacked even when travelling alone although 21% also felt unsafe even when in a group. 73.7% felt safer travelling in a group than alone. The study also established that people using public service vehicles felt safer than motorists who drove alone.

### **2.6.0 Impact of Motor vehicle crime in the Kenya**

Interpol (2014) posits that motor vehicle crime is a highly organized criminal activity affecting all regions of the whole world and with clear links to organized crime and terrorism<sup>17</sup>. It is

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<sup>16</sup> 'Group' in this context refers to persons known to the traveller, and may include relatives, friends, workmates and other acquaintances.

<sup>17</sup> Read more in the Interpol Website at: <http://www.interpol.int/Crime-areas/Vehicle-crime/Vehicle-crime>. Accessed on 13th November, 2014

imperative to note that vehicles are not only stolen for their own sake, but are also trafficked to finance or to execute other types of crime.

In Kenya motor vehicle criminal cases are very minimal as there were only 464 cases reported across Nairobi, Mombasa, Nakuru, Kisumu, Kiambu and Busia towns between the months of August, 2013 to September, 2014. Among these cases, 414 were carjacking while only 50 were theft of car parts and other accessories. The survey found that not all cases of theft of car parts were reported to the police; neither were they reported to insurance companies. It was found that failure to report emanated from the perceived lengthy processes of settling claims with insurance companies and also the minimal chances of recovery from the police. This means the actual number of motor vehicle related crimes could be higher than the established numbers.

The study sought to establish the monetary loss associated with motor vehicle crimes. The loss included costs associated with anticipation for vehicle theft such as costs for anti-vehicle theft and insurance, the consequence of vehicle theft such as the value of the stolen vehicles, the physical and emotional impact on victims and also the costs incurred by government authorities such as the police in response to such types of crime.

Comparatively, it cost the UK government £4,000 in 2003 to follow up and process a car theft case<sup>18</sup>. This cost is slightly more than Ksh.0.5 million and involved the preventive expenditures and the average value of the stolen and recovered vehicles. Based on the fact that there were about 420 cases of carjacking across the six main urban towns in Kenya, the total loss to the country could be estimated in excess of Kshs.200 million per year (*ceteris paribus*). This translates to about 3.5% of the budgetary allocation to the NPS for 2014 – 2015 fiscal year<sup>19</sup>. Assuming that the basic salary for the lowest ranked police officer is Ksh.25, 000<sup>20</sup> the same amount lost as a result of motor vehicle theft can pay salaries to slightly more than 800 police officers for a year. This implies that if the law enforcement agents were to focus on preventive

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<sup>18</sup> See more at: Home Office, Research, Development and Statistics Directorate (2005): The economic and social costs of crime against individuals and households 2003/04.

<sup>19</sup> NPS was awarded Ksh. 71.3B during the 2014-2015 National Government budgetary allocation. Retrieved from: <http://www.deloitte.com/assets/Dcom-Kenya/Local%20Assets/Documents/Budget%202014/BudgetInsight2014.pdf> on 20th November, 2014.

<sup>20</sup> See more in the Daily Nation Mobile on the proposed police pay structure. Available at: [\\_http://mobile.nation.co.ke/News/Police-prison-officers-pay-raise/-/1950946/2025974/-/format/xhtml/-/6rmj0y/-/index.html](http://mobile.nation.co.ke/News/Police-prison-officers-pay-raise/-/1950946/2025974/-/format/xhtml/-/6rmj0y/-/index.html) (Accessed on 20th November, 2013)

measures of dealing with the carjacking including sensitizing the members of public on the importance of ensuring that their motor vehicles were fitted with security gadgets, this money could be used to improve police welfare for better policing in the country.

Motor vehicle theft does not only lead to direct costs, but also creates secondary economic effects on the society-at-large. Most importantly, victims of motor vehicle theft have to deal with the foregone costs as a result of the necessary administrative activities and the temporary unavailability of their vehicle (including companies who own transport vans or trucks), which could lead to a reduction in working time hours<sup>21</sup>. On the other hand, there are the opportunity costs of police and other public services. On the economic front, these types of crime will have some effects on the motor vehicle market since there will be more demand for new vehicles and more supply of second-hand vehicles.

