

## Social Determinants of Human Rights Awareness Among Barmaids in Mathare Sub County, Nairobi, Kenya

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### ABSTRACT

The study explores the societal factors contributing to the vulnerability and lack of legal protection of barmaids in the informal labor sector in Mathare sub county, Nairobi, Kenya. The study aims to identify barriers to human rights awareness and develop strategies to bridge the gap between marginalization and empowerment among vulnerable individuals, like barmaids. The study employed a descriptive survey research design to establish human rights awareness and knowledge of the violations among barmaids in Mathare Sub-County. The study's target population was 238 barmaids in 119 licensed bars in Mathare sub-county. A sample size of 108 barmaids from 59 bars/clubs in the Mathare Sub- County was used in the study. The study's instruments were questionnaires and focus group discussions. The study applied SPSS version 25 in data analysis. The study found that awareness of human rights remains consistent regardless of education level, with social factors like social class and positive attitudes being highly rated as facilitating knowledge by 66% and 76% of respondents, respectively. The study found that 73% of respondents believe social lifestyle, family size, and income levels influence human rights awareness, while 77% of barmaids believe education level also influences awareness. However, a chi-square test showed no significant relationship. The study found that 91% of barmaids believe social factors enhance their understanding of human rights, while 9% believe societal issues do not hinder their knowledge. The study revealed no significant correlation between awareness level and factors such as age, education level, and service length, as denoted by ( $\chi^2 (4, N = 81) = 1.28, p = .86$ ;  $\chi^2 (5, N = 81) = 1.69, p = .89$ ;  $\chi^2 (3, N = 81) = 2.9, p = .41$ ). The study was limited to barmaids in Mathare Sub-County, Nairobi. It was limited to its structured survey method and cross-sectional research design. This may have overlooked qualitative insights and limited the ability to examine human rights awareness changes over time. The study recommends targeted and sustained human rights awareness campaigns tailored to vulnerable groups such as barmaids in informal urban settlements. It further advocates for the integration of human rights education across all levels of Kenya's education system, emphasizing curriculum reforms that promote legal empowerment and civic responsibility. The study underscores the importance of leveraging digital platforms and social media to enhance outreach and engagement. Methodologically, it calls for future research to adopt longitudinal and mixed-methods approaches that capture the evolving and complex nature of human rights awareness. Finally, the study highlights the need to address broader social determinants through multisectoral collaboration across education, health, labor, and civil society sectors.

**Keywords: Barmaid, Social Determinants, Human Rights Awareness, Informal Urban Settlements**

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### 1. INTRODUCTION

Since the signing of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights 65 years ago, many people in developing countries continue to suffer from denial and abuse of their rights due to ignorance or lack of knowledge (Singh, 2023; Horn, 2004). The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR, 1948) asserts that all workers have the right to fair and equitable compensation for their work. Human rights awareness and knowledge vary across regions, and might be influenced by demographic factors like age, gender, and education, personal experiences, and access to information like media coverage and advocacy (Osler & Starkey, 1995). Mashallah, Maryam, Saedeh, Masoud (2012) found that factors like education, age, gender, job, mass media, and social treatment influence people's awareness of human rights. Shiani (2003) and Hezarjaribi (2011) attributed this to inadequate resources and social opportunities associated with societal empowerment. They also revealed a lack of knowledge about intellectual and participatory skills, appropriate welfare status, and participation in volunteer activities. Additionally, the types of individuals' views and values indicate their abilities.

In this view, the study focuses on social determinants influence on Human rights awareness in informal urban settlements among barmaids in Mathare Sub County, Nairobi, Kenya. White (2000) defines a barmaid as a person who serves alcoholic beverages in

a licensed establishment. Barmaids are often viewed as unemployed due to their lack of employment opportunities. However, Rosemary (2004) argues that barmaids are professionals who perform a transitional job, gaining customer experience during university before entering the labor market. Further, opine that barmaids may have been working to save money for university fees. Both perspectives provide a different perspective on the meaning of barmaids. Ndunga and Owakah (2023) defines barmaid as a female employee responsible for serving beverages in bars and taverns. Barmaids often face sexual harassment, life threats, emotional labor, and tension due to emotion management. Barmaids are crucial in creating a pleasurable atmosphere and ensuring patron satisfaction. However, this definition is often stigmatizing, as the public perceives them as unsuitable for respectable work elsewhere. Barmaids, employed in settings where the majority of patrons consume alcohol, face an elevated risk of human rights violations, including arbitrary arrest, detention, sexual harassment, discrimination, and stigmatization, attributable to their involvement in the sale of liquor (Kelly, Coy & Davenport, 2011). Maher, Pickering, and Gerard (2013) highlighted the vulnerability of barmaids to human rights violations in the workplace, arguing that protection against exploitative aspects of sex work can only be achieved through safe, profitable, and

ethical working conditions.

