



Child Series Volume II

Crime against children

Report 92-02-02

IMPROVING LIVES THROUGH DATA ECOSYSTEMS



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Child Series Volume II

Crime against children

Statistics South Africa

**Risenga Maluleke
Statistician-General**

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Contents

Abbreviations and acronyms	viii
Glossary of concepts	ix
Foreword	xi
Chapter 1: Crime in South Africa	1
1.1 Background.....	1
1.2 The legal framework in South Africa.....	1
1.3 The Current Practice of Ukuthwala and its origin	2
1.4 International instruments	3
1.5 Sustainable Development.....	3
1.6 The National Development Plan: Vision for 2030.....	4
1.7 Medium-term strategic framework (MTSF) 2019-2024	4
1.8 Objective of the report	4
Chapter 2: Reported crime against children.....	5
2.1 Introduction	5
2.2 Types of offences	5
2.3 Experience of robbery, assault, and murder	6
2.4 Experience of abduction and trafficking.....	12
2.5 Sexual offences	17
2.6 Summary	23
Chapter 3: Households with children aged 17 years and younger who experienced household crime	24
3.1 Introduction	24
3.2 Summary	45
Chapter 4: Summary and Conclusion	45
Reference	52

List of Tables

Table 2.1: Percentage distribution of attempted common robbery and common robbery for children aged 17 years and younger reported to the police by province, 2015/16-2019/20	6
Table 2.2: Percentage distribution of assault for children aged 17 years and younger reported to the police by province, 2015/16-2019/20.....	7
Table 2.3: Percentage distribution of attempted murder and murder for children aged 17 years and younger reported to the police by province, 2015/16-2019/20	11
Table 2.4: Percentage distribution of child trafficking for children aged 17 years and younger reported to the police by province, 2015/16-2019/20.....	12
Table 2.5: Percentage distribution of abduction for children aged 17 years and younger reported to the police by province, 2015/16-2019/20.....	13
Table 2.6: Number of customary marriages for children aged 17 years and younger by age, 2021	17
Table 2.7: Percentage distribution of rape and sexual assault for children aged 17 years and younger reported to the police by province, 2015/16-2019/20	18

List of Figures

Figure 2.1: Percentage distribution of offences for children aged 17 years and younger reported to the police by year, 2015/16–2019/20	5
Figure 2.2: Percentage distribution of attempted common robbery and common robbery for children aged 17 years and younger reported to the police by gender, 2015/16–2019/20.....	7
Figure 2.3: Percentage distribution of assault for children aged 17 years and younger reported to the police by gender, 2015/16–2019/20	8
Figure 2.4: Volume of total common assault and common assault on children reported to the police per 100 000 population, 2015/16–2019/20	8
Figure 2.5: Volume of total assault with GBH and assault with GBH on children reported to the police per 100 000 population, 2015/16–2022/23	9
Figure 2.6: Percentage distribution of attempted murder and murder for children aged 17 years and younger reported to the police by gender, 2015/16–2019/20.....	11
Figure 2.7: Volume of total murder and murder of children reported to the police per 100 000 population, 2015/16–2022/23.....	12
Figure 2.8: Percentage distribution of child trafficking and abduction for children aged 17 years and younger reported to the police by gender, 2015/16–2019/20.....	14
Figure 2.9: Number of child marriages for children aged 17 years and younger, 2006–2021	15
Figure 2.10: Number of customary marriages for children aged 17 years and younger by province, 2017–2021	16
Figure 2.11: Number of civil marriages for children aged 17 years and younger by province, 2017–2021	16
Figure 2.12: Percentage distribution of rape and sexual assault for children aged 17 years and under reported to the police by gender, 2015/16–2019/20.....	18
Figure 2.13: Percentage distribution of sexual offences for children aged 17 years and younger reported to the police by gender, 2015/16–2019/20	19
Figure 2.14: Volume of reported rape to the police per 100 000 population, 2015/16–2019/20.....	20
Figure 2.15: Volume of reported sexual assault to the police per 100 000 population, 2015/16–2019/20	22
Figure 3.1: Percentage distribution of households with children aged 17 years and younger who experienced a specific type of crime, GPSJS 2022/23	24
Figure 3.2: Percentage distribution of households with children aged 17 years and younger who experienced housebreaking/burglary and home robbery by province, GPSJS 2022/23	25
Figure 3.3: Percentage distribution of households with children aged 17 years and younger who experienced theft of motor vehicle by province, GPSJS 2022/23	26
Figure 3.4: Percentage distribution of households with children aged 17 years and younger who experienced assault by province, GPSJS 2022/23	26
Figure 3.5: Percentage distribution of households with children aged 17 years and younger who experienced a specific type of crime by metropolitan status, GPSJS 2022/23	27
Figure 3.6: Percentage distribution of children aged 17 years and younger in the households who experienced some sort of crime by age, GPSJS 2022/23.....	28
Figure 3.7: Percentage distribution of households with children aged 17 years and younger who experienced a specific type of crime by household composition, GPSJS 2022/23.....	28
Figure 3.8: Number of households with children aged 17 years and younger who experienced theft of motor vehicle, GPSJS 2018/19–2022/23	29

Figure 3.9: Number of households with children aged 17 years and younger who experienced housebreaking, GPSJS 2018/19–2022/23	30
Figure 3.10: Number of households with children aged 17 years and younger who experienced home robbery, GPSJS 2018/19–2022/23.....	30
Figure 3.11: Number of households with children aged 17 years and younger who experienced murder, GPSJS 2018/19–2022/23.....	31
Figure 3.12: Number of households with children aged 17 years and younger who experienced sexual offence, GPSJS 2018/19–2022/23	31
Figure 3.13: Number of households with children aged 17 years and younger who experienced assault, GPSJS 2018/19–2022/23.....	32
Figure 3.14: Percentage distribution of households with children aged 17 years and younger who experienced specific types of crime and reported cases to the police, GPSJS 2018/19–2022/23	32
Figure 3.15: Percentage distribution of households with children aged 17 years and younger who experienced specific types of crime and reported those cases to the police by metropolitan status, GPSJS 2022/23	33
Figure 3.16: Percentage distribution of households with children aged 17 years and younger who experienced certain crimes in the past 5 years and top 3 reasons for not reporting it to the police, GPSJS 2022/23	34
Figure 3.17: Percentage distribution of households with children aged 17 years and younger who experienced theft of motor vehicle in the past 12 months by metropolitan status, GPSJS 2022/23.....	35
Figure 3.18: Percentage distribution of households with children aged 17 years and younger who experienced housebreaking/burglary in the past 12 months by metropolitan status, GPSJS 2022/23	35
Figure 3.19: Percentage distribution of households with children aged 17 years and younger who experienced home robbery in the past 12 months by metropolitan status, GPSJS 2022/23	36
Figure 3.20: Percentage distribution of households with children aged 17 years and younger who experienced assault in the past 12 months by metropolitan status, GPSJS 2022/23.....	36
Figure 3.21: Number of times a household with children aged 17 years and younger experienced household crime in the past 12 months, GPSJS 2022/23.....	37
Figure 3.22: Percentage distribution of problems or disputes experienced by households with children aged 17 years and younger in the past two years, GPSJS 2021/22.....	38
Figure 3.23: Percentage distribution of households with children aged 17 years and younger who experienced domestic violence dispute/problem in the past two years by province, GPSJS 2021/22	38
Figure 3.24: Percentage distribution of households with children aged 17 years and younger who experienced conflict on child support, visitation and guardianship dispute/problems in the past two years by province, GPSJS 2021/22	39
Figure 3.25: Members of households with children aged 17 years and younger who experienced assault by sex, 2022/2023	40
Figure 3.26: Percentage of households with children aged 17 years and younger that were satisfied with the police response, 2022/23	40
Figure 3.27: Percentage of households with children aged 17 years and younger who experienced incidences of assault committed by a specified perpetrator, 2022/23.....	41
Figure 3.28: Type of weapons used in incidents of assault in a household with children aged 17 years and younger during a home robbery, 2022/23	42
Figure 3.29: Percentage of households with children aged 17 years and younger that know/trust their next-door neighbours enough to let them look after their children for more than an hour, 2022/23	42
Figure 3.30: Percentage of households with children aged 17 years and younger by the level of participation in community forums, 2022/23	44

List of Maps

Map 2.1: Percentage of assaults with GBH cases reported to the police by district, SAPS 2021/22	9
Map 2.2: Percentage of common assault cases reported to the police by district, SAPS 2021/22	10
Map 2.3: Percentage of rape cases reported to the police by district, SAPS 2021/22	21
Map 2.4: Percentage of sexual assault cases reported to the police by district, SAPS 2021/22	23

Annexure	48
Map A.1: Total population of children and total number of crimes reported to the police by province, SAPS 2021–2022	48
Map A.2: Distribution of the ratio of population of children aged 17 years and police station, SAPS 2021–2022	49
Table A1: Number of offences for children aged 17 years and younger reported to the police, 2015/16-2019/20	
Table A2: Number of households with children aged 17 years and younger who experience theft of motor vehicle	50
Table A3: Number of households with children aged 17 years and younger who experience housebreaking/burglary	50
Table A4: Number of households with children aged 17 years and younger who experience home robbery	51
Table A5: Number of households with children aged 17 years and younger who experience Murder	51
Table A6: Number of households with children aged 17 years and younger who experience sexual offence	51
Table A7: Number of households with children aged 17 years and younger who experience assault	51

Abbreviations and acronyms

CRC	The Convention on the Rights of the Child
DHA	Department of Home Affairs
DUI	Driving Under the Influence
DSD	Department of Social Development
DoJ & CD	Department of Justice and Constitutional Development
GBH	Grievous Bodily Harm
GPSJS	Governance, Public Safety, and Justice Survey
NDP	The National Development Plan
NPAC	National Plan of Action for Children
MTSF	Medium-term strategic framework
ORC	The Office on the Rights of the Child
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SAPS	South African Police Services
STATS SA	Statistics South Africa
VOCS	Victims of Crime Survey
WHO	World Health Organization
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNICRI	United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute
UNODC	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
WC	Western Cape
EC	Eastern Cape
NC	Northern Cape
FS	Free State
KZN	KwaZulu-Natal
NW	North West
GP	Gauteng
MP	Mpumalanga
LP	Limpopo
RSA	Republic of South Africa

Glossary of concepts

	Term	Definitions/descriptions
1.	Abduction	Consists in unlawfully taking a minor out of the control of his or her custodian with the intention of enabling someone to marry or have sexual intercourse with that minor.
2.	Age of consent	The Age of Consent in South Africa is 16 years old. The age of consent is the minimum age at which an individual is considered legally old enough to consent to participate in sexual activity. Individuals aged 15 or younger in South Africa are not legally able to consent to sexual activity, and such activity may result in prosecution for statutory rape or the equivalent local law.
3.	Assault with intent to inflict grievous bodily harm (GBH)	The unlawful and intentional direct or indirect application of force to the body of another person with the intention of causing grievous bodily harm to that person. Note: The victim does not need to sustain serious injuries. The decisive element is the intention to cause serious injuries.
4.	Attempted murder	Consists of the commission of an unlawful act with the intention of killing another human being but which does not result in the death of that human being.
5.	Child marriage	Refers to any formal marriage or informal union between a child under the age of 18 and an adult or another child.
6.	Civil marriages	These are marriages registered according to the Marriage Act, 1961 (Act No. 25 of 1961). In the release, the term 'civil' is used to differentiate marriages that were solemnised by licensed DHA marriage officers from marriages that were solemnised by religious marriage officers.
7.	Common assault	The unlawful and intentional: a) Direct and indirect application of force to the body of another person, or b) Threat of application of immediate personal violence to another, in circumstances in which the threatened person is prevailed upon to believe that the person who is threatening him has the intention and power to carry out his threat.
8.	Common robbery	Unlawful and intentional forceful removal and appropriation of movable tangible property belonging to another. Note: The decisive factor is the use of force or violence. Incidents of robbery (including business and home robbery) are classified as common robbery if no weapon is used.
9.	Complex household	Households consisting of the nuclear households and at least one non-related member.
10	Contact crimes	Contact crime refers to those crimes in which victims themselves are targets of violence or property is targeted and victims in the vicinity during the commission of the crime are subjected to threats of violence or the use of such violence: Murder, sexual offences, attempted murder, Assault with GBH, common assault, common robbery.
11.	Customary marriages	These are marriages that are negotiated, celebrated, or concluded according to any of the systems of indigenous African customary law which exist in South Africa as prescribed in the Recognition of Customary Marriages Act, 1998 (Act No. 120 of 1998).

	Term	Definitions/descriptions
12.	Domestic Violence	The abusive behaviour in any relationship (emotional, verbal, and psychological) that is used by one person to gain or maintain control over another person.
13.	Extended household	Household consisting of the nuclear household and other family members.
14.	Hijacking	An act of unlawfully using force or threats to take a motor vehicle.
15.	Home robbery (incl. robbery often around or inside the household's dwelling) when someone was at home.	Home robbery is the unlawful and intentional forceful removal and appropriation of property from the residential premises of another person. The intention of the perpetrator must be to rob an occupant of the residential premises of personal or household goods (including money, firearms, motor vehicles, tools, cell phones, etc.) The occupants of the dwelling are home at the time.
16.	Housebreakings/burglary (when someone was not at home)	Housebreaking (residential premises) is committed by a person who unlawfully and intentionally breaks into a building or similar structure, used for human habitation, and enters or penetrates it with part of his or her body or with an instrument with which he or she intends to reach something with the intention to commit a crime on the premises. There is no contact between the victim and the perpetrator.
17.	Household composition	Classification of households according to the relationships between the members
18.	Human trafficking	Is also known as trafficking in persons. A crime that involves compelling or coercing a person to provide labour or /services, or to engage in commercial sex acts. The coercion can be subtle or overt, physical, or psychological. Exploitation of a minor for commercial sex is human trafficking, regardless of whether any form of force, fraud, or coercion was used.
19.	Murder	Consists of the unlawful and intentional killing of another human being.
20.	Nuclear household	Household consisting of a married couple, or a couple or a single parent together with their children.
21.	Rape	Occurs when a person forces another to have sexual intercourse without their consent.
22.	Sexual assault	Occurs when a person sexually violates another person without their consent.
23.	Sexual offences (including sexual assault, sexual grooming, rape and domestic sexual abuse)	Refers to grabbing, touching someone's private parts or sexually assaulting grooming incest or raping someone. Note: In terms of the Sexual Offences Act No 32 of 2007 section 5, (1) A person ('A') who unlawfully and intentionally sexually violates a complainant ('B'), without the consent of B, is guilty of the offence of sexual assault. (2) A person ('A') who unlawfully and intentionally inspires the belief in a complainant ('B') that B will be sexually violated is guilty of the offence of sexual assault.
24.	Single-parent household	Household consisting of one parent with children.
25.	Statutory rape	Statutory rape is an unlawful and intentional act of sexual penetration of a child of 12 years and older, but younger than 16 years irrespective of whether child consents (SAPS).
26.	Theft of motor vehicle (Excluding hijacking)	Unlawful taking or obtaining of vehicles with an engine, including cars, buses, lorries, construction, and agricultural vehicles (excluding motorcycles) with the intent to permanently deprive it of a person or organization without consent and without the use of force, threat of force or violence, coercion, or deception.