Findings from general questionnaires and key informant interviews revealed that motorists and members of the public in general were investing a great deal in safeguarding their vehicles. Generally, security measures aimed at mitigating the economic costs of vehicle theft, warrant investment in terms of time and money. These means that money which would have been put in other areas of both personal and country-wide development would be diverted to securing motor vehicles against theft which would have otherwise been avoided. In general, though, standard anti-vehicle theft measures make sense from a social-economic point of view<sup>22</sup>.

### **2.7.0 Precautionary Measures put in Place by Motorists**

Motorists had adopted a raft of “survival tactics” in an attempt to try and ward off – or at least minimize - the degree of risk of losing their cars. The most widely used measures were shunning stopping for strangers (19.4%), speeding or avoiding completely known crime hotspots (16.7%) and installation of car alarms and cut outs (13.8%). Motorists were also found to use track- and-trace gadgets and related top-notch car security systems. Others had taken comprehensive car insurance covers and decline to carry suspicious-looking strangers. Other precautionary measures mentioned included tinting car windows (2%) and avoiding desolate or dilapidated

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<sup>21</sup> Field, S. (1994). Crime Prevention and the Costs of Auto Theft: An Economic Analysis. Home Office Research and Planning Unit. Retrieved from [http://www.popcenter.org/library/crimeprevention/volume\\_01/04field.pdf](http://www.popcenter.org/library/crimeprevention/volume_01/04field.pdf) on 17th November, 2014.

<sup>22</sup> *ibid*

roads especially during the rainy seasons which accounted for a measly 0.3% of the sampled respondents.

**Figure 23: Anti-theft Measures put in Place by Motorists**

<b>Precautionary Measures</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
No response	281	11.6
Car alarms/ cut outs/ car track	340	14.0
Do not stop to strangers	470	19.4
Speeding/ avoiding known crime hotspots	406	16.7
Tinting car windows	49	2.0
All	873	36.0
Avoid desolate or dilapidated roads especially during rainy seasons	8	.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>2427</b>	<b>100.0</b>

*Source: Analysis from general questionnaire findings*

### **2.7.1 Interventions put in place to reduce/manage Motor vehicle crimes**

#### **National Police Service**

The study also sought to find out intervention mechanisms put in place by the National police service to manage motor vehicle crimes. Key informants interviews with senior NPS officers revealed that the National Police Service has established an Anti-Motor Vehicle Theft Unit (AMVTU) specifically to deal with all motor vehicle crimes. The Unit is trained and equipped to deal with both preventive and detection of motor vehicles crimes.

a) **Prevention measures.** This involves:

- (i) Conducting Police patrols both foot and mobile as a deterrent to would be motor vehicle criminals
- (ii) Erection of Road-Blocks and Check Points.
- (iii) Collection of Intelligence information to profile suspected motor vehicle offenders

- (iv) Community policing through informal community surveillance and neighborhood watch activities.
- (v) Use of Media to sensitive members of public on risks and methods used by motor vehicle criminals.
- (vi) In collaboration with the Ministry of Transport, KRA and Motor vehicle Registration, the NPS have proposed to replace vehicle registration number plates with new tamper-proof ones through the Transport Integration Management System in order to curb vehicle thefts and reduce crimes committed using stolen vehicles.

**b) Detection Measures:**

- (i) The Anti-Motor Vehicle Theft Unit in collaboration with the Crime intelligence unit has stepped up investigations through the use of mobile phone technology and tracking devices.
- (ii) The unit Works in collaboration with Interpol in following up of motor vehicles crime offenders who cross borders.

Besides the Unit’s operations, the Regular Police also supplements the roles of the Anti-Motor vehicle in prevention, detection and investigations of motor vehicle crimes.