Flowers, Bernbaum, Rudelius-Palmer, & Tolman (2004) argue that human rights are universal, inalienable, and indivisible, granting them to every individual regardless of their human dignity. They assert that losing these rights would result in a loss of human dignity, and that no one should be denied these rights due to their less value in society. Human rights awareness is a vital tool for achieving social justice, it provides a moral compass, action framework, and the power to challenge injustice. The interconnectedness of these concepts is evident, as human rights education fosters understanding and empathy, which are essential for addressing the root causes of inequality and discrimination (Yücel, 2023). Social justice requires human rights awareness, and barmaids in Kenya face significant social stigma and working conditions (White, 2000; Rosemary, 2004). The profession is highly stigmatized, causing psychological, physical, social, sexual, and economic challenges for these women, who serve alcoholic beverages in licensed establishments (FIDA 2008; Forst 2016).

UNESCO (2012) emphasizes the importance of human rights education initiatives, which member states adopt to promote action, such as the 1988 World Public Information Campaign on Human Rights, which focuses on developing and disseminating human rights information materials. Human rights education (HRE) has become an essential instrument for advancing worldwide awareness of human rights and cultivating collective responsibility among communities (Singh, 2023; Cassidy et al., 2014). Human Rights Education (HRE) is a strategy that promotes human dignity, respect, and inclusion without resorting to force or oppression (Silva et al., 2024). The global village has fostered a shared understanding of human rights, with human rights education promoting values, beliefs, and attitudes that encourage individuals to uphold their own rights and those of others. Education on human rights fosters inclusivity and tolerance among diverse groups, leading to advocacy for legal and policy reforms promoting social justice (Panda, 2001). Human rights awareness instills values, beliefs, and attitudes that encourage individuals to uphold their rights and those of others. Despite challenges, HRE remains crucial for creating a global human rights culture and promoting social transformation through intersubjective sharing of values (Fatima & Nacem, 2023; Silva et al., 2024). The global village has led to a shared understanding of human rights, which is promoted through human rights education. This education encourages individuals to uphold their rights and others, fostering a shared responsibility to make human rights a reality in each community. UNESCO (2012) emphasizes the significance of human rights education initiatives, which member states adopt through international frameworks like the 1988 World Public Information Campaign on Human Rights. It confirms that human rights are universal and inalienable, ensuring that they are accessible and known to everyone, regardless of their social or economic status. Human rights are fundamental freedoms and basic liberties that enable individuals to live with respect and dignity.

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) encourages individuals and society to promote respect for these rights through education. Article 26 of the UDHR emphasizes the development of human personality and strengthening of these rights, as stated by Padmavathy & Pratima (2015). However, human rights denial is often seen in deprived sections of society, and lack of awareness among the masses about their basic human rights is a major reason for exploitation (Vishal Sood & Arti Anand, 2012). The government's role in protecting human rights may not always be appropriate, and the situation is exacerbated by a lack of awareness among the masses.

In 2004, the World Programme for Human Rights Education, declared by the United Nations General Assembly, aimed to stimulate the development of sustainable national strategies and programmes in human rights education (Gerber, 2010). The International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), a comprehensive instrument focusing on women's human rights, comprises 30 articles covering political, economic, social, and cultural rights in

all aspects of their lives. Despite such international frameworks, Kenya's barmaids need more human rights awareness.

In Kenya, the barmaids' profession is stigmatized due to negative cultural attitudes and societal perceptions of the profession. The challenges faced by barmaids include psychological, physical, social, sexual, and economic issues. Factors contributing to this stigma include the absence of the rule of law, poor governance, religious and political intolerance, fundamentalism, tensions over development issues, and limited knowledge on human rights (Forst, 2016).