	Term	Definitions/descriptions
		Occurs when somebody steals a car, van, truck or pick-up when nobody is present in the vehicle, regardless of where the vehicle was parked at the time.
27.	Ukuthwala	Ukuthwala is a form of abduction that involves kidnapping a girl or a young woman by a man and his friends or peers with the intention of compelling the girl or young woman's family to agree into marriage.

Foreword

The healthy growth and well-being of children constitutes the foundation for society's overall progress and prosperity. Crime against children is a critical issue that may have a lifetime impact on children, resulting in an unpleasant environment and poor development of the country. These crimes include rape, assault, robbery, murder, child trafficking, abduction, home robbery, housebreaking, theft of motor vehicles, and sexual offence. In South Africa, according to the South African Police data, rape was the most prevalent crime reported to the police for children aged 17 years and younger between 2015/16 to 2019/20, followed by common assault and assault with grievous bodily harm (GBH). Rape cases increased by 6,3 percentage points between 2015/16 and 2019/20, whilst both common assault and assault with GBH decreased by 2,1 and 3,5 percentage points respectively.

In 2019/20, children aged 17 years and younger who were residing in KwaZulu-Natal reported a high percentage of abduction (49,1%) and rape (20,2%) to the police. Western Cape recorded the highest percentage of children who were victims of attempted common robbery (55,2%), common assault (32,9%), assault with GBH (20,6%), attempted murder (38,4%), murder (23,8%), and sexual assault (24,6%). Common robbery and child trafficking were mostly experienced by children living in Gauteng.

Child marriages for children aged 17 years and younger showed a significant overall decline from 1,578 in 2006 to 207 in 2021. Furthermore, children were prone to experience customary marriage relative to civil marriages. Customary marriage was most prevalent in Eastern Cape, Limpopo, and KwaZulu-Natal from 2017 to 2021. In addition, out of 207 child marriages that were recorded in 2021, 188 children were brides and 19 were grooms. Children are also impacted by crimes they experience or witness within their households. According to the Governance, Public Safety and Justice Survey, in 2022/23, the prevailing crime among households with children aged 17 years and younger in South Africa was housebreaking/burglary (71,3%). Furthermore, high percentages of housebreaking/burglary (25,5%), home robbery (36,3%), and theft of motor vehicles (51,2%) were noted in households with children located in Gauteng. However, Western Cape recorded a high percentage of households with children who experienced assault (24,5%).

Households with children aged 0–6 years encountered a high percentage of murder (44,1%), while those with children aged 7–11 years experienced a high percentage of assault (29,0%). Additionally, households with children aged 12–17 years experienced a notable prevalence of sexual offence, amounting to 38,2%. Extended households with children, experienced more crimes compared to other household compositions, with sexual offence (63,6%) being the most prevalent crime.

Reporting crimes to the police not only assists law enforcement in investigating and resolving individual cases, but also contributes to creating a safer environment for all individuals, particularly children. Murder and theft of motor vehicles were the most commonly reported incidents to the police. Additionally, households with children in non-metropolitan areas were more prone to report murder, sexual offence, assault, and housebreaking/burglary incidents to the police when compared to households in metropolitan areas.

Households had different reasons for not reporting crimes to the police. Approximately 49,0% of households with children who experienced theft of motor vehicles, chose to report it to other authorities rather than the police. Furthermore, the majority of households that encountered assault (34,5%) and home robbery (23,9%) preferred to solve these crimes themselves.



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Chapter 1: Crime in South Africa

1.1 Background

A socially cohesive and safe South Africa requires a series of overlapping interventions that unite the country. A country with high levels of crime brings risks to safety, security and democracy. Violent crimes often lead to a tragic loss of life and injury, resulting in the erosion of public health and psychological well-being of victims and their families. Loss of properties and livelihood due to crime is immense. Fear of crime leads to altering routine activities and habits, enabling those with resources to protect themselves and their property, at the same time displacing crime to those less privileged. Some of the consequences of crime could be the denial of the rights and dignity of citizens, which could lead to threats towards the peaceful resolution of differences and risks of unfair participation in economic and democratic processes. As such, crime can transform some public places and neighbourhoods into no-go areas by withdrawing from the community; they can shrink community cohesion, trust and neighbourhood stability. The causes of crime are multifaceted. They could emanate from socio-economic factors such as poverty, unemployment, lack of educational opportunities, addictions to drugs and alcohol, peer pressure, and poor social norms. Other factors associated with crimes could be dysfunctional family structures, family violence, and poor parenting skills.

Section 12 of the South African Constitution guarantees the right of everybody including children to be protected from all forms of violence from either public or private sources. This section of the law particularly safeguards children from maltreatment, neglect, abuse, and degradation. Therefore, corporal punishment was abolished in all areas of life in the justice system, at schools and at home as a form of discipline. In 2009, close to one in five children (18,6%) aged 5–17 years experienced some sort of violence at school which included corporal punishment or verbal abuse. This decreased to 8,2% in 2019, with just over one million out of 13 million school-going children aged 5–17 years reporting that they had experienced some form of violence (Statistics South Africa, 2023).

Crimes committed against children can have long-lasting effects on their well-being, families, and society as a whole. Such crimes may include physical or emotional abuse, as well as acts of violence like assault with grievous bodily harm or robbery. Sexual offences, such as sexual assault, grooming, rape, and domestic abuse, are also included under the umbrella of crimes against children. These acts may cause actual or potential harm to a child's well-being, development, or dignity.

South Africa is one of the top three countries in the world with the highest crime rates, with the most common crimes being assaults, rape, murder, and other violent crimes (World Population Review, 2023). In terms of contact crime trends over twelvemonth periods, in 2021/2022, South African Police Service (SAPS) recorded 607 163 contact crimes. Gauteng (171 026) had the largest number of reported contact crimes, followed by KwaZulu-Natal (103 725) and Western Cape at 102 057 respectively. For murder trends over a twelve-month period in 2021/2022, SAPS recorded 25 181 murder cases. KwaZulu-Natal had the largest number of reported murder cases (6 495), followed by Gauteng and Western Cape at 5 570 and 4 109 respectively (SAPS recorded crime statistics, 2021/2022).

1.2 The legal framework in South Africa

The Bill of Rights in the South African Constitution (Act No 108, 1996) contains six rights directly related to crime and maltreatment of children. These include the right:

- To be protected from maltreatment, neglect, abuse, and degradation.
- To be protected from exploitative labour practices.
- To be protected from performing work or services that are not appropriate for their age, would impact their well-being in general but also their physical, mental, spiritual, and moral development; affect their educational participation.

- To be treated as a child when in conflict with the law.
- To be represented by a legal practitioner assigned by the state; and
- To be protected in case of armed conflicts and not be used for the cause.

The Bill also suggests that all decisions concerning the child should be made by looking at their best interests. Various laws were subsequently enacted to give effect to these rights. The main legislation is the Children's Act (Act No. 38 of 2005) which provides a standard for the "best interests of a child". The Act provides guiding factors when applying the principle of the "best interests of a child" which takes into account the following features directly related to crime and maltreatment. These include:

- The need to protect the child from any physical or psychological harm that can subject or expose him/her to maltreatment, abuse, degradation, ill-treatment, violence or harmful behaviour towards another person;
- The need to protect the child from any family violence; and
- There is a need to opt for an action or decision that would avoid or minimise further legal or administrative proceedings in relation to the child.

The Children's Act further elaborates on the establishment of children's courts, their proceedings and jurisdiction. It makes new provisions to prohibit child abduction and to create certain new offences relating to children, such as trafficking.

The Office on the Rights of the Child (ORC) was re-established under the Department of Social Development (DSD) in 2019. The main objective of the ORC is to ensure the effective mainstreaming of child rights at national, provincial and local level. Furthermore, the ORC was mandated to develop and oversee the implementation of the National Plan of Action for Children (NPAC). The ORC is responsible for all international, regional and national reporting obligations related to children. The NPAC has direct bearing on the rights and well-being of children and ensures that domestic legislations are in harmony with international laws.

1.3 The Current Practice of Ukuthwala and its origin

Ukuthwala, is the cultural practice deriving from the Xhosa marriage custom. It involves the 'pretend abduction' of the bride-to-be as part of negotiations between the two families. In ancient Africa, particularly among the Nguni, Ukuthwala was a condoned albeit abnormal path to marriage targeted at certain girls or women of marriageable age. But it did not involve raping or having consensual sex with the girl until marriage requirements had been concluded.

The act of Ukuthwala, however, was not with impunity; it incurred delictual liability for the culprit, in the form of the payment of one or more herds of cattle to the father or legal guardian of the female.

Criminal Law (Sexual Offences and Related Matters) Amendment Act, 2007 (Act 32 of 2007) Having sex with a child without their consent, following their kidnapping and abduction (Ukuthwala), constitutes rape in violation of the Criminal Law (Sexual Offences) Amendment Act, 2007 (Section 15). This Act, which is known as the Sexual Offences Amendment Act, 2007, prohibits sex with a person without their consent. Regarding a child, the age of consent is 16 meaning that sex with an under-16-year-old is statutory rape. Sex with a child that is 12 and below is rape as a child of that age is legally incapable of consent. The Act also prohibits other sexual activities with children (sections 16 and 17), including sexual grooming (Section 18). Section 17 of the Sexual Offences Amendment Act, 2007 prohibits the sexual exploitation of children by parents and others. Parents or relatives and others who collude in or aid and abet the Ukuthwala of a girl child commits the crime of sexual exploitation of children. These parents and relatives also face being charged with Trafficking in Persons under Section 71 of the Sexual Offences Act.

1.4 International instruments

The United Nations Declaration on Human Rights (Resolution A/RES/217(III)), the Declaration of the Rights of the Child (Resolution 1386(XIV)) also known as the Geneva Declaration of the Rights of the Child and the United Nations Conventions on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) (Resolution 444/25, 1989) are the most notable instruments adopted by the United General Assembly. The Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) came into force in September 1990 and South Africa ratified the convention in 1995.

The CRC is quite extensive and consists of 54 articles. Furthermore, the CRC articulates in Articles 32-40 the need for children's protection from crime, economic and sexual exploitation and trafficking by:

- Making provision for a minimum age of employment and appropriate conditions of employment;
- Protecting children from the illicit use and trafficking of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances;
- Protecting the child from all forms of sexual exploitations and sexual abuse;
- Preventing the abduction of the sale or trafficking children for any purpose or in any form;
- Protecting children from torture or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, arrest, detention or imprisonment of a child;
- To ensure that children are cared for and protected from armed conflicts. Children 15 years and younger do not take a direct part in armed conflicts and do not form part of the armed forces.
- The establishment of a minimum age below which children shall be presumed not to have the capacity to infringe the penal law; and
- Not to be compelled to give testimony or confess guilt.

The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child has two optional protocols which South Africa also prescribes. These consist of UN Convention on the Rights of the Child Optional Protocol Prohibiting the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Pornography (Resolution A/RES/54/263) which South Africa ratified on June 30, 2003. The second optional protocol is the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child Optional Protocol on Involvement of Children in Armed Conflicts (Resolution A/RES/54/263) which South Africa ratified in 2009. These protocols make provision for prohibition of:

- The sale of children, child prostitution, and child pornography.
- Such cases that have been investigated, prosecuted, and sanctioned; and
- Child victims of such crimes who have been provided with recovery assistance or
- Compensation.
- Children to take part in direct hostilities; and
- Recruitment of children in the armed forces and must be genuinely voluntary.

An additional international instrument is the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (Document CAB/LEG/24.9/49). The Charter entered into force in November 1999 and South Africa ratified the Charter in January 2000. The Charter consists of 48 articles in total and is a domesticated child rights tool of the UNC to suit the needs of the continent. Article 21 is the most notable article of this instrument as it makes provision for protection against harmful social and cultural practices.

- Elimination of harmful social and cultural practices; and
- Prevention of child marriages.

1.5 Sustainable Development

Internationally, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) Goal 16 targets and indicators are set up to promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development; to provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable, and inclusive institutions at all levels. Target 16.2 focuses particularly on crime against children as follows:

Target 16.2: End abuse, exploitation, trafficking, and all forms of violence against torture of children

- Indicator 16.2.1: Proportion of children aged 1–17 years who experienced any physical punishment and/or psychological aggression by caregivers in the past month.

- Indicator 16.2.2: Number of victims of human trafficking per 100,000 population, by sex, age, and form of exploitation
- Indicator 16.2.3: Proportion of young women and men aged 18–29 years who experienced sexual violence by age 18.

1.6 The National Development Plan: Vision for 2030

Safe communities are directly related to socio-economic development and equality. A safe and secure country encourages economic growth and transformation and is therefore an important contributor to addressing the triple challenge of poverty, inequality, and unemployment. The National Development Plan (NDP) 2030 envisages a South Africa where people feel safe and enjoy a community life free of crime. Achieving this requires a well-functioning criminal justice system, in which the police, the judiciary and correctional services work together to ensure that suspects are caught, prosecuted, convicted if guilty, and securely incarcerated and rehabilitated. This requires:

- Strengthening the criminal justice system;
- Making the police service professional;
- Increasing rehabilitation of prisoners and their successful reintegration into society and reducing the number of repeat offenders.

1.7 Medium-term strategic framework (MTSF) 2019-2024

The MTSF 2019–2024 turns the NDP goals and the government's priorities over a five-year period. These priorities were announced by the President in July 2019. Priority six consists of social cohesion and safer communities. Under this priority, various goals and targets were set to be achieved by 2024. However, the indicator specific to children was as follows under the outcome: to increase feelings of safety in communities:

- Percentage reduction in the number of crimes against children.

1.8 Objective of the report

This report is the second report in the child series thematic report. The main purpose of the report is to present data on crimes committed against children and reported to the SAPS. The report also uses the Governance, Public Safety, and Justice Survey (GPSJS) 2021/22, which is a countrywide household-based survey with a wide scope that ranges from the respondents' perceptions and experience on crime, corruption, community cohesion, trust in institutions to government's performance. In this report, households with children are used to measure experience of crime and feelings of safety.

The report comprised of four chapters. The first chapter provides an overview of the child-related national legislations and international instruments. The second chapter presents data on reported offences committed and reported against children under age 17 years using SAPS 2015/16-2019/20 data. Chapter three analyses the experiences of households with children of crimes and reporting of these crimes using GPSJS 2021/22 to 2022/23 data. Chapter four summarises the findings of the report and offers a conclusion.