**Figure 24: Intervention Measures put in place by NPS**

<b>Intervention Measures</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Police patrols (Foot and Mobile)	42.2%
Erecting road blocks and check point	22.6%
Intelligence gathering on suspected motor vehicle offenders	12.1%
Involving community members (informal community surveillance and neighborhoods watch groups)	6.4%
Sensitization campaigns using the media	10.4%

Advanced stages of introducing new generation vehicle number plates in collaboration with other stakeholders	6.3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>

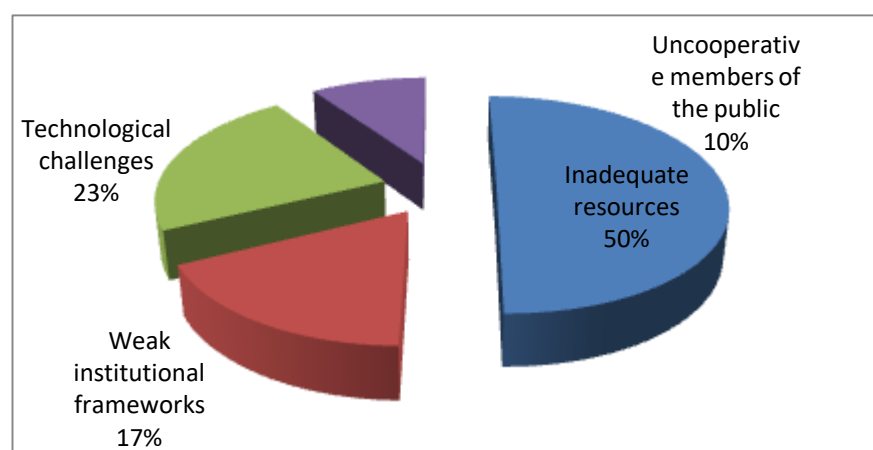
*Source: Analysis from key informant interviews involving the law enforcement agents*

### **Challenges faced by the National Police Service in the fight against Motor Vehicle Crimes**

The study found that despite the efforts made by the Police in curbing Motor vehicle crimes, there are challenges which hinder their smooth operations. Among them are;-

- (i) Inadequate resources: - Financial and Human resource capabilities, development of new strategies for integrating the knowledge in fighting motor vehicle crimes
- (ii) Institutional frameworks: - Legal frameworks and protocol hitches in pursuit of crimes pilfering to other Countries.
- (iii) Development of Technology: - the National Police Service is not adequately equipped to match with technological advancement used by criminals. Lack of forensic labs in the country complicates timely investigations and detection of criminal acts.
- (iv) Lack of cooperation from the members of Public. Members of public are in most times reluctant to share information with law enforcement agents.

**Figure 32: Challenges Faced by the NPS**



Source: Analysis from key informant interviews involving the law enforcement agents



### **3.1. Conclusion and Recommendations**

#### **3.1.1 Conclusion**

In conclusion, this study established that carjacking cases were very minimal in the six towns studied with only few cases being reported in Nairobi, Kisumu and Kiambu. Car theft including loss of car parts and other accessories were however reported in all the towns studied. Nairobi city recorded the highest cases of car theft and loss of car parts and other accessories followed by Nakuru, Kiambu, Mombasa, Kisumu and finally Busia which recorded almost negligible cases.

The study established that there seemed to be a preference for personal cars and taxis especially the Toyota model of cars/ vehicles which were found to be the most targeted/ preferred in all the towns. Majority of all the respondents across the six towns indicated that there seemed to be a ready market for the make in terms of spare parts, the model was also perceived to be cheaply available and also the fact that Toyota models were the most common in the market and therefore tended to offer criminals anonymity even with slight remodelling or manipulation.