Kenya has a strong record of ratifying major international and regional human rights treaties, including the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (ICESCR, 1966), Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW, 1979), and the Maputo Protocol (2003).

Mathare Sub-County Barmaids are especially vulnerable to human rights violations due to their occupational setting and cultural perceptions of their role. Notwithstanding Kenya's strong constitutional framework, this group has a significant incidence of human rights breaches owing to insufficient knowledge and protection (Agharuwhe, 2013; Elvin, 1977).

This research aims to determine the social factors influencing human rights awareness among barmaids in Mathare Sub-County. The research aims to enhance the importance of human rights education in contemporary society, specifically in increasing awareness among barmaids in Mathare sub-county.

This study investigates the social factors influencing human rights awareness among barmaids in Mathare Sub-County, Nairobi County, Kenya. It seeks to uncover and analyze the key elements shaping the level of rights awareness within this often-overlooked population. The specific objectives of the study are as follows:

- To critically assess the level, depth, and scope of human rights awareness among barmaids in Mathare Sub-County.
- To determine the social determinants influencing human rights awareness among barmaids in Mathare Sub-County.
- To examine how workplace conditions affect barmaids' understanding and awareness of their human rights in Mathare Sub-County.

#### **Statement of the Research Problem**

Kenyan citizens are becoming more aware of their human rights. However, there is a lack of information on the awareness of vulnerable groups like barmaids. Public outcry about human rights violations among barmaids has been raised despite a progressive constitutional framework and a comprehensive Bill of Rights. The increasing human rights awareness among Kenyan citizens is matched by very little information about the level of human rights awareness among vulnerable groups like barmaids. Consequently, public outcry over human rights violations among feminist groups, including barmaids, has led to government agencies and non-government organizations promoting awareness on human rights (KNCHR, 2024). This study attempts to bridge a gap in the knowledge in this area by investigating the influence of social determinants on human rights awareness among barmaids in Mathare Sub-County, within Nairobi County, Nairobi, Kenya.

#### **Rationale of the study**

Awareness of human rights serves as a means to educate individuals in safeguarding and advancing personal rights. A multitude of studies have been undertaken to investigate and substantiate the difficulties and challenges of human rights across various settings. This study evaluated how social determinant influence human right awareness among barmaids in Mathare sub county.

It offers valuable insights for many stakeholders. It provides a basis for further academic research into a knowledge gap in human rights awareness amongst barmaids. The findings may inform government programs to educate barmaid about their rights and procedures for reporting their violation. Civil society organizations can use the results to improve civic education programs aimed at engaging barmaids and advocate for their continued protection and empowerment. Finally, the study hopes to help barmaids know more about what they are entitled to and

improve their capability to persuade for themselves.

This study will contribute to the development of better education and advocacy strategies for human rights by examining in detail how the social factors contributing to human rights awareness operate in Kenya.

### **Theoretical Framework** **Empowerment Theory**

Theory of empowerment and education was coined by Freire, (1973) to liberate oppressed populations. The empowerment theory is known for its contributions to grassroots community movements and educational contexts. The proponent proposed three progressive steps of empowerment: dialogue, transformation, and conscientization. Conscientization involves raising awareness of social inequalities and difficulties, which is crucial for transferring knowledge about human rights and creating a sense of agency. This construct is investigated by exploring the underlying forces and difficulties faced by barmaids.

Dialogue involves dialogue between human rights educators and barmaids to identify and address the root causes of human rights violations. Dialogue can be measured through dimensions of dialed-to-two-way communication, dialed-to problem-posing, and dialed-to joint discovery of reality.

Transformation allows for self-reflection and collective action, encouraging community integration and shared views on human rights. To transform barmaids, self-reflection programs based on human rights can be provided. Teachers and barmaids work together to facilitate cooperation, precise communication, and political organization to change policy. These steps align with Freire's ideas of 'power within,' 'power with,' and 'power to,' which involve conscientizing, stimulating, and liberating oppressed people.

### **Literature Review**

This literature review examines human rights knowledge among barmaids in Mathare sub-county, Nairobi County. It aims to identify social factors influencing their awareness of human rights, including education, socioeconomic status, social networks, and cultural conventions. The review explores the influence of social determinants on human rights awareness among barmaids in Mathare sub county, examining perspectives from global, African, and Kenyan perspectives.