Chapter 2: Reported crime against children

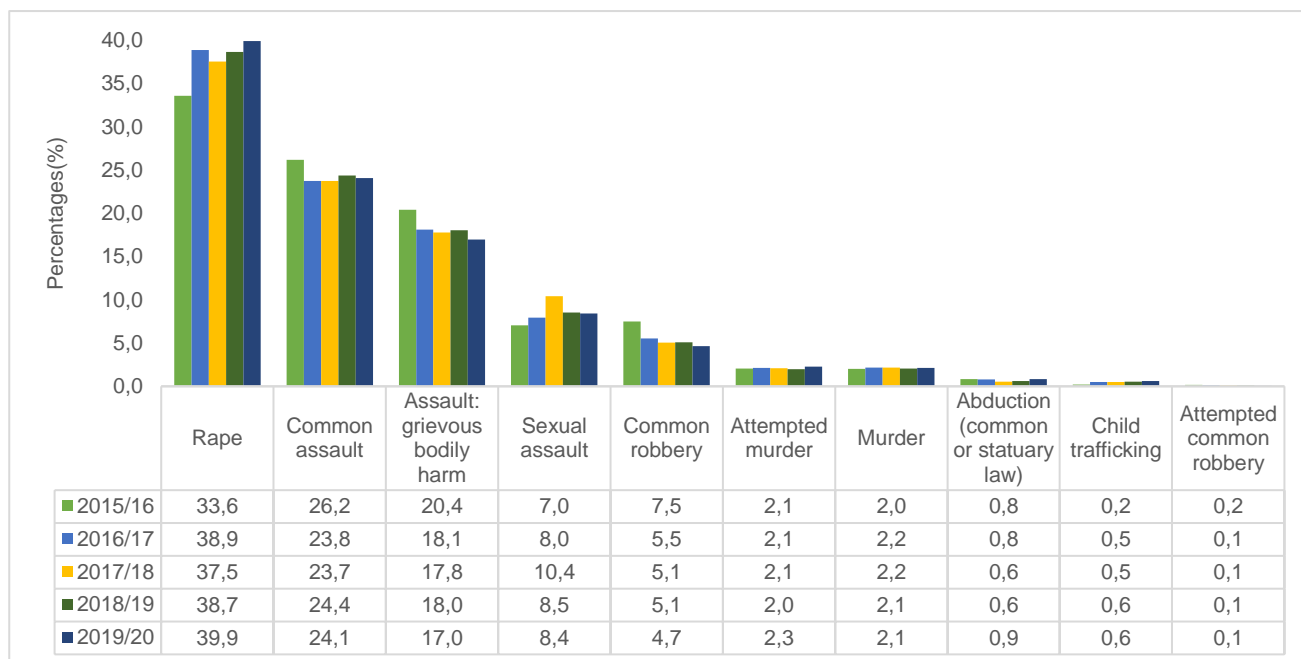
2.1 Introduction

Crime against children is a severe issue that can have a negative impact on children's mental, physical, and emotional well-being. Studies show evidence of associations between childhood violence and major causes of mortality in adulthood or illnesses (Hillis et al, 2016). Reported crime rates are higher in South Africa and may be linked to the high-income inequality present in the country. In 2015, the Gini coefficient for South Africa based on per capita expenditure was 0,65, amongst men and was about 0,64 and 0,61 amongst women showing a higher level of inequality among males when compared to females (Stats SA, 2019). The latest unemployment figures show that the total unemployment rate from January-March 2023 was 32,9% with Eastern Cape having the highest rate (40,0%) followed by Mpumalanga (38,5%) while Western Cape had the lowest (21,6%). The unemployment rate was higher among women compared to men (35,4% and 30,7% respectively) (Stats SA, 2023). Moreover, even though South Africa has many regulations and laws in place to safeguard and prevent crime against children, the incidences of crime against children appear to increase daily.

2.2 Types of offences

South Africa has high levels of reported violent crimes which include murder, rape, aggravated assault, robbery, property crime and hijacking of vehicles. In this section, crimes reported against children aged 17 years and younger were presented.

Figure 2.1: Percentage distribution of offences for children aged 17 years and younger reported to the police by year, 2015/16–2019/20



Source: SAPS 2015/16-2019/20

Figure 2.1 shows the distribution of crime against children reported in 2015/16–2019/20. The percentage of rape cases of children aged 17 years and younger reported to the police increased from 38,9% in 2016/17 to 39,9% in 2019/20. Between 2015/16 and 2019/20, the percentage of children aged 17 years and younger who experienced some form of common assault and assault with grievous bodily harm (GBH) had decreased slightly from 26,2% to 24,1% and from 20,4% to 17,0% respectively.

The percentage of children aged 17 years and younger who experienced sexual assault was 7,0% in 2015/16 and increased to 8,4% in 2019/20. Children are more likely to fall victim to sexual assault than homicide. The effects of child sexual abuse usually include teenage pregnancy, low self-esteem, a feeling of worthlessness, a lack of trust in adults, and an abnormal or distorted view of sex. The effects can be so strong that the child may even become suicidal. Children who have suffered from sexual abuse are at an increased risk of future abuse and may become child abusers themselves.

2.3 Experience of robbery, assault, and murder

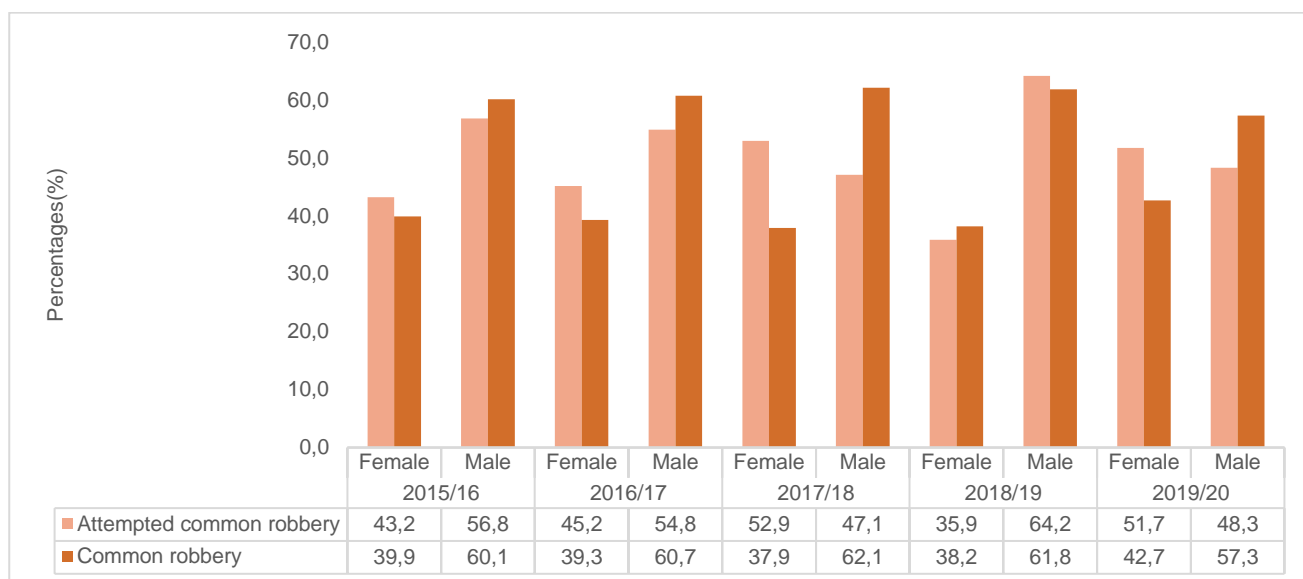
Children's experience of assault was higher compared to robbery and murder; however, robbery may also result in injury or death of the child victim as it involves force. Children would also most likely fall victim to common robbery than attempted common robbery. Furthermore, children would most likely fall victim of robbery in the household environment where they could also suffer emotional scars from witnessing the crime. Assault with intention to do bodily harm which is more commonly referred to as "assault with GBH" normally carries a heavier sentence, such as imprisonment, whereas common assault is usually only penalised with a fine. To ascertain whether assault is common or assault with GBH, factors such as nature of the weapon used, degree of force, and the actual injuries sustained are taken into consideration.

Table 2.1: Percentage distribution of attempted common robbery and common robbery for children aged 17 years and younger reported to the police by province, 2015/16–2019/20

	Attempted common robbery								
	WC	EC	NC	FS	KZN	NW	GP	MP	LP
2015/16	45,7	1,2	2,5	2,5	11,1	1,2	30,9	2,5	2,5
2016/17	37,1	11,3	1,6	6,5	9,7	1,6	24,2	4,8	3,2
2017/18	35,3	11,8	5,9	2,0	13,7	3,9	23,5	3,9	0,0
2018/19	37,7	5,7	3,8	5,7	13,2	9,4	20,8	1,9	1,9
2019/20	55,2	20,7	0,0	0,0	3,5	3,5	13,8	3,5	0,0
	Common robbery								
	WC	EC	NC	FS	KZN	NW	GP	MP	LP
2015/16	27,9	7,2	3,1	3,9	12,6	4,6	27,7	5,9	7,2
2016/17	29,7	9,5	3,9	5,5	10,7	5,9	25,7	3,8	5,4
2017/18	26,1	8,7	5,2	5,6	11,6	5,8	27,0	3,3	6,8
2018/19	24,5	9,4	4,3	6,3	12,6	6,1	26,6	3,6	6,8
2019/20	20,7	9,7	5,1	6,2	12,0	7,0	26,6	4,1	8,6

Source: SAPS 2015/16-2019/20

Table 2.1 shows that Western Cape recorded the highest percentage of children aged 17 years and younger who experienced attempted common robbery and common robbery relative to other provinces. Between 2015/16 and 2019/20, attempted common robbery increased from 45,7% to 55,2% in the Western Cape, whilst the percentage of common robbery in the Western Cape declined from 27,9 to 20,7%.

Figure 2.2: Percentage distribution of attempted common robbery and common robbery for children aged 17 years and younger reported to the police by gender, 2015/16–2019/20

Source: SAPS 2015/16-2019/20

According to the figure above, males aged 17 years and younger experienced common robbery more than females of the same age from 2015/16 to 2019/20. The percentage of males who experienced attempted common robbery decreased slightly from 56,8% in 2015/16 to 48,3% in 2019/20 and 60,1% in 2015/16 to 57,3% in 2019/20, respectively.

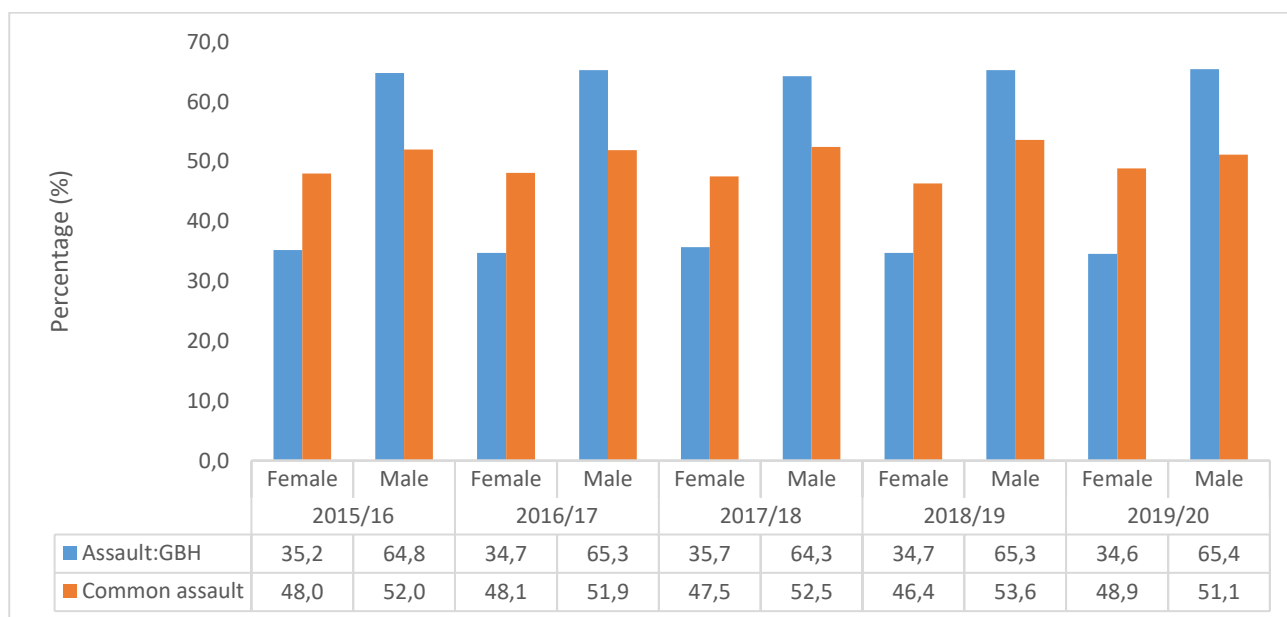
Table 2.2: Percentage distribution of assault for children aged 17 years and younger reported to the police by province, 2015/16–2019/20

	Assault with grievous bodily harm								
	WC	EC	NC	FS	KZN	NW	GP	MP	LP
2015/16	20,8	11,2	5,5	5,4	16,1	6,7	18,5	7,0	8,9
2016/17	20,6	14,0	6,3	7,1	16,0	7,5	16,2	5,7	6,7
2017/18	21,0	13,5	6,7	6,3	15,4	7,3	16,4	5,5	7,9
2018/19	20,6	14,2	6,9	6,1	15,5	7,5	15,9	5,8	7,5
2019/20	20,6	14,2	6,9	6,1	15,5	7,5	15,9	5,8	7,5
	Common assault								
	WC	EC	NC	FS	KZN	NW	GP	MP	LP
2015/16	35,4	6,1	3,2	6,4	14,6	3,9	19,6	4,8	6,0
2016/17	35,2	7,3	3,9	8,0	14,1	5,0	18,6	3,8	4,1
2017/18	33,8	7,7	3,6	7,5	14,5	5,3	20,3	3,8	3,6
2018/19	34,0	7,8	3,7	7,0	15,0	5,0	19,3	4,0	4,1
2019/20	32,9	8,2	4,0	7,2	14,1	5,9	19,5	4,1	4,2

Source: SAPS 2015/16-2019/20

Table 2.2 displays an overall decline in the percentage distribution of assaults reported to the police for children aged 17 years and younger. Western Cape recorded the highest percentage of assault with GBH and common assault for all the years displayed above, followed by Gauteng and KwaZulu-Natal. However, for these three provinces, the percentage of children aged 17 years and younger who experienced common assault and assault with GBH decreased; for example, common assault in the Western Cape decreased from 35,4% in 2015/16 to 32,9% in 2019/20. Furthermore, Northern Cape, Mpumalanga, and Limpopo had the lowest percentage of children who suffered from common assault in 2019/2020.