The study also established that majority of residents of these towns lived in fear of falling victim to carjacking, car theft or losing their car parts and other accessories especially when driving alone and that most preferred to drive in a group to offer them some sort of protection. In conclusion, it was apparent that although motorists felt safe in driving through/ along some areas there were some other parts of the towns that a majority chose to avoid completely. These areas were characterised by poor/ dilapidated roads, numerous road bumps, muddy roads (where vehicles get stuck), and roads along unkempt / bushy surroundings, roads going through areas awash with bars and other entertainment joints and along infrequently used or desolate roads among many other factors.

Finally the study concludes that most cases of loss car parts and accessories are rarely reported to the police or insurance companies. As established from the general questionnaires, a majority of residents of these towns preferred to make their own arrangements to replenish lost car parts and accessories as opposed to reporting to insurance companies or the police since they considered reporting a waste of time as the police were perceived to do little in recovering the

stolen car parts/ accessories while insurance companies were reportedly imposing an excess fee which seemed to deter motorists from reporting.

It was also apparent that majority of the people who reported these cases to either the police or insurance companies were men as indicated by findings from the NPS records, insurance companies and also from the general questionnaires where more than 70% of the complainants were reported to be men.

### **3.1.2 Recommendations**

Stakeholders in motor vehicle crime include; law enforcement agencies, car manufacturers, insurance companies, motor vehicle owners, registration authorities, legislators/ justice departments, vehicle related businesses (car hire, garages and so on). Law enforcement agencies could hold the key to initiating both preventive and repressive measures with regard to motor vehicle crime in cooperation with one or more of the other stakeholders. The following are recommendations to manage motor vehicle crime in Kenya.

#### **National Police Service (NPS)**

**Intensify police surveillance including patrols, beats and erecting road blocks and tightening security at border entry/exit points.** This study established that the few carjacking cases and car theft/ loss of car accessories happen along highways during the dead of the night or around bars and restaurants in the towns. The study recommends consistent and unpredictable police patrols and beats in order to stump out the vices.

**Improve distress response rate.** This study established that police response to carjacking or even car theft distress calls was very slow as indicated by 63.54% of all the respondents sampled for this study. It was apparent from the findings that sometimes police were not adequately facilitated to be able to swiftly respond to this kind of calls. This study therefore recommends proper facilitation of police including sufficient provision of motor vehicle fuel and communication equipments to improve on response.

**Revamp community policing** through encouraging and publicizing the proposed *Nyumba Kumi* initiative. This study established that one of the key drivers of car theft and stealing of car parts

and other accessories was the ready market for car spare parts in the most of the towns sampled other than Mombasa and Busia. To this end, the study recommends a revamp of police-community relationship in order to be able to nab and control the sale of car spare parts business, not only in the sampled towns but across the country.

**Manage and address bribe-taking and corruption among police officers.** This study and many other perception surveys conducted on crime management in this country continue to point out that some police officers were still soliciting for bribes from the members of the public in order to render services. This study lauds the efforts of the Police Service commission, IPOA and the general NPS management in weeding out these elements who have continued to dent the reputation of the NPS. The study recommends the hastening of the ongoing police reforms in order to quickly save the reputation of the NPS.

**Strengthen research and planning.** The police and security sector are in the forefront of the fight against all types of crime. The security industry should constantly be working on solutions to automobile theft. Therefore, the NPS research and planning department should be activated and equipped with qualified personnel and funding to proactively come up with innovative policy research options for combating carjacking and automobile crimes.

**Restore toll free communication numbers.** In order to be in a position to effectively deal with distress calls, this study recommends that NPS restores the toll free numbers within the police stations as opposed to centralizing the service within a certain point. This will make it possible for members of the public to reach out to police stations especially when in distress. This will also improve on crime reporting and police response to crime scene.

**Revamp and expand the Anti Motor Vehicle Theft Unit (AMVTU).** This study revealed that the unit was understaffed and only concentrated in Nairobi city and therefore recommends that the unit be revamped and expanded to cover all the major urban centres since motor vehicle theft was gradually being witnessed outside Nairobi City, which has the highest concentration of vehicular traffic in the country.