#### **Social Determinants and Human Right Awareness**

Several studies have shown that certain social factors regulate individuals' sensitivity to human rights. Maryam, Saedeh, and Masoud (2012), according to Mashallah, factors such as education, age, gender, job, mass media, and social treatment extremely affect human rights awareness. Shiani (2003) and Hezarjaribi (2011) argue that accessibility to resources and social opportunities at the macro level are the creators of human rights awareness and that social empowerment plays a major role in meeting human needs and basic human rights.

A study by Saikia and Padmavathy (2015) revealed that the awareness of human rights among higher education students in India varies significantly depending on demographic characteristics, including country of origin, educational attainment, and age group; however, academic field does not appear to influence human rights awareness in India. Conversely, Narad and Kaur (2021) argue that employed women demonstrate a higher level of awareness and application of their human rights compared to their unemployed women. Furthermore, both rural and urban working women in India were found to be aware of their rights; nevertheless, rural workers showed a greater tendency to actively assert their rights than those in urban environments.

Tantengco and Simeon (2015) discovered that over ninety-five percent (95%) of participants had awareness of human rights, irrespective of their race, gender, educational background, or geographic area, with just a minuscule percentage indicating complete ignorance of the subject. WHO reports that at least 1 in 3 women experience physical or sexual violence. A study by NCRC (2020) revealed a 92.2% increase in gender-based violence cases in Kenya between January and June 2020, compared to 1,057 between January and December 2019. A

survey of 390 interviewees revealed that only 9(2.3%) had adequate awareness of available GBV interventions, while 112(28.7%) were unaware, indicated a lack of awareness among the respondents.

Wairimu, Keraka, and Mutabazi. (2023) revealed that only 2.3% of respondents had adequate awareness of available GBV interventions, while 28.7% were unaware. Factors such as age, education, occupation, affordability, accessibility, cultural factors, and service acceptability were associated with awareness of available GBV interventions.

The Human Rights Watch Report (2014) underscore that poverty as a factor issue and impact various aspects of life, including human rights in Nigeria. The report emphasizes the importance of people's attitudes towards human rights, as many dismiss them as a waste of time, arguing that selfish politicians will not prioritize protecting the rights of vulnerable masses. Similarly, economic hardships compound this lack of interest because the Human Rights Watch Report (2014) shows poverty as a major barrier to the awareness of human rights. According to Augie (2004), illiterate populations often care little about understanding their rights or redress for violations of these rights. In most cases, human rights issues do not attract as much attention as issues related to basic survival. The Human Rights Watch Report (2014) also pointed out that people's attitude towards human rights determines whether these rights should be esteemed. For instance, many of us tend to dismiss human rights discussions as unimportant (and somehow irrelevant) because we think that they will not do any good, as selfish politicians are not going to protect human rights for vulnerable people.

Human rights awareness is significantly influenced by traditional and cultural norms, with many women hesitant to challenge societally acceptable practices that violate their rights (Okome,2011). This is due to social factors, such as traditional views that restrict women from participating in social and political activities and restrain them in domestic roles (Augie,2004). This perception makes them more susceptible to human rights violations, as they are unable to demand their rights and are therefore more vulnerable to these practices.

A study by Binjha (2022) used a self-developed awareness scale and focus group discussion to collect data on students' awareness of fundamental human rights and the right to education. The results showed limited awareness about education as a human right. The study recommends organizing programs to raise awareness about human rights education and the role of organizations in protecting human rights. This could help raise critical questions about child rights, education, and injustice.

Augie (2004) argues that certain traditions view women as domestic helpers, hindering their ability to advocate for their rights and making them vulnerable to human rights violations. The study examined factors such as family size, education level, social lifestyle, disposable income, social classes, and community attitudes towards human rights to understand how they influence the creation of awareness.

According to Maher, Pickering, and Gerard (2013), safe, profitable, and ethical work conditions are fundamental to protect barmaids from exploitation, and human rights abuses. The right to just and favorable remuneration includes an existence worthy of human dignity (the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR, 1948). Nevertheless, these standards are not attained for far too many barmaids, meaning further research into barmaids' knowledge and promotion of human rights is warranted. According to the authors, only if barmaids achieve safe, profitable, and ethical working conditions will they be protected against what the authors consider to be the exploitative and concerning aspects of their work. This attests to the difficulty of respecting these women's human rights and understanding and solving the challenges they face at work.