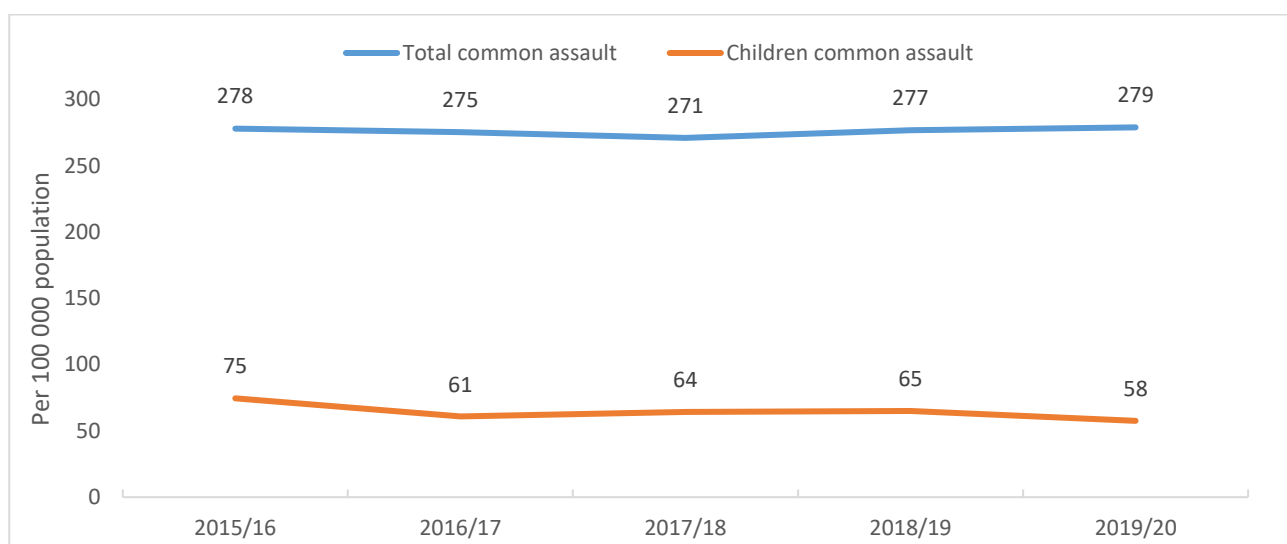
Figure 2.3: Percentage distribution of assault for children aged 17 years and younger reported to the police by gender, 2015/16–2019/20



Source: SAPS 2015/16-2019/20

Figure 2.3 shows that males were more likely to experience both common assault and assault with GBH than females across all the years presented above. The percentage of females aged 17 years and younger who experienced common assault slightly increased from 48,0% in 2015/16 to 48,9% in 2019/20, while the percentage of assault with GBH slightly declined from 35,2% in 2015/16 to 34,6% in 2019/20. However, among males, there was a slight drop in common assaults from 52,0% in 2015/16 to 51,1% in 2019/20, whereas assault with GBH increased from 64,8% in 2015/16 to 65,4% in 2019/20.

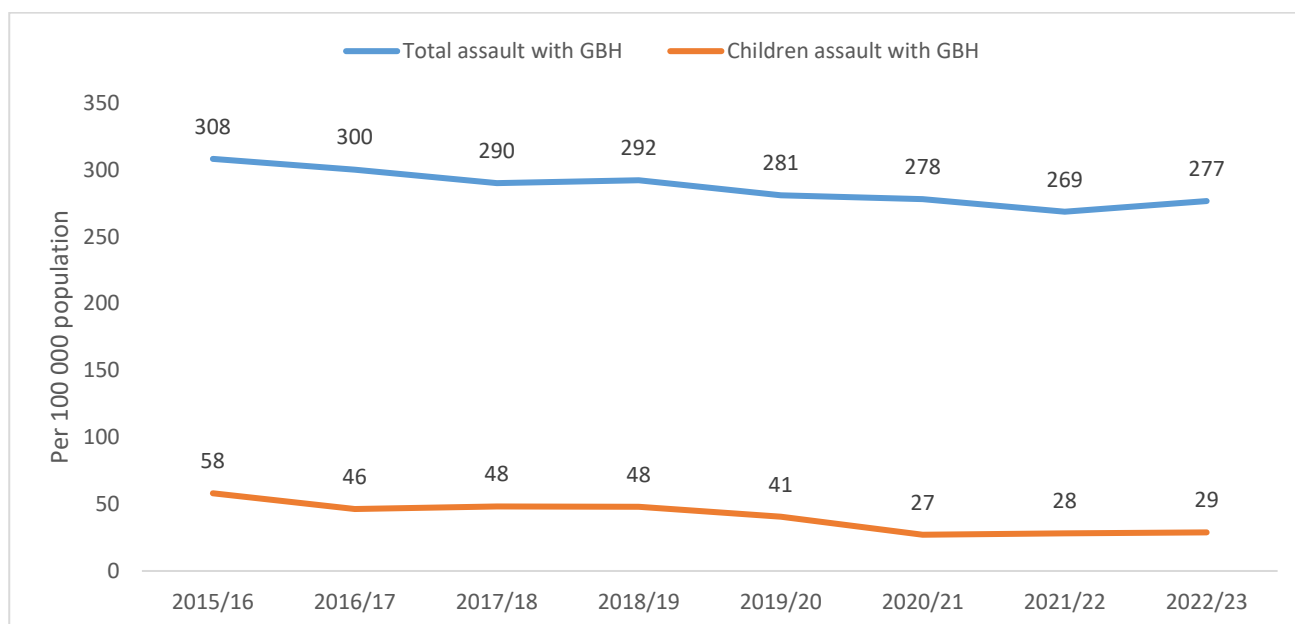
Figure 2.4: Volume of total common assault and common assault on children reported to the police per 100 000 population, 2015/16–2019/20



Source: SAPS 2015/16-2019/20

According to the figure above, in 2015/16, there were in total 278 cases of common assault per 100 000 of the population reported to the police while 75 cases of common assault were recorded for children. While common assault cases of children decreased over the years, total reported cases remained almost constant overall.

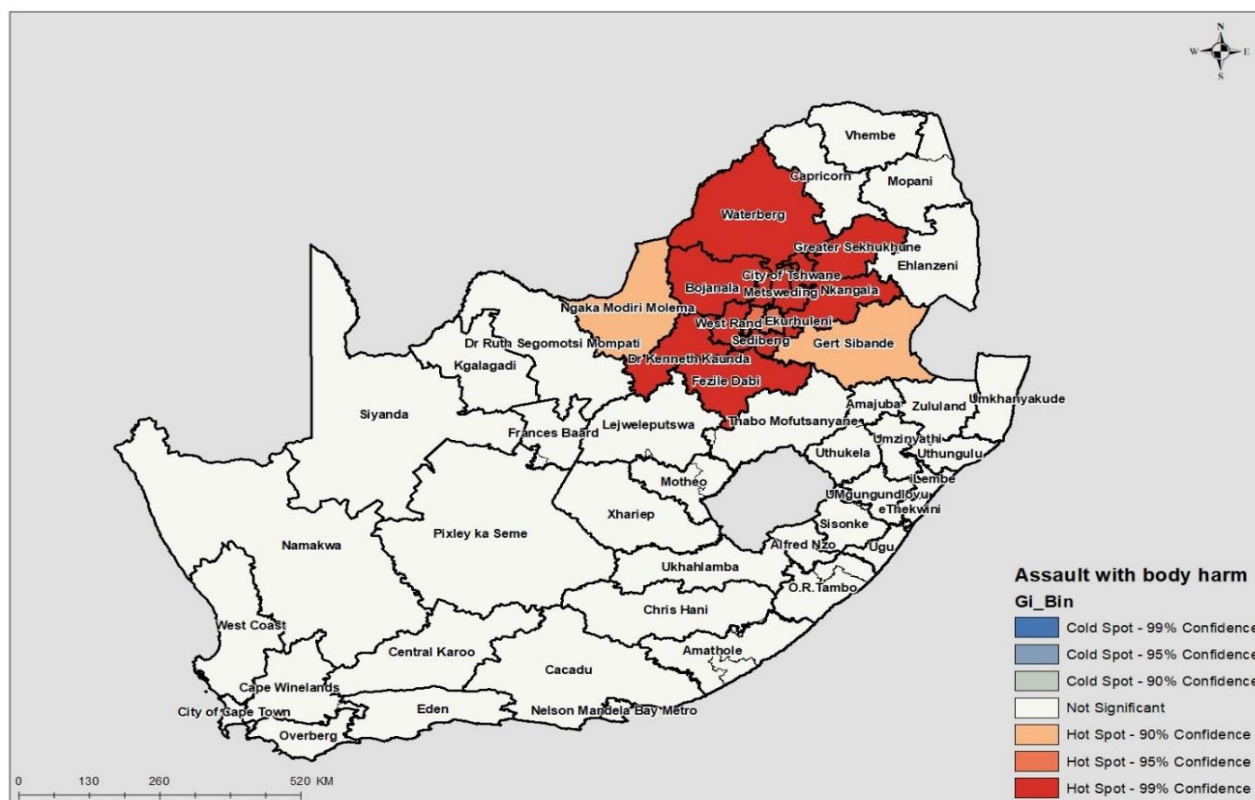
Figure 2.5: Volume of total assault with GBH and assault with GBH on children reported to the police per 100 000 population, 2015/16–2022/23



Source: SAPS 2015/16-2022/23

As shown in the figure above, data on assaults with GBH show an overall decline over the years. Children cases of assault with GBH was 58 per 100 000 population in 2015/16 and decreased to 29 per 100 000 population in 2022/23. Arguments, road rage, and robberies were some of the leading causes of the assault with GBH.

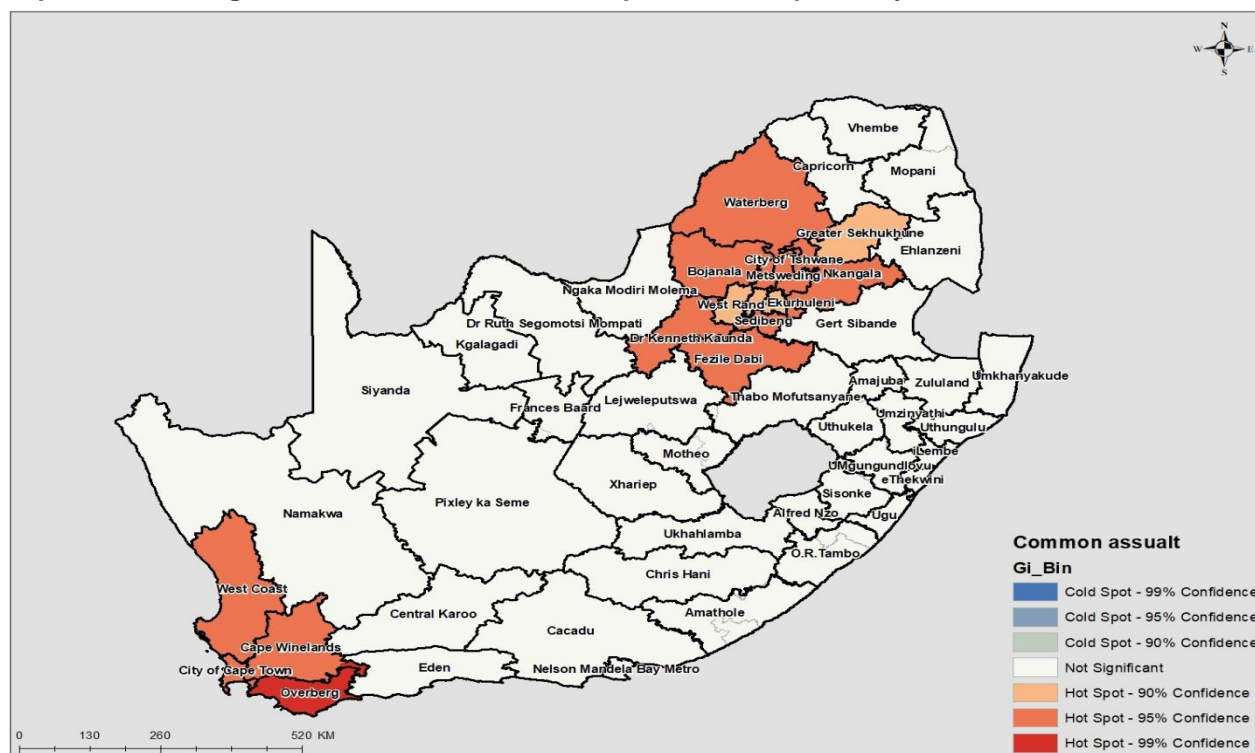
Map 2.1: Percentage of assaults with GBH cases reported to the police by district, SAPS 2021/22



Source: SAPS 2021/22

Map 2.1 above presents percentage of assaults with GBH cases reported to the police by districts. Results indicate that in 2021/22, Waterberg, Greater Sekhukhune, City of Tshwane, Bojanala, Metsweding, Nkangala, West Rand, Sedibeng, Fezile Dabi, and Dr Kenneth Kaunda had the highest percentages of reported Assault with GBH cases to the police. Ekurhuleni recorded the second-highest percentage of cases of assault with GBH reported to the police. Furthermore, Gert Sibande and Ngaka Modiri Molema districts ranked third in terms of the highest percentages of reported crimes to the police.

Map 2.2: Percentage of common assault cases reported to the police by district, SAPS 2021/22



Source: SAPS 2021/22

The map above illustrates the percentage of common assault cases reported to the police in various districts for the year 2021/22. Overberg recorded the highest percentage of reported common assault cases. Following closely were West Coast, Cape Winelands, City of Cape Town, Waterberg, City of Tshwane, Nkangala, Bojanala, and Metsweding, which had the second-highest percentages of common assault cases. Greater Sekhukhune, West Rand, and Ekurhuleni ranked third among districts with the highest percentages of reported common assault cases to the police.