**Spearhead Sensitization Campaigns** aimed at informing members of the public of the available security measures. The measures include tips to motorists and passengers covered in this report.

Along with other high flood security masks, police departments should be facilitated with [satellite tracking devices such as Lo-jacks](#) to help in the fight against automobile crimes. Lo-jacks Stolen Vehicle Recovery Systems is a vehicle tracking system that allows police to track the motor vehicle in the event of theft. This system will give credence to the proposed new generation motor vehicle registration number plates in cracking down unscrupulous motor vehicle dealers. Lo-jack security devices have been used widely in the developed countries in recovery of stolen vehicles and the manufacturer claims a 90% recovery rate so far. Some of the areas where this technology has been applied and proved successful include: Michigan and Texas in the US.

[Propose enactment of stringent laws](#) in dealing with dealers or motorists found to have fitted their motor vehicles or trading with stolen car parts and accessories. Through the ministry of transport and infrastructure and other relevant agencies, notably NTSA, the NPS needs to propose and lobby legislation of stringent measures of dealing with motorist found in possession or trading with stolen motor vehicle parts and accessories. These legislations will by a large measure curb the sale of illegal car parts and accessories and ultimately starve the industry of supply.

### **Car Dealers, Car-part Dealers**

Motor vehicle dealers have tremendous potential of making automobile theft almost impossible with very little effort through technology as follows:

Embrace modern technology by ensuring that all motor vehicles are fitted with technological devices such as “Micro Chips”, in the ignition key (pass-key theft deterrent system) currently available in just a few vehicles. The chip is embedded in the ignition can only work with a certain key which is also embedded with a precision resistor. This means that any other key that does not have a resistor or if the resistor has the wrong value, the circuit disables part of the car's electrical system to prevent the car from starting.

Introduction and installation of anti-theft devices such “the club” can be enforced through the law to compel vehicle manufacturers into adoption. A club is a motor vehicle lock that is a strong

visual deterrent to potential car thieves through alerting them that the car is protected. Clubs come in different types. There are the pedal jack locks, which are used to immobilize both the clutch and breaks such that the car cannot move; the steering wheel locks used to lock the steering such that it cannot move without the ignition key. Members of the public need to be made aware of such devices in order to prioritize motor vehicles fitted with such in order to reduce car theft cases in the country.

### **Individual Motorists and Passengers:**

There are various ways of prevention to reduce the likelihood of a vehicle getting stolen. These include physical barriers and behavioral measures, which make the effort of stealing the vehicle more difficult. Some of these include:

#### **Physical Barriers**

- (i) Installing devices used to lock a part of the vehicle necessary in its operation, such as the wheel, steering wheel or brake pedal. A popular steering wheel lock is the Club.
- (ii) Installing immobilizers, allowing the vehicle to start only if a key containing the correct chip is present in the ignition. These work by locking the steering wheel and disabling the ignition.

Chances of theft can also be reduced with various deterrents, which give the impression to the thief that he/she is more likely to get caught if the vehicle is stolen. These include:

- (i) Car alarm systems that are triggered if a breaking and entry into the vehicle occurs.
- (ii) Using Identification tags which allow individual parts of a vehicle to be identified.
- (iii) Kill switch circuits are designed to frustrate or slow down the efforts of a determined car thief. Kill switches are often located between crucial parts of the starting system, between the battery source and the coil, or the fuel pump. A car cannot start without first flipping these kill switches to closed position. Or after starting, goes for a short distance then the

engine goes off. The gadgets can be hidden in obscured areas, under the dashboard, beneath the seat, behind a chair, etc.

(iv) Vehicle Identification Number (VIN) etching: The permanent engraving of a vehicle's federally registered vehicle Identification number onto its windshield and windows. VIN etching is often seen as a deterrent to thieves because it not only makes it nearly impossible for thieves to profit from selling windows and windshields, but it also makes it more difficult for thieves to find a way to dispose of the vehicle once it has been stolen. As a result, VIN etching is recommended by Police and insurance agencies to protect against auto theft.