However, the various social factors that affect human rights awareness have been acknowledged, yet the country still needs to explain those factors fully about barmaids. Previous studies need to adequately consider the combination of education, economic status, social networks, and cultural norms that influence human rights awareness of this vulnerable group.

The study explores how factors like family size, education, social lifestyle, disposable income, social class, and community attitudes towards human rights affect barmaids' perception of rights in Mathare sub-county. It aims to provide empirical data and insights to inform intervention and policy for improved human rights education advocacy in Mathare Sub County, Nairobi, Kenya.

**Materials and Methods**

The research used a descriptive survey approach to evaluate the extent to which barmaids are familiar with and knowledgeable about human rights. The study target population 238 barmaids in 119 licensed bars in Mathare sub county, Nairobi Kenya. A sample size of 108 barmaids from 59 bars/clubs in the Mathare sub-county was used in the study.

The selection of barmaids was conducted using simple random sampling, to ensure every member of the population had an equal and independent chance of being chosen, a method that was reliable, unbiased, and relatively efficient to collect data when making inferences and conclusions about a population from a sample.

The study was conducted in an informal urban settlement in Nairobi County, Kenya's regulatory capital, due to its cosmopolitan nature and diverse population. The focus was on Mathare Sub County, a region with a large ethnically and socially heterogeneous barmaid population and a high rate of human rights violations in slum areas.

Taro Yamane's (1967) simplified formula was used to calculate the sample size:

$$n = N / (1 + N(e)^2)$$

where;

*n* is the sample size,

*N* is the population size, and *e* is the level of precision.

Substituting the values:

$$n = 238 / (1 + 238(0.07)^2) = 108$$

A 95% confidence level and *P*=0.5

The sample size for the bars was rounded to 59 (bars / 119) bars x 50% (recommended by Mugenda and Mugenda, 2003), 50% of the 119 bars in Mathare Sub County.

The study used primary data collection methods was structured questionnaires and interview guides to gather information on human rights awareness among barmaids in Mathare Sub County in Kenya. While, secondary data, including legal documents, books, online publications, stakeholder reports, and Acts of Parliament, was sourced from the Kenya National Commission on Human Rights and Human Rights Watch. A survey design and FGDs were utilized to collect data to ascertain the population's status concerning human rights awareness. The data was obtained through SPSS Version 25 for descriptive and inferential statistics. Quantitative analysis utilized descriptive statistics and chi-square tests to establish relationships between variables, presenting frequency tables and figures based on the analyzed data.

The study adhered to ethical guidelines, maintaining confidentiality and fostering trust among participants. Only licensed bar members participated in the study. The University of Nairobi granted research permission, and questionnaires were administered for participant participation.

**Results and Discussion**

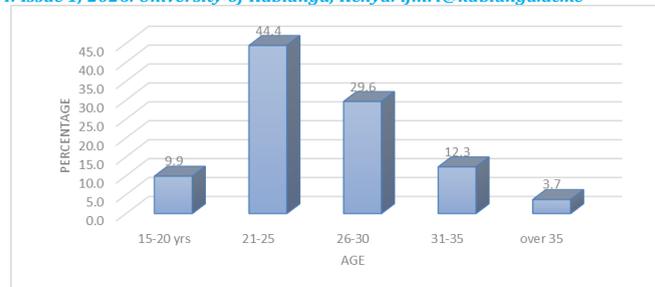
The study had a 92% response rate, with 81 returned questionnaires out of 88 administered, achieved by timely collection and rescheduling of busy respondents, and all participants attended the scheduled Focus Group Discussions.

**Demographic Data**

Age of the Respondents: Almost half (44.4%) of barmaids were 21–25 years old, one third (30%) were 26–30 years old, 12% were 31–35 years old, 10% were 15–20 years old, and 4% were over 35 years old see Figure 1.