Table 2.3: Percentage distribution of attempted murder and murder for children aged 17 years and younger reported to the police by province, 2015/16–2019/20

	Attempted murder								
	WC	EC	NC	FS	KZN	NW	GP	MP	LP
2015/16	32,8	8,8	3,6	3,4	17,9	3,8	19,8	5,6	4,3
2016/17	37,7	14,7	2,1	4,5	15,6	5,5	13,6	3,2	3,2
2017/18	42,0	12,5	2,9	4,0	15,8	3,7	11,8	4,8	2,5
2018/19	36,3	13,2	3,2	5,4	18,1	2,5	14,4	4,2	2,6
2019/20	38,4	11,8	3,3	4,8	16,9	4,0	13,0	4,7	3,1
	Murder								
	WC	EC	NC	FS	KZN	NW	GP	MP	LP
2015/16	21,1	18,1	1,9	5,4	17,1	6,5	18,7	5,8	5,6
2016/17	27,3	19,6	2,1	6,2	19,0	5,7	11,5	5,1	3,6
2017/18	26,1	18,0	2,0	4,4	16,5	5,3	16,7	5,0	5,9
2018/19	25,4	19,2	2,8	5,2	18,3	4,2	12,9	5,1	6,9
2019/20	23,8	17,2	0,8	5,7	20,7	3,5	17,8	5,0	5,6

Source: SAPS 2015/16-2019/20

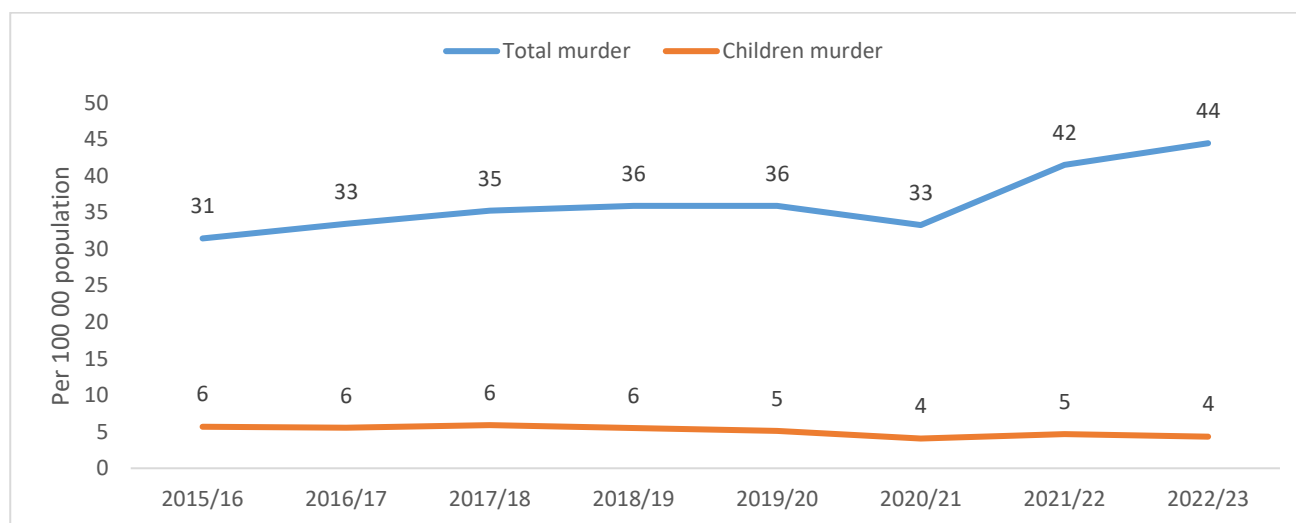
The table above presents the percentage of children aged 17 years and younger who experienced murder and attempted murder. Attempted murder was experienced more by children who were residing in Western Cape, followed by those residing in KwaZulu-Natal and Gauteng. Interestingly, the percentage of children who suffered from attempted murder in the Western Cape increased drastically from 32,8% in 2015/16 to 42,0% in 2017/18. Furthermore, the percentage of children who experienced murder was high in Western Cape compared to other provinces. Robberies and gang violence might be the cause of high murder cases in the Western Cape.

Figure 2.6: Percentage distribution of attempted murder and murder for children aged 17 years and younger reported to the police by gender, 2015/16–2019/20

Source: SAPS 2015/16-2019/20

Figure 2.6 above demonstrate that attempted murder and murder affected males more than females across all the years displayed. However, between 2017/18 and 2019/20 the percentage of females aged 17 years and younger who experienced attempted murder and murder went up from 26,7% to 35,2% and 29,5% to 31,0%, respectively. Whilst the percentage of males aged 17 years and younger who experienced attempted murder and murder declined over the period of five years depicted above.

Figure 2.7: Volume of total murder and murder of children reported to the police per 100 000 population, 2015/16–2022/23



Source: SAPS 2015/16–2022/23

The above graph shows that total reported murders increased from 31 per 100 000 population in 2015/16 to 33 per 100 000 population in 2020/21 before increasing to 44 per 100 000 population in 2022/23.

Reported cases for children remained constant for a year period (2015/16–2018/19) at 6 per 100 000 population of murder cases for children. However, murder cases for children slightly decreased from 2019/20 to 2022/23.

2.4 Experience of abduction and trafficking

Both abduction and trafficking involve taking somebody away illegally against their will; while one is for ransom the other involves illegally trading a person for either exploitation or commercial gain. These two crimes could be linked as the abduction could be the recruitment part of the trafficking crime. For these reasons, it is easier to victimise children. Abduction and trafficking of children are crimes that are the least reported in South Africa.

Table 2.4: Percentage distribution of child trafficking for children aged 17 years and younger reported to the police by province, 2015/16–2019/20

	Child trafficking (N)								
	WC	EC	NC	FS	KZN	NW	GP	MP	LP
2015/16	9	17	5	6	28	6	22	10	7
2016/17	12	28	3	13	52	13	82	19	15
2017/18	24	27	5	20	34	38	68	21	21
2018/19	8	34	5	26	55	7	87	29	24
2019/20	11	39	1	19	61	17	74	25	28
	Child trafficking (%)								
	WC	EC	NC	FS	KZN	NW	GP	MP	LP
2015/16	8,2	15,5	4,6	5,5	25,5	5,5	20,0	9,1	6,4
2016/17	5,1	11,8	1,3	5,5	21,9	5,5	34,6	8,0	6,3
2017/18	9,3	10,5	1,9	7,8	13,2	14,7	26,4	8,1	8,1
2018/19	2,9	12,4	1,8	9,5	20,0	2,6	31,6	10,6	8,7
2019/20	4,0	14,2	0,4	6,9	22,2	6,2	26,9	9,1	10,2

Source: SAPS 2015/16–2019/20

Table 2.4 depicts the percentage of children aged 17 years and younger who suffered from child trafficking. Although there was no clear pattern for child trafficking, KwaZulu-Natal, Gauteng, and Eastern Cape recorded highest percentages of children aged 17 years and younger who experienced child trafficking for all the years presented above. Data further reveals that children in Gauteng (34,6%) experienced the highest percentage of child trafficking in 2016/17.

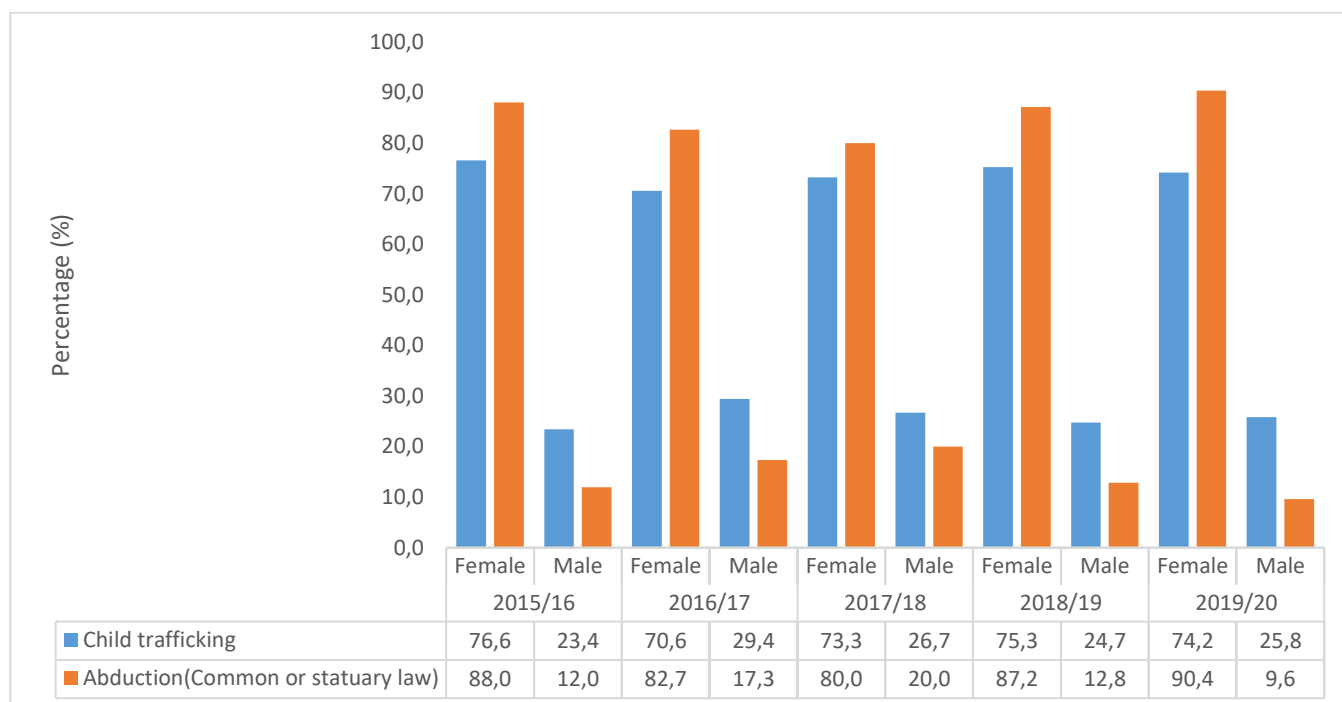
Table 2.5: Percentage distribution of abduction for children aged 17 years and younger reported to the police by province, 2015/16–2019/20

	Abduction (Common or statutory law) (N)								
	WC	EC	NC	FS	KZN	NW	GP	MP	LP
2015/16	95	42	31	46	52	89	48	15	25
2016/17	105	41	15	23	35	86	43	12	20
2017/18	73	35	15	19	29	30	51	10	13
2018/19	85	35	16	32	24	40	30	28	14
2019/20	87	26	6	8	189	24	21	7	17
	Abduction (Common or statutory law) (%)								
	WC	EC	NC	FS	KZN	NW	GP	MP	LP
2015/16	21,4	9,5	7,0	10,4	11,7	20,1	10,8	3,4	5,6
2016/17	27,6	10,8	4,0	6,1	9,2	22,6	11,3	3,2	5,3
2017/18	26,6	12,7	5,5	6,9	10,6	10,9	18,6	3,6	4,7
2018/19	28,0	11,5	5,3	10,5	7,9	13,2	9,9	9,2	4,6
2019/20	22,6	6,8	1,6	2,1	49,1	6,2	5,5	1,8	4,4

Source: SAPS 2015/16-2019/20

Table 2.5 above, displays percentages of children aged 17 years and younger who experienced abduction. Abduction was experienced more by children who lived in Western Cape and North West than in other provinces. However, the percentage of children aged 17 years and younger who experienced abduction in the North West sharply dropped from 20,1% in 2015/16 to 6,2% in 2019/20. Moreover, the percentage of children who experienced abduction went up drastically from 11,7% in 2015/16 to 49,1% in 2019/20 for KwaZulu-Natal.

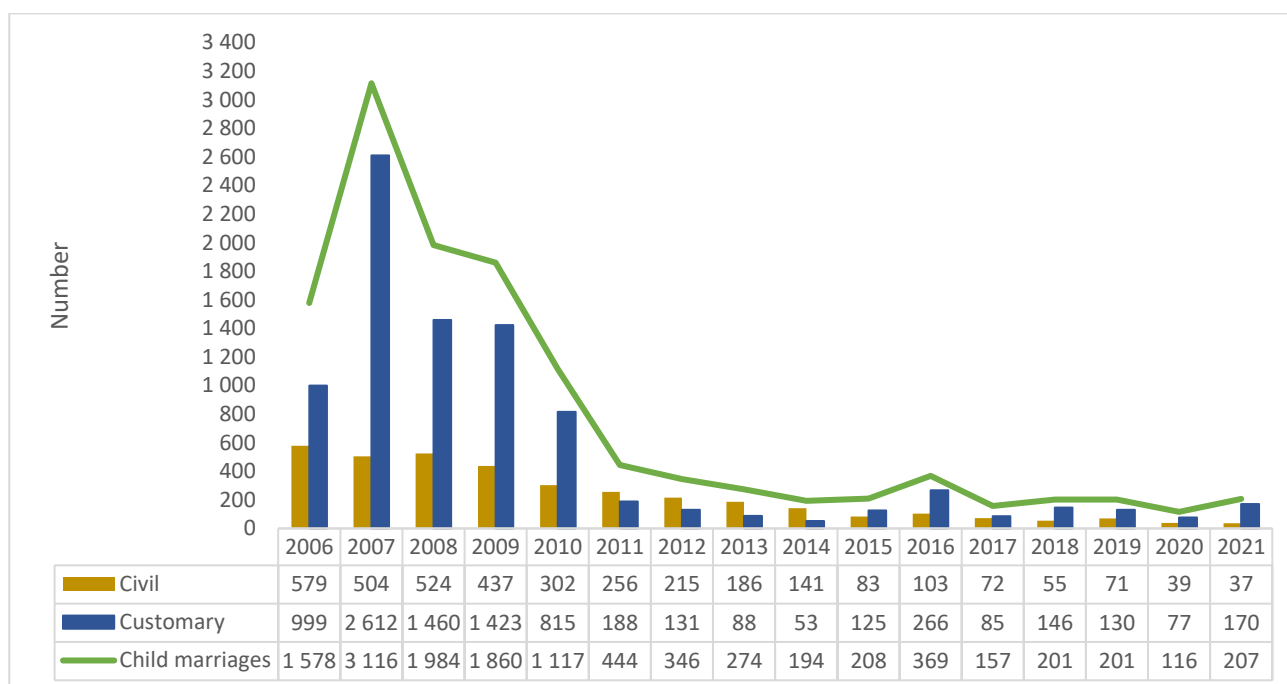
Figure 2.8: Percentage distribution of child trafficking and abduction for children aged 17 years and younger reported to the police by gender, 2015/16–2019/20



Source: SAPS 2015/16-2019/20

Females had a higher percentage of abduction and child trafficking than males across all years. Between 2015/16 and 2019/20, the percentage of females aged 17 years and younger who were victims of child trafficking decreased by 2,4 percentage points from 76,6% to 74,2%, while abduction increased by 2,4 percentage points from 88,0% to 90,4%. Additionally, females aged 17 years and younger were more likely to be abducted than trafficked. Furthermore, across all the years indicated above, males aged 17 years and younger suffered child trafficking more than abduction, which has increased from 23,4% in 2015/16 to 25,8% in 2019/20, whilst abduction decreased from 12,0% in 2015/16 to 9,6 in 2019/20.

This may be attributable to so many factors, for example, abduction may be because of forced marriages whilst child trafficking may be the action or practice of illegally procuring and relocating children, typically for the purposes of forced labour or sexual exploitation. In South Africa, abduction is the unlawful and intentional removal of an unmarried minor from the control of his or her parents or guardian to enable someone to marry him or her. This practice is known as Ukuthwala, which predominates in the rural areas of Eastern Cape and KwaZulu-Natal (Budoo et al., 2018).