### **Behavioral Measures**

[Desist from picking strangers on way; reduce on the time travelled at night.](#) This study found that most of carjacking and car theft cases happened at night and recommends that members of the public should, where possible reduce on night travels or staying outdoors late in the night. It is also recommended that motorists desist from picking strangers especially at night.

[Avoid frequenting or passing through known crime-infested areas and streets.](#) Findings in this study revealed that there were some areas which were already known by the members of the public as carjacking/theft hotspots- areas where one was likely to lose car parts and other accessories and recommends avoidance of these areas.

[Ensure that motor vehicles were regularly serviced.](#) The study established that criminals normally target stalled cars, upon which they pounce on the unsuspecting motorists and passengers and recommends to motorists to ensure their vehicles were regularly serviced to reduce on roadside breakdowns which could lead them to traps already set up by criminals.

[Obey traffic rules especially during rush hours and rainy seasons to avoid unnecessary traffic jams.](#) Study established that loss of car parts such as side mirrors and other car accessories happen mostly when motor vehicles are stationery either at parking spaces, stalled or during traffic jams.

**Avoid buying spare parts from rogue dealers.** The study established that there were cartels and illegal suppliers of motor vehicle spare parts who sustain the industry by buying stolen items from criminals. The study recommends to the members of public to shun from buying from these dealers in order starve the ‘black’ market from supplies.

**Intensify screening of passengers before boarding.** In order to minimize carjacking especially involving public service vehicles, the study recommends to the managers of *matatu* SACCOS and other associations to ensure proper mechanism are put in place for screening passengers to ensure they don’t load armed criminals.

The study established that it was easier to steal a car that has someone in it who has the keys and/or the immobilizer on them. In order to minimize risks and prevent injuries, this report recommends the following security measures/ interventions to motorists:

**Check out the scene.** When you walk towards your car, look around you. Check if you’re being followed, especially if you’ve just come from the bank, office or a shopping mall. If you’re not sure whether someone is following you, go past your car, or go into a shop or other establishment. Keep your keys ready in your hand when you do approach your car, so you don’t waste time looking for them.

**Loading can distract you.** Many people get hijacked when they are loading stuff into their cars. Don’t leave the car open while you are loading stuff into the boot. Your attention is distracted and you are an easy hijacking target. When you are at home, don’t offload stuff until you are securely inside your property. If you think there is any danger, leave the stuff in the car and get to the safety of your house as quickly as possible.

**Lock up behind you.** Once inside the car, lock the doors immediately and start the car. Don’t open windows wide enough to allow a hand to fit through. If you think someone might be following you, don’t go home, but drive to the nearest police station or well-lit place where there are security guards and many other people. Petrol stations are open 24 hours a day and many of them have CCTV cameras, which might put hijackers off.

**Keep to the middle.** When approaching an intersection, drive in the center lane to make it harder for people to approach you. Leave enough space between yourself and the car in front that you

can maneuver around it. If you are right behind the car in front of you, you can easily be hemmed in even by just one car coming from behind.

**Check behind you.** Monitor all vehicles travelling behind you. There could be more than one vehicle involved and they could be setting a trap for you. If you think you are in danger, attract the attention of other motorists or pedestrians. Use the hooter, flash your lights, put on your emergency lights and shout. People might try and help you or they might not – but at least you tried.

**Hitting from behind:** If car has been hit from behind, do not come out. Once you are sure it's not a hijacking, get out and inspect the damage. Hijackers often dent a car slightly in order to get the driver out of it.

**Stranger danger:** If a suspicious person approaches you, especially at night or in a deserted area, drive off quickly from a stop street or intersection, but do pay careful attention to the traffic.

**At Traffic lights:** Be on the lookout for anyone approaching your car, or lingering at traffic lights, stop streets, parking areas or driveways. Don't be distracted by vendors or people handing out flyers at intersections. Many hijackings happen at traffic intersections.