**Figure 1:**

*Respondents Distribution by Age*

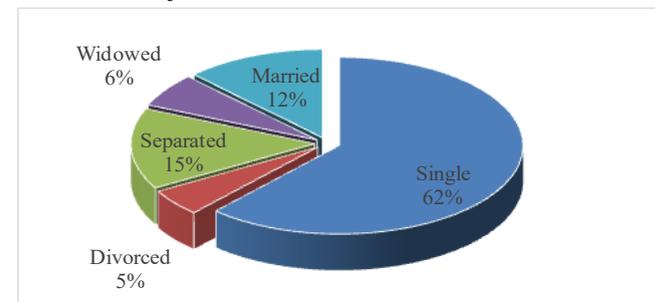


(Source: Personal Archive)

The residents in Figure 1 are in tandem with Rotich et al (2024) that the majority of women were aged 18–29 years (48.7%), had primary education (61.7%), were married (58.7%), and were unemployed (69.3%) in Mathare sub county.

Additionally, the marital status of the respondents shown that the majority of barmaids were single (62%), married (12%), separated (15%), divorced (5%) or widowed (6%) see Figure 2.

**Figure 2:**  
*Marital Status of Barmaids*

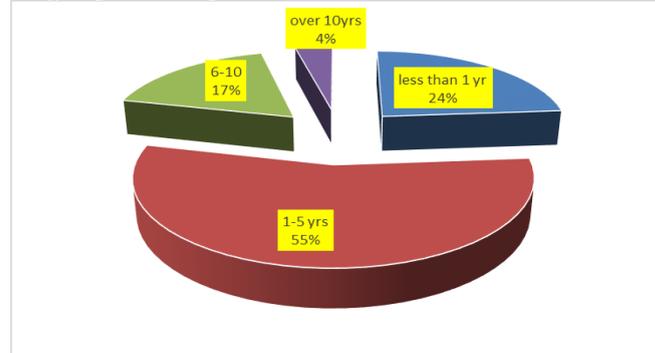


(Source: Personal Archive)

The education level of the barmaids 35% of barmaids had completed high school, 19% had a middle-level college education, 6% had a university degree, and 40% had a contemporary college education.

Respondents' length of service revealed that 55% served between 1 and 5 years, 24% had less than one year of experience, 17% had 6 to 10 years of expertise, and 4% of barmaids had over 10 years of experience. Barmaids had an average tenure of 2.5 years at their length of service, ranging from 10 months to 25 years in Mathare sub county, see figure 3.

**Figure 3:**  
*Length of Services of Barmaids*

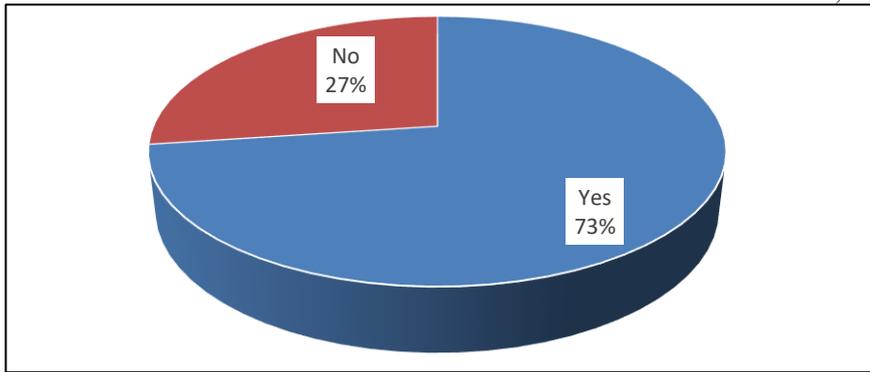


(Source: Personal Archive)

**Awareness of Human Rights**

The study revealed that 73 percent of respondents were aware of existing human rights, whilst 27 percent were not, see Figure 4

**Figure 4:**  
**Barmaids' Awareness of Human Rights**



(Source: Personal Archive)

The study findings mirrored those of the Centre for Research and Development in Education of the Philippine Normal University (2004), which found that over 95% of secondary school students

in the Philippines are aware of human rights, with 73% being aware and 27% not. The study analyzed data from various variables, including gender, ethnicity, school type, geographical classification, and region. The findings suggest that human rights awareness is crucial for promoting understanding and respect for these rights.

Further inferential analysis revealed no statistically significant relationships between the level of awareness of human rights ( $X^2(4, N = 81) = 1.28, p = .86$ ;  $X^2(5, N = 81) = 1.69, p = .89$ ;  $X^2(3, N = 81) = 2.9, p = .41$ ) and the variables Age, Education level, and Length of service, as noted by Ndunga and Owaka, (2023). This suggests that there is not much difference in relation to human rights awareness among barmaids, irrespective of demographics. The chi-square tests are presented in Table 1.