Figure 2.9: Number of child marriages for children aged 17 years and younger, 2006–2021

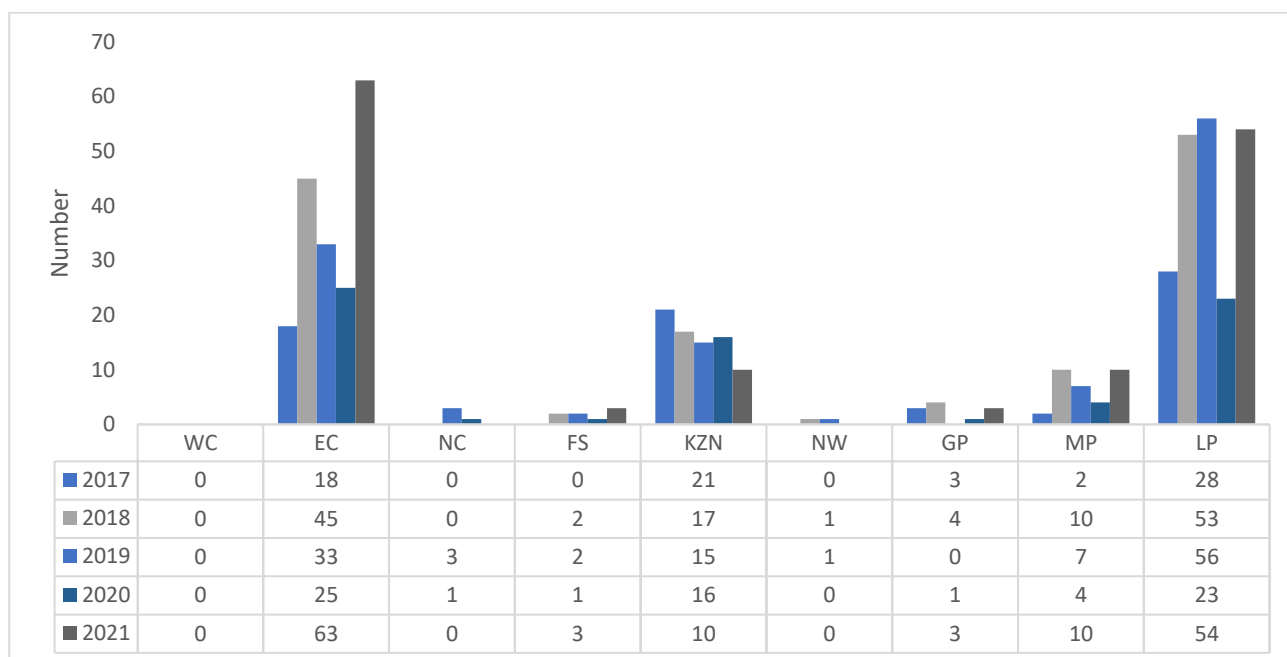
Source: Marriages and divorces, 2006–2021

Any formal or informal marriage between a child under the age of 18 and another child or an adult is regarded as child marriage (United Nations Children’s Fund, 2023). Child marriage is a major problem that may lead to poor health outcomes, lower levels of education, and a high risk of violence, abuse, and poverty (Elisabet Le Roux, 2020).

Figure 2.9 above, displays the number of registered child marriages amongst children aged 17 years and younger over the past 16 years. Results show that overall child marriages declined drastically from 1 578 in 2006 to 207 in 2021. However, there was a notable peak in 2007 (3 116), which almost doubled from 2006 (1 578).

Furthermore, customary marriages for children aged 17 years and younger recorded the highest number of registered marriages compared to civil marriages for the reference period above. Although, registered customary marriages for children sharply dropped by 82,9% between 2006 and 2021. The same pattern was observed for registered civil marriages which declined by 93,6% between 2006 and 2021.

Figure 2.10: Number of customary marriages for children aged 17 years and younger by province, 2017–2021

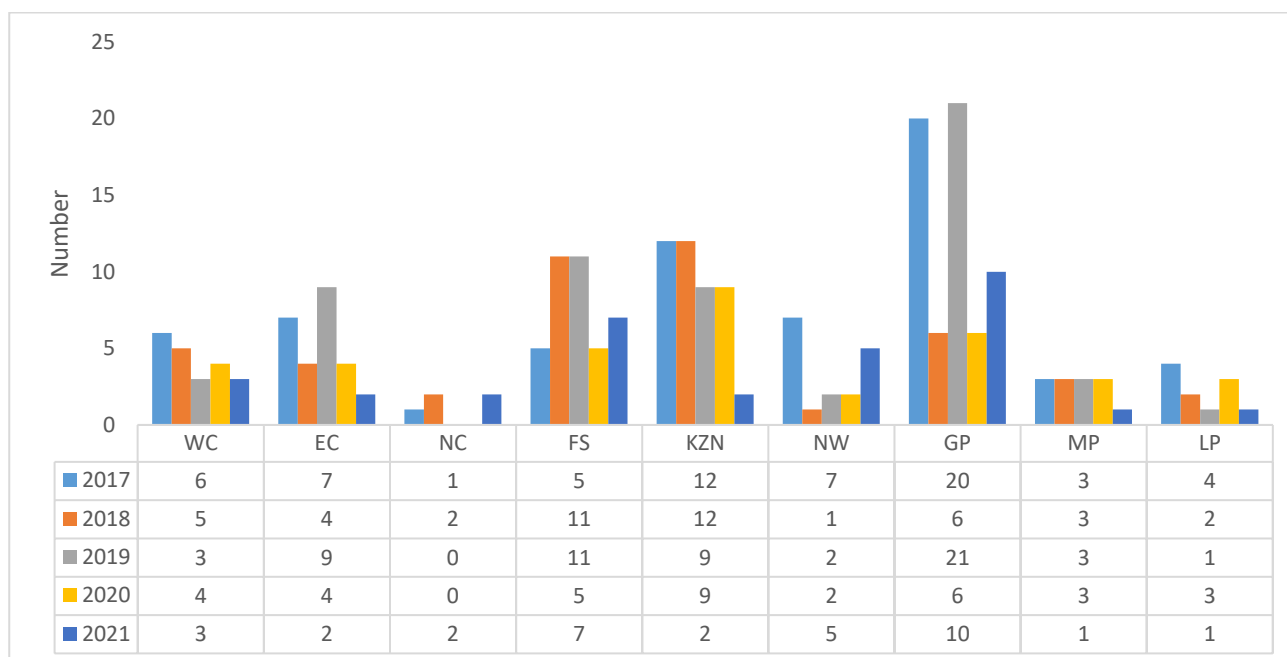


Source: Marriages and divorces, 2017–2021

The graph above, depicts that customary marriage was mostly common in Eastern Cape, Limpopo and KwaZulu-Natal over the past five years. Between 2017 and 2021, registered customary marriages for children increased in Eastern Cape and Limpopo from 18 to 63 and from 28 to 54 respectively. However, a decrease was observed in KwaZulu-Natal from 21 to 10 for customary marriages.

Furthermore, the figure above indicates that most of the customary marriages are particularly from poor rural communities.

Figure 2.11: Number of civil marriages for children aged 17 years and younger by province, 2017–2021



Source: Marriages and divorces, 2017–2021

The graph above, shows the number of civil marriages for children aged 17 years and younger by province. Overall, civil marriages were prevalent in Gauteng, KwaZulu-Natal, and Free State. Whilst, Northern Cape recorded the lowest number of registered civil marriages for children throughout the reference period shown above.

Table 2.6: Number of customary marriages for children aged 17 years and younger by age, 2021

Customary 2021			
Age	Bridegroom	Bride	Total
9	-	1	1
10	-	2	2
11	1	1	2
12	1	3	4
13	-	3	3
14	1	9	10
15	2	25	27
16	5	40	45
17	4	72	76
Total	14	156	170
Civil marriages 2021			
14	-	2	2
15	-	3	3
16	1	4	5
17	4	23	27
Total	5	32	37
Grand total	19	188	207

Source: Marriages and divorces, 2021

Section 28(3) of the South African Constitution defines a child as a person under the age of 18 years. The minimum legal age for marriage is 18 years for boys and 15 years for girls in South Africa. The Department of Home Affairs can grant an exception to the '15 years old' minimum age for girls with a written permission. The consent of child and parents or guardian is critical to this process.

South Africa recorded 207 child marriages in 2021, with 188 children taken as brides and 19 were grooms. Of 207 child marriages in 2021, 37 of the child marriages were registered as civil marriages and 170 were registered as customary.

2.5 Sexual offences

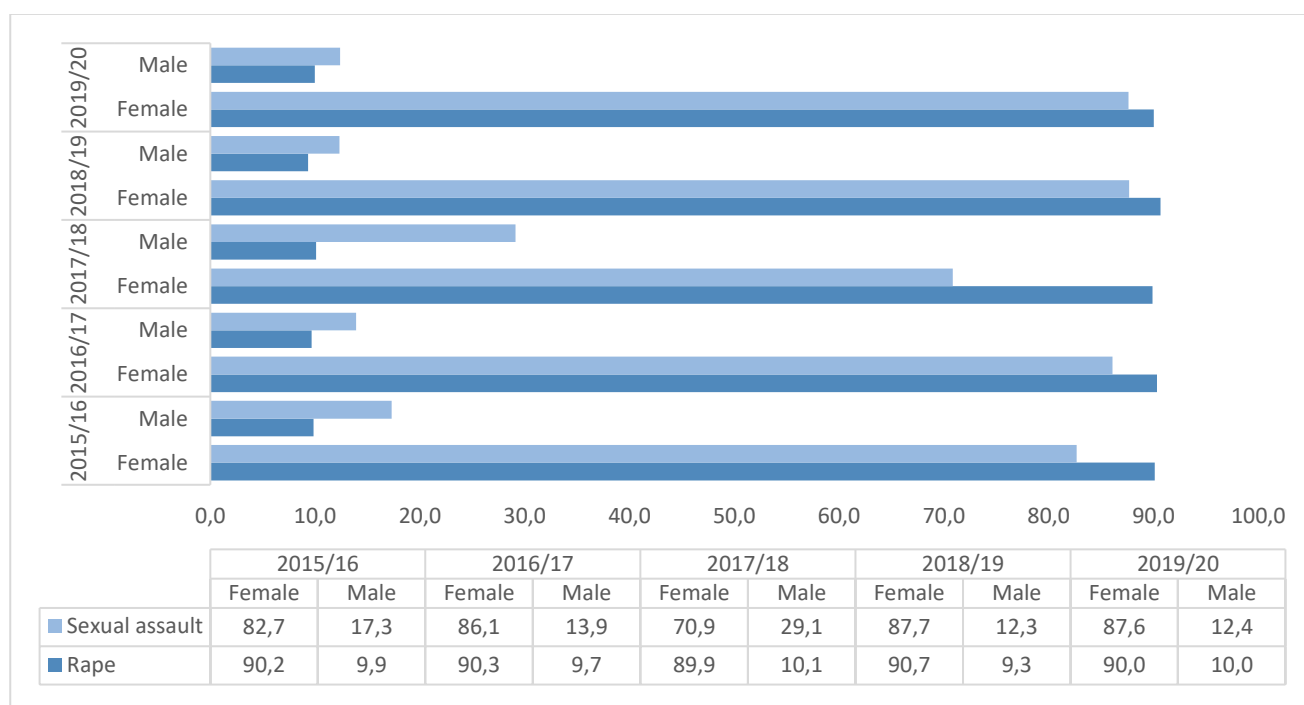
Victims of sexual offences tend to be younger women and children. There is generally a large under-reporting of sexual offences. GPSJS 2021/22 indicated that 69,0% of households reported all or some incidences of sexual offences to the police in 2018/19, suggesting that close to 30,0% of sexual offences remain unreported.

Table 2.7: Percentage distribution of rape and sexual assault for children aged 17 years and younger reported to the police by province, 2015/16–2019/20

	Rape								
	WC	EC	NC	FS	KZN	NW	GP	MP	LP
2015/16	11,5	15,7	3,2	7,1	20,6	9,2	16,7	7,1	8,9
2016/17	11,9	15,1	2,5	6,4	21,0	9,9	16,8	7,8	8,7
2017/18	10,9	16,5	2,8	6,2	20,5	9,1	17,7	7,8	8,6
2018/19	10,5	16,9	2,4	7,6	21,0	7,5	17,0	8,0	9,2
2019/20	12,5	16,3	2,3	6,1	20,2	8,4	17,1	8,1	9,0
	Sexual assault								
	WC	EC	NC	FS	KZN	NW	GP	MP	LP
2015/16	27,1	9,2	3,2	8,4	13,5	6,5	24,0	4,2	3,9
2016/17	30,0	9,5	3,4	7,1	14,2	6,4	21,4	4,0	4,0
2017/18	21,6	8,6	2,5	5,8	11,6	4,5	37,8	4,0	3,5
2018/19	24,5	11,4	3,6	7,9	16,1	4,3	22,5	5,5	4,1
2019/20	24,6	12,4	2,6	7,8	14,9	5,5	21,8	5,2	5,3

Source: SAPS 2015/16-2019/20

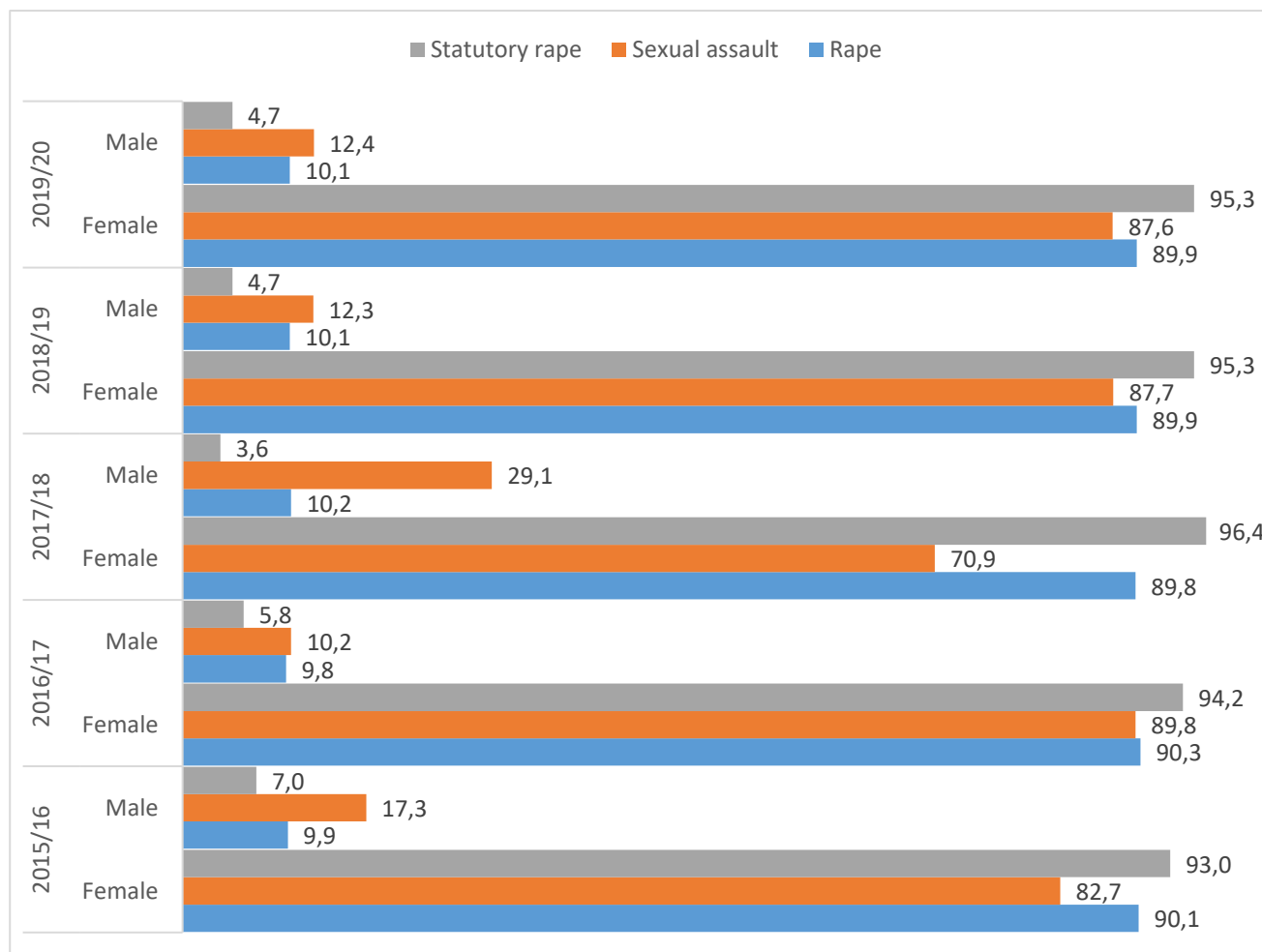
Table 2.7 illustrates the percentages of children aged 17 years and younger who experienced rape and sexual assault. The percentages vary over the five-year period shown above, however, children in KwaZulu-Natal had a high percentage of rape compared to other provinces, followed by Gauteng and Eastern Cape. While sexual assault was high in the Western Cape, followed by Gauteng and KwaZulu-Natal relative to other provinces in 2019/20.