**Samaritans can get robbed.** Accident scenes can sometimes be set up as a trap. Don't stop unless you are convinced it is real. Use your cell phone to report the accident. It has happened in the past that 'injured passengers' turn out to be hijackers. If you are unsure of what to do and you don't have your cell phone on you, drive to the nearest police station and report the incident.

**Coming and going.** Ensure that the area around your gate is well-lit. When opening your gate, don't leave your car door open and the engine running. Criminals can act much faster than you expect. Many hijackings occur while victims wait for the gate to open. If there are suspicious-looking people hanging around, drive round or past the house or call the security and get them to escort you in. Don't take any chances, especially late at night and early in the morning. Those are most favorable hijacking times.



**Suspicious Roadblocks:** If you encounter an unusual or unexpected roadblock, keep your windows closed and doors locked. Ask the police or traffic officer for an identity card. Show them your identity document through the window.

**In the event of being carjacked:** try to stay calm, follow instructions, cooperate but look scared. The hijacker wants to feel he has power over you. Don't stare at the hijacker; this could be interpreted as defiance. Don't argue, or scream, especially if you suspect the hijacker may have a weapon. Rather give up your car. It's worth a lot less than your life.

**No sudden moves.** If you need to reach inside your pocket or bag to get something the hijacker wanted, warn your hijacker beforehand, but make sure that he can see your hands at all times. Answer all questions and ask the hijacker to repeat something if you do not understand.

Take note. Make mental notes of the hijacker's appearance, how many they are and any of their physical characteristics that stand out. This could help you later in identifying them.

Child alert: If there is a sleeping child in the vehicle, alert the hijackers. Reassure them that the child is not a threat and would make things difficult for them. Wait until instructed to release the child.

**PIN numbers.** If you are forced to accompany the hijacker in your car, this is usually to make sure that no anti-hijacking devices are triggered. If they ask for PIN numbers on cards, give it to them. Set the limit of cash you can draw on one day quite low, as this will limit the amount of money that can be stolen in one go from you.

Once the hijacker has gone, get away from the area as quickly as possible, and get to a phone to call for help.

### **To the Government:**

**Invest in the improvement of roads.** To this end, it was noted that the dilapidated nature of Kenyan roads, especially in towns and cities, sometimes become a godsend for criminals who attack motorists when they slow down along damaged or flooded road sections.

[Invest in programmes aimed at sensitizing members of public on road safety.](#) Members of public sometimes seem to be careless when using Kenyan roads and there is therefore need for government to step in and revive programmes aimed at improving their general security in town centres and along the highways. This information could be conveyed through Chief's Barazas, community policing activities especially on identifying suspicious individuals who could be trailing them or even on the importance of not leaving valuables in the motor vehicles.

[Install and sufficiently maintain street lights across all towns and cities.](#) The rationale for this particular proposal was that there was an appreciable reduction in general crime in well lit areas and conversely, a spike in crime in dingy or unlit spaces.

[Create employment or more job opportunities for the youth.](#) There is need to set up and support programmes aimed at creating more job opportunities for the youth. This includes supporting and popularizing the existing initiatives including the Uwezo initiative, the Youth fund and so on. It will also be important that the government organizes training workshops to equip the youth with necessary skills before disbursing any monies to them.

[Create more secure packing spaces.](#) County governments should invest in ensuring that designated car park spaces are well secured through installation of security elements such as CCTV cameras and dedicated security guards.

[Enact stringent measures on sale of car spare parts/ put proper regulatory measures on sale of car spare parts.](#) This study established that some of the areas earmarked as crime hotspots neighbored car garages and spare parts shops and to this end recommends that the government puts proper mechanisms in place including necessary bills and policies to control and manage sale of car spare parts in order to weed out rogue car parts dealers.

[Hasten launch and use of the new generation motor vehicle number plates.](#) This will not only reduce on car theft but also improve on tracking and tracing stolen motor vehicles.

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