The study's findings align with those of Wairimu, Keraka, and Mutabazi (2023), who observed that a major proportion of respondents demonstrated adequate awareness of their human rights, while a significant percentage remained unaware (28.7%). Their study further identified key factors influencing human rights awareness, including age, level of education, occupation, affordability, accessibility, cultural norms, and the perceived acceptability of related services and information sources.

**Table 1:**  
**The Relationship between Human Rights Awareness and Demographic Factors**

Demographic Factors	Chi-Square Tests			
		Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Age	Pearson Chi-Square	1.275 <sup>a</sup>	4	.866
Level of education	Pearson Chi-Square	1.693 <sup>a</sup>	5	.890
Length of service as a barmaid	Pearson Chi-Square	2.909 <sup>a</sup>	3	.406

(Source: Personal Archive)

The study found no relationship between demographic factors like age, education, and barmaid experience and human rights knowledge among barmaids. Factors like age, education level, and service length did not affect human rights education, such as health care, emergency medical attention, political participation, life rights, economic and social rights, equality, and due process in court and administrative bodies.

The results contradict Osler and Starkey (1996) and HRAFP (2011), who suggested a direct relationship between human rights awareness and demographic factors like age, gender, and

education. The study's focus on barmaids may be due to the nature of respondents, while Osler and Starkey's studies were conducted across different groups. Additionally, mashallah, Maryam, Saedeh, and Masoud's (2012) work found that education, age, and gender influence human rights awareness.

**Sources of Information Utilized by Barmaids**

The study aimed to identify the primary source of information on existing human rights. The obtained data is presented in Table 2.

**Table 2:**  
**Sources of Information Utilized by Barmaids**

Source of information	Responses	
	N	Percent
Television/Radio	21	23.3%
Family/parents	7	7.8%
Newspaper/magazine	3	3.3%
School	36	40.0%
Internet/websites	3	3.3%
Legal documents	3	3.3%
Friends	17	18.9%
<b>Valid N</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

(Source: Personal Archive)

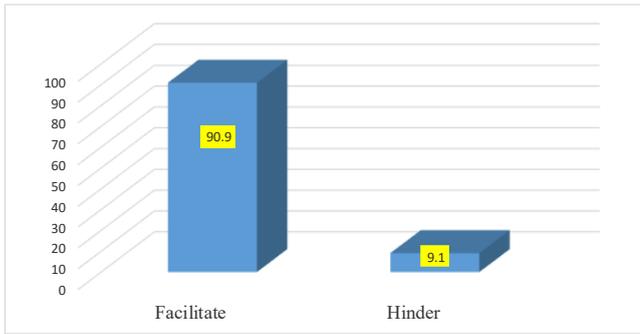
The study found that 40% of respondents learned about human rights in the classroom, followed by the media (23%), peers (19%), and parents (8%). The remaining 8% learned about human rights through family members, media (3%), the internet (3%), as noted by (Ndunga, 2018). This aligns with previous research in the Philippines and Nigeria, where respondents learned about their rights through formal education and television/radio, respectively. The study also found that 8% cited parents as their primary source of knowledge about human rights.

**Social Factors and Human Rights Awareness**

The study aimed to identify the social factors that enhance or hinder the awareness of human rights among Kenyan barmaids,

as indicated by the responses presented in Figure 5.

**Figure 5:**  
**Influence of Social Determinants on Human Rights Awareness**



(Source: Personal Archive)

Figure 5 demonstrates that 91% of respondents stated that social factors increase their awareness of human rights. The findings suggest that 9% of respondents believe societal issues do not impede human rights knowledge. This indicates that the barmaids recognize that social circumstances enhance their knowledge of human rights.

The respondents were asked to express their agreement or disagreement with the assertion on the contribution of social elements in promoting knowledge of human rights.

**Table 3:**

**How Social Determinants Influence Human Rights Awareness**

Social Factors	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly agree
Individual Social lifestyle	21	1	5	55	18
Family size and structure	19	8	1	55	18
Average income	19	3	1	55	18
Level of education	14	3	7	40	37
Social classes	18	4	11	34	32
Community attitude towards human rights	12	4	8	40	36

(Source: Personal Archive)

The study found that 73% of respondents believe social lifestyle and family size and structure contribute to human rights awareness. Average disposal income levels also play a role. 77% of barmaids believe education level also influences human rights awareness. However, a chi-square test showed no significant relationship between education and awareness. This could be attributed to the fact that 96% of respondents had at least primary level education, which is the primary level of education. The results indicate that regardless of education level, as long as one has attained primary level education, the level of awareness does not significantly differ.