Figure 2.12: Percentage distribution of rape and sexual assault for children aged 17 years and under reported to the police by gender, 2015/16–2019/20

Source: SAPS 2015/16-2019/20

Figure 2.12 shows the cases of sexual assault and rape for children aged 17 years and younger reported to the police. Between 2015/16 and 2019/20, sexual assault cases for females increased from 82,7% to 87,6%. While sexual assault cases for males decreased from 17,3% to 12,4%. However, data showed that males were sexually assaulted at a higher percentage in 2017/18 (29,1%) than in comparative years.

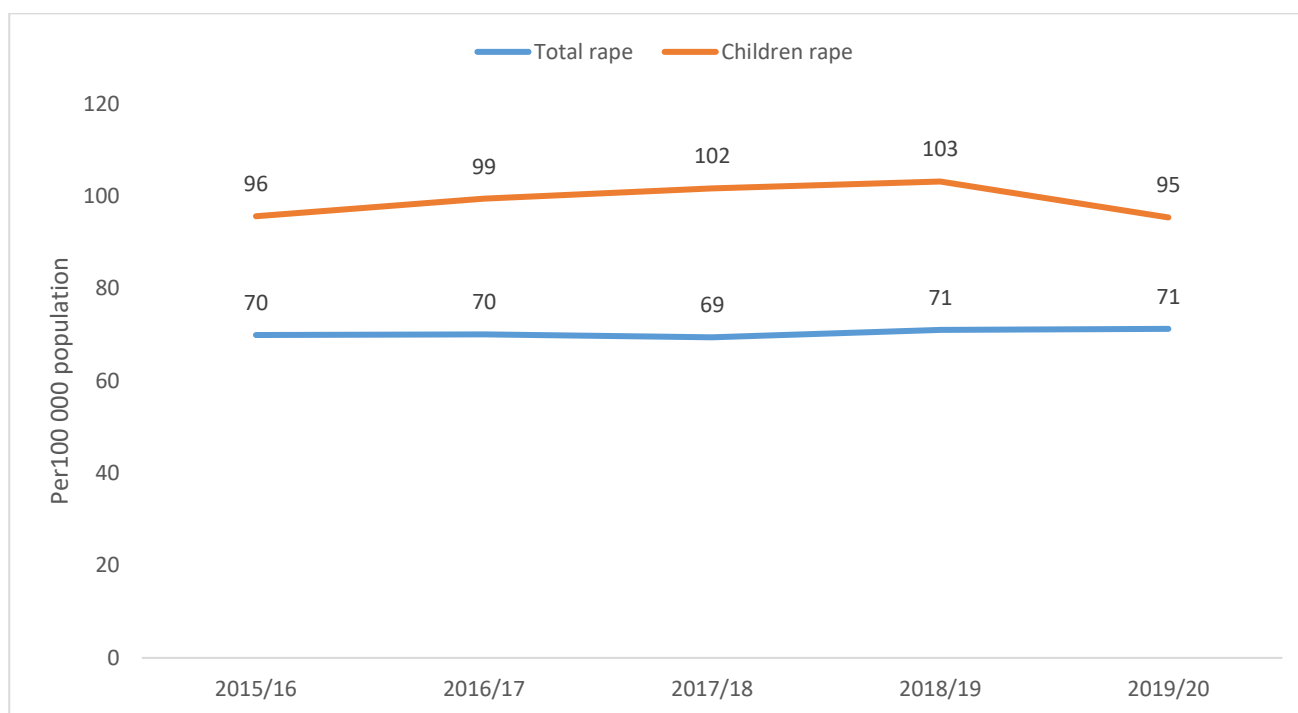
Figure 2.13: Percentage distribution of sexual offences for children aged 17 years and younger reported to the police by gender, 2015/16–2019/20



Source: SAPS 2015/16-2019/20

Note: Statutory rape is an unlawful and intentional act of sexual penetration of a child of 12 years and older, but younger than 16 years irrespective of whether child consents (SAPS).

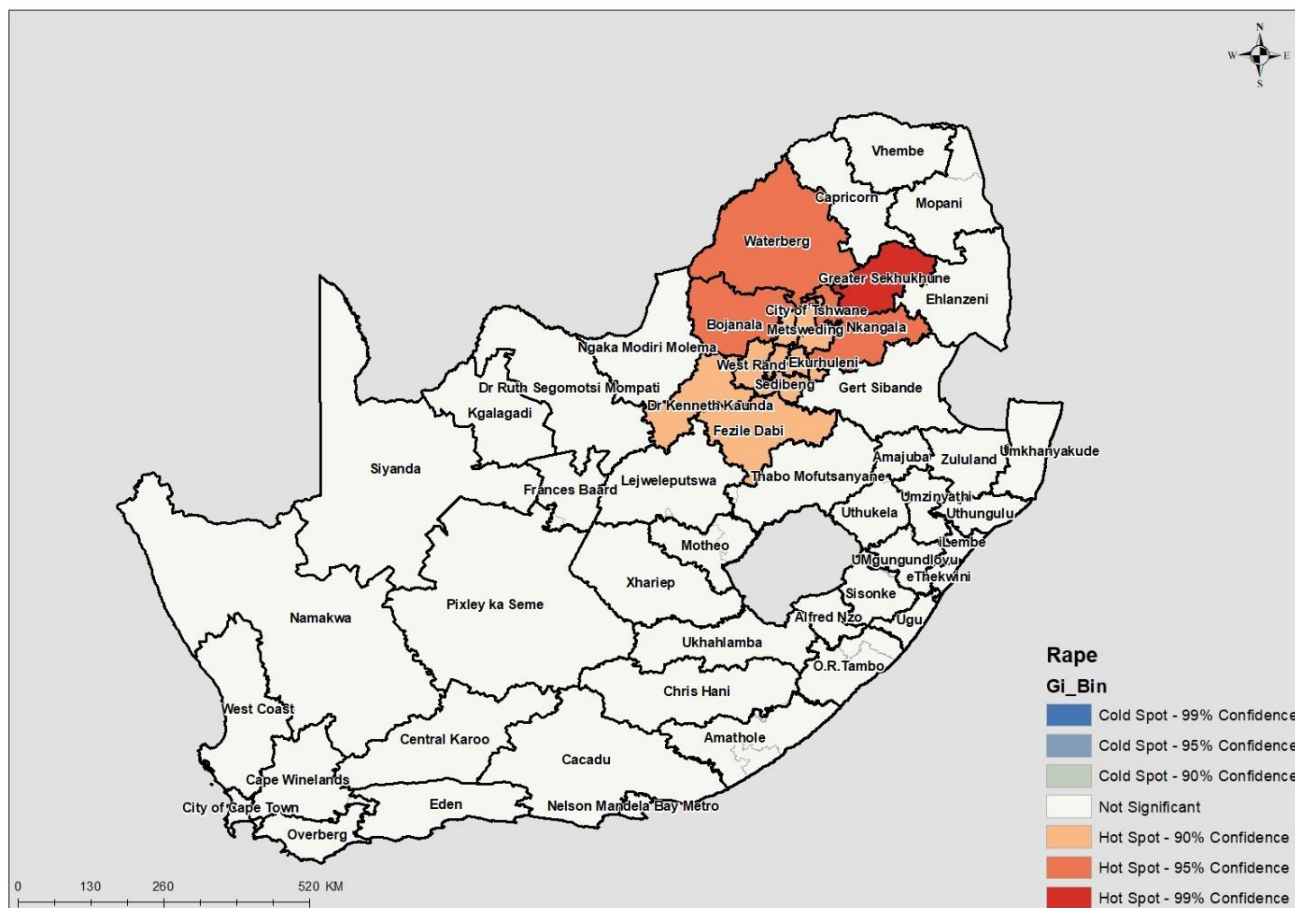
According to Figure 2.13, females were more likely than males to be victims of statutory rape, sexual assault, and rape. Females had a higher percentage of statutory rape cases between 2015/16 to 2019/20, followed by rape and sexual assault. However, the percentages of females aged 17 years and younger who experienced statutory rape and sexual assault slightly increased from 93,0% in 2015/16 to 95,3% in 2019/20 and 82,7% in 2015/16 to 87,6% in 2019/20, respectively. While the percentage of rape cases among females aged 17 years and younger decreased from 90,1% in 2015/16 to 89,9% in 2019/20.

Figure 2.14: Volume of reported rape to the police per 100 000 population, 2015/16–2019/20

Source: SAPS 2015/16-2019/20

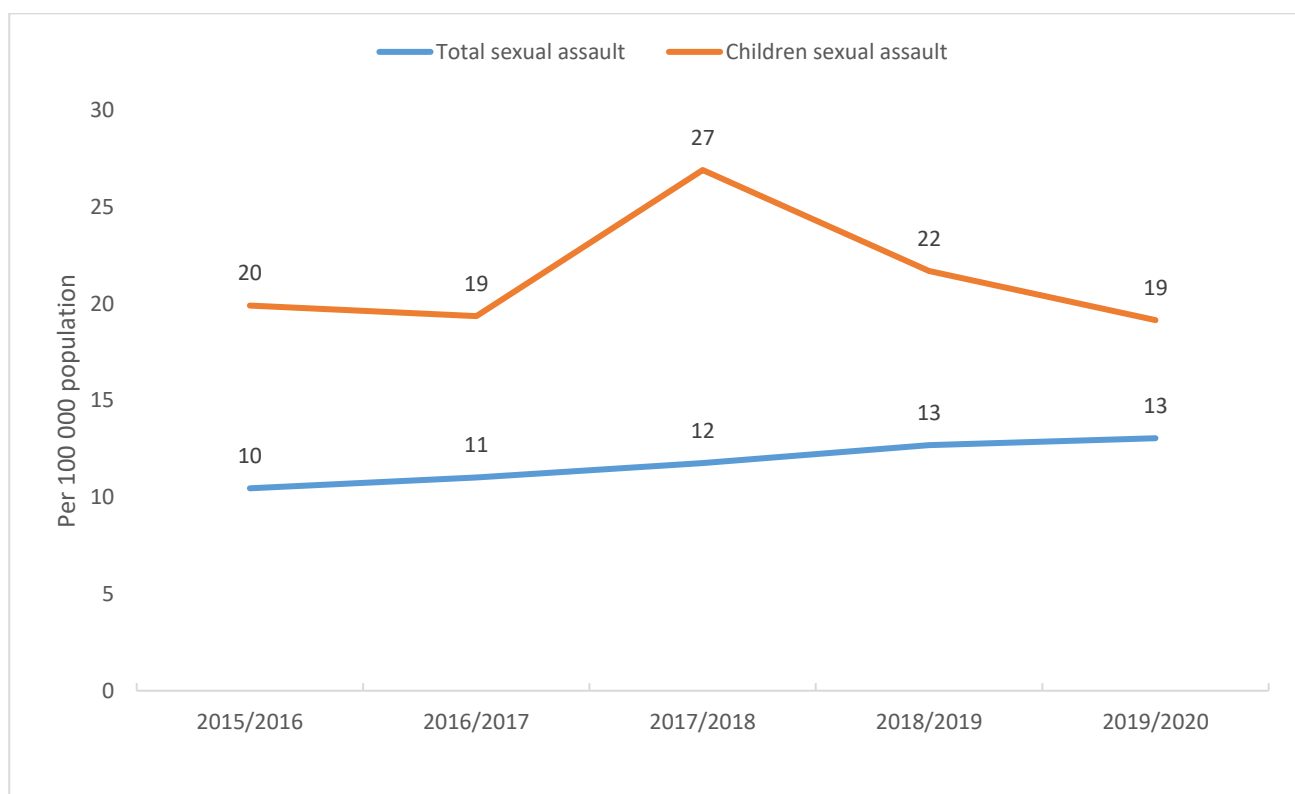
The figure above, presents a comparison of crimes committed against children to total crimes reported per year. Rape cases per 100 000 population were higher among children compared to total rape cases reported throughout the years. There was a notable decrease recorded in number of children's rape cases reported to the police from 96 per 100 000 population in 2015/16 to 95 per 100 000 population in 2019/20.

Map 2.3: Percentage of rape cases reported to the police by district, SAPS 2021/22



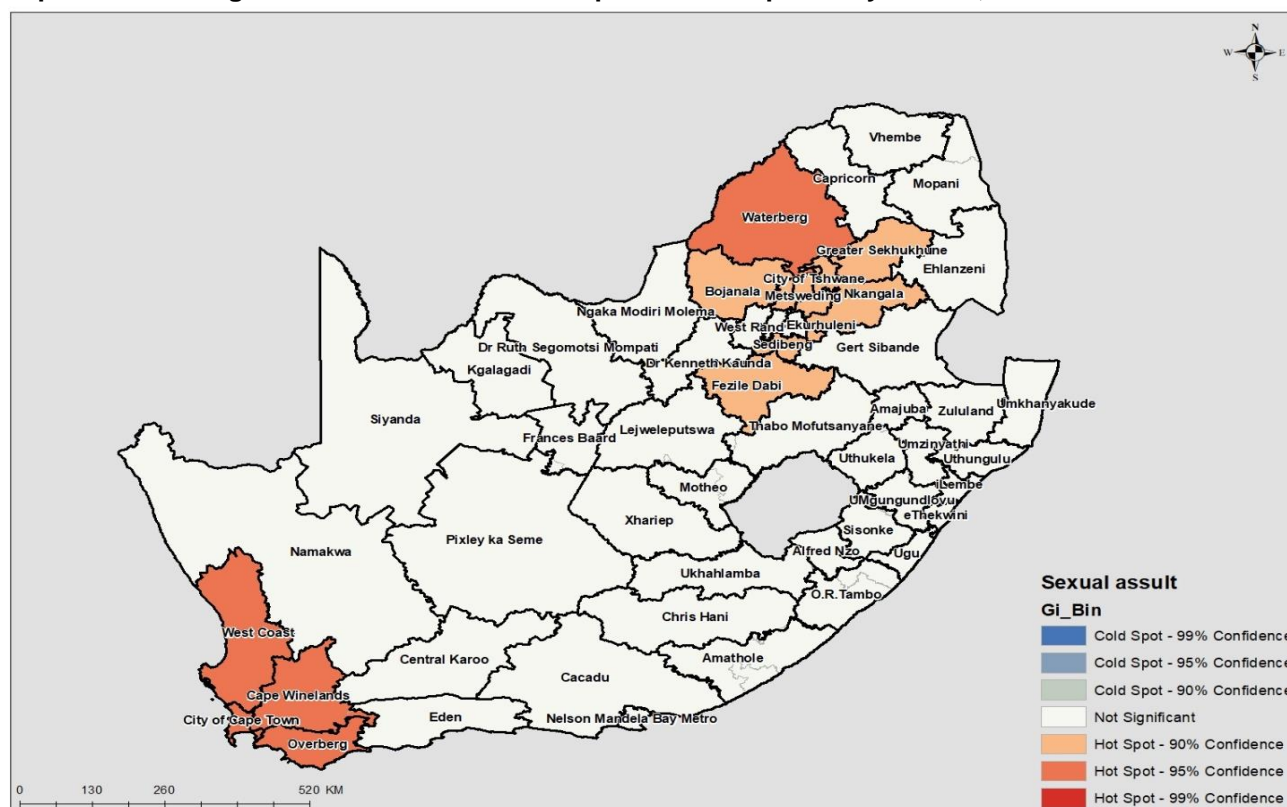
Source: SAPS 2021/22

Map 2.3 illustrates the percentage of rape cases reported to the police by district. A high percentage of reported rape cases was observed in Greater Sekhukhune. Additionally, Waterberg, Bojanala, and Nkangala ranked the second-highest districts in recording a high percentage of rape cases. While, Metsweding, West Rand, Sedibeng, Dr Kenneth Kaunda, and Fezile Dabi ranked the third-highest districts with a high percentage of reported rape cases to the police.