Social factors such as social class and positive attitudes towards human rights were highly rated as facilitating knowledge of human rights by 66% and 76% of respondents, respectively. Focused group discussions also indicated that education level, religion, culture, family, and lifestyles are some of the social factors that facilitate awareness of human rights. Both questionnaires and focus group discussions agree on these factors.

**Limitation of the Study**

This study was confined to barmaids operating within the urban informal settlements of Mathare Sub-County, Nairobi, which may limit the generalizability of the findings to similar populations in other socio-economic or geographical contexts. Furthermore, the study relied exclusively on a structured survey as the primary data collection method. While this facilitated systematic quantitative analysis, it potentially overlooked nuanced insights that could have been captured through qualitative methods such as in-depth interviews or focus group discussions, particularly regarding barmaids' attitudes, perceptions, and lived experiences related to human rights awareness.

Additionally, the study employed a cross-sectional research design, capturing data at a single point in time. This approach limited the ability to examine human rights awareness changes over time or identify causality. A longitudinal design could have

offered more profound insights into how such awareness evolves in response to the community's shifting socio-political or institutional dynamics.

**Conclusion**

The study concluded that barmaids' awareness of human rights is not influenced by age, education, or service length but by their lack of understanding of national and international documents in Mathare sub county, Nairobi County. This lack of human rights awareness leads to violations like physical assault, sexual assault, harassment, death threats, salary delays, and discrimination against women.

The study concluded that social factors like lifestyle, family structure, income, and education significantly influence barmaids' understanding of human rights. Cultural norms, community connections, and family size and structure shape their awareness of these rights. Although barmaids can demand rights, they are less assertive than men in expressing them, highlighting the importance of understanding these social factors.

The study concluded that barmaids' daily salary impacts their access to human rights knowledge and resources. Higher educational attainment correlates with their awareness, as higher qualifications lead to better information access and greater engagement in human rights activism in informal urban settlements in Mathare sub county, Nairobi, Kenya.

The study found no statistical correlation between human rights awareness level and age, education, or service length. This was attributed to uniform exposure to information from various sources, including schools, radio, TV, friends, and parents.

The study utilized empowerment theory to explore the need to empower barmaids in Nairobi County's Mathare sub-county, focusing on their vulnerability to human rights violations. A descriptive survey design was used to assess their awareness of these rights.

**Recommendations**

Based on the study findings, several key recommendations are proposed to enhance human rights awareness, particularly among vulnerable groups such as barmaids in informal urban settlements:

**1. Strengthen Human Rights Awareness Campaigns:**

Targeted awareness initiatives should be developed and implemented to reach marginalized populations, especially barmaids, who face heightened risks of rights violations. These campaigns should be community-based, context-sensitive, and sustained over time to foster both awareness and behavioral change.

**2. Integrate Human Rights Education Across All Levels:**

There is a critical need to prioritize human rights education within Kenya's formal and informal education systems. This includes revising the national curriculum to embed human rights content from early childhood education through to adult learning programs, with an emphasis on practical knowledge, legal empowerment, and civic responsibility.

**3. Leverage Technology and Virtual Platforms:**

Social media, mobile applications, and other digital platforms should be utilized as tools for disseminating human rights information, facilitating dialogue, and documenting violations. Digital engagement can bridge gaps in outreach, particularly among urban youth and working populations.

**4. Adopt a Longitudinal and Mixed-Methods Research Approach:**

Future research and monitoring efforts should incorporate longitudinal designs to track changes in human rights awareness over time. Additionally, qualitative methodologies such as in-depth interviews and focus group discussions should be used to capture complex social and psychological dimensions that quantitative surveys may overlook.

**5. Address Broader Social Determinants:**

Policies and interventions should consider the diverse social factors that influence human rights awareness, including gender norms, economic vulnerability, cultural perceptions, and workplace dynamics. A multisectoral approach involving

stakeholders from education, health, labour, and civil society is recommended to create an enabling environment for rights realization.

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