Figure 2.15: Volume of reported sexual assault to the police per 100 000 population, 2015/16–2019/20

Source: SAPS 2015/16-2019/20

Figure 2.15 presents a comparison of total cases of sexual assault reported to the police against cases registered for children aged 17 years and younger, in 2015/16–2019/20. The data shows an upward trend over time in the total number of sexual assault cases reported to the police. The volume of reported sexual assault cases were higher for children compared to the overall reported cases. The data also shows that 2017/18 had the highest number of sexual assaults reported cases to the police of children aged 0–17 years (27 per 100 000 population of children) which notably declined to 19 in 2019/20.

Map 2.4: Percentage of sexual assault cases reported to the police by district, SAPS 2021/22

Source: SAPS 2021/22

The above map illustrates the percentage of sexual assault cases reported to the police by districts. The findings indicate that the highest percentages of reported sexual assault incidents occurred in Waterberg, West Coast, Cape Winelands, City of Cape Town and Overberg. The second-highest percentages of reported sexual assaults to the police were observed in Greater Sekhukhune, City of Tshwane, Bojanala, Metsweding, Nkangala, Sedibeng, and Fezile Dabi.

2.6 Summary

Overall, rape and sexual assault have increased from 2015/16 to 2019/20, while assaults (common assault and assault with GBH) have decreased. Results showed that Gauteng recorded the highest percentages of common robbery reported cases to the police for children aged 17 years and younger in 2019/20. It was notable that assault with GBH, common assault, attempted murder and murder were most common in Western Cape between 2015/16 and 2019/20.

In addition, child trafficking for children aged 17 years and younger were prevalent in KwaZulu-Natal and Gauteng for the reference period while abduction was experienced more by children who were residing in Western Cape and North West. KwaZulu-Natal recorded the highest percentage of children aged 17 years and younger who were victims of rape, while sexual assault was most common in Western Cape.

Throughout the reference period, males aged 17 years and younger were mostly affected by assault with GBH, common assault, attempted murder and murder, while females aged 17 years and younger mostly experienced child trafficking, abduction, sexual assault, rape and attempted common robbery.

Chapter 3: Households with children aged 17 years and younger who experienced household crime

3.1 Introduction

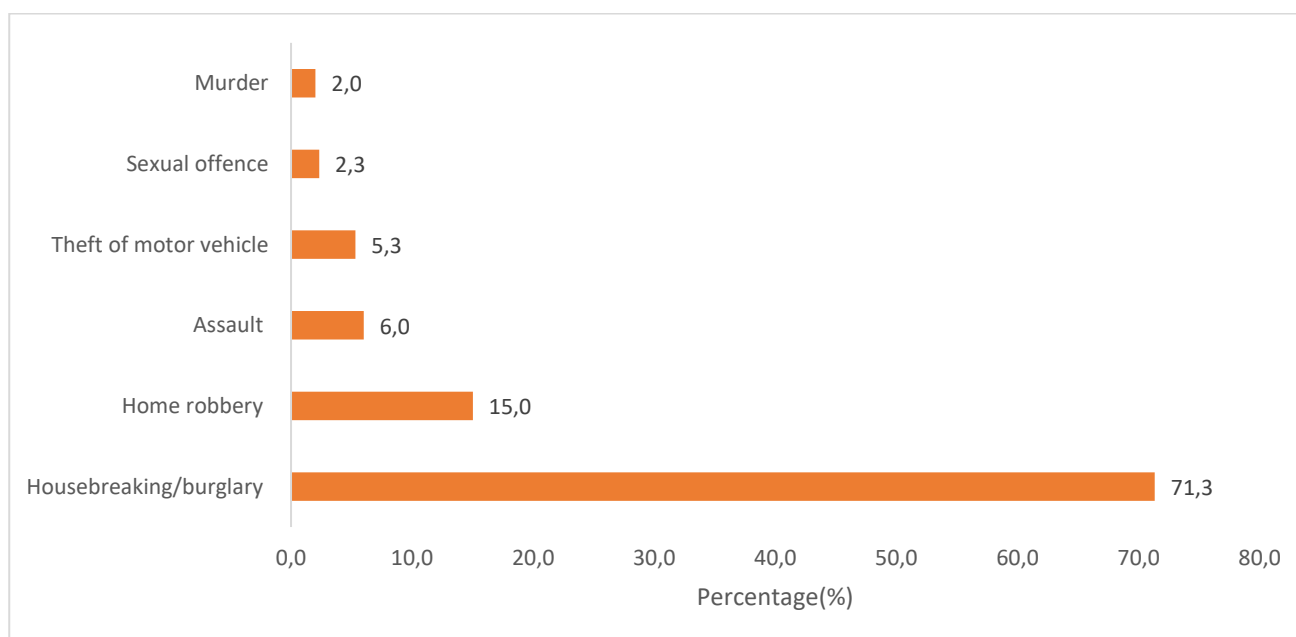
Crime, in many cases, has created an environment that is less appealing to children and everyone in general. Every day, children are exposed to crime in their homes, public places, and schools, which has long-term effects on their development. Apart from physical injuries, being exposed to crime at an early age may induce psychological issues such as feeling worthless, which can lead to undesirable behaviours such as having many partners, substance abuse, or becoming a criminal later in life.

Hsiao C, *et al* (2017), revealed that preventing children from experiencing violence, neglect, or observing family violence resulted in substantial declines in mental and physical health outcomes of the population. The study further indicated that if children are not exposed to family violence, interpersonal violence in the population might be decreased by 16,0%. If sexual violence against children is prevented, then drug abuse in the entire population could be reduced by 14,0%. As a result, preventing any unethical or criminal activities against children is critical if we are to have a better generation in the future.

For various reasons, not all crimes experienced or witnessed by children are always reported to the police. This chapter will examine the dynamics of crimes that children witness or encounter in their households, as well as whether or not these crimes are reported to the police and reasons for not reporting such crimes to the police using GPSJS data from Statistic South Africa.

Housebreaking in South Africa is driven by socio-economic variables such as poverty, inequality, substance abuse, and unemployment, along with intra and interpersonal factors such as lack of self-control, peer pressure, and greed (Fumba and Magadze, 2022). The study further found that low educational levels and skills contribute to unemployment, leading to housebreaking crimes.

Figure 3.1: Percentage distribution of households with children aged 17 years and younger who experienced a specific type of crime, GPSJS 2022/23



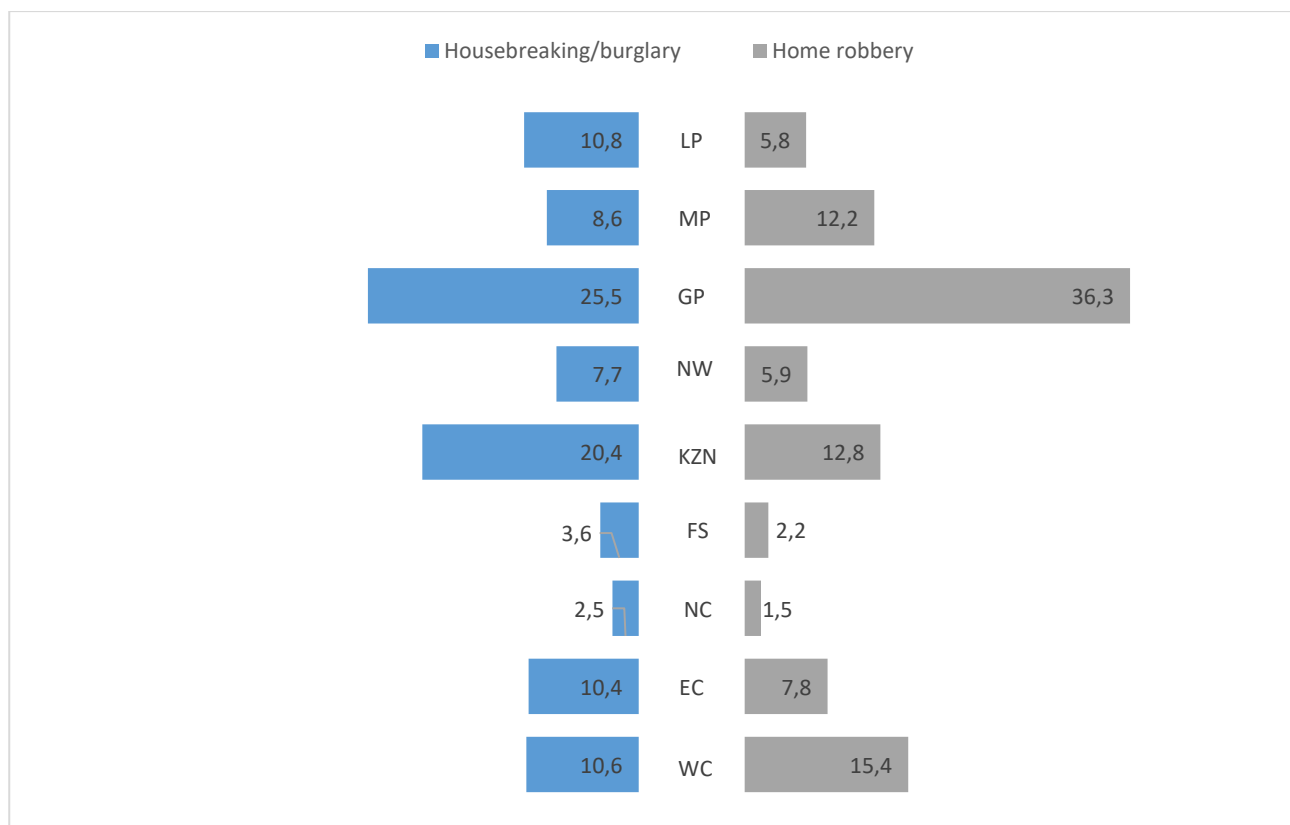
Source: GPSJS 2022/23

Reference period: in the past five years

Home robberies are crimes in which there is contact between the perpetrator and the victim. Housebreaking/burglary are crimes that are committed in the absence of any of the household members, hence occur without any contact between the victim and the perpetrator.

Figure 3.1 above indicates the percentage distribution of households with children aged 17 years and younger who experienced various crimes. A high percentage of households with children aged 17 years and younger experienced housebreaking/burglary (71,3%), followed by home robbery (15,0%) and assault (6,0%). Whilst, only 2,0% of households with children experienced murder.

Figure 3.2: Percentage distribution of households with children aged 17 years and younger who experienced housebreaking/burglary and home robbery by province, GPSJS 2022/23



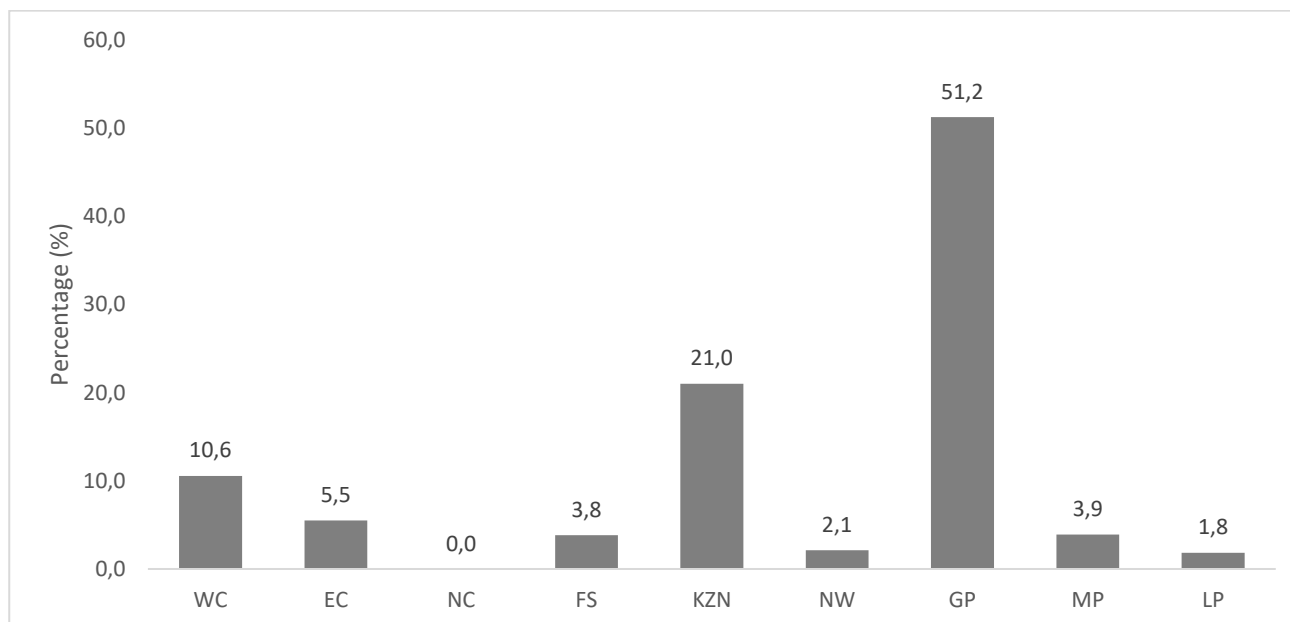
Source: GPSJS 2022/23

Reference period: in the past five years

The results above show that households with children aged 17 years and younger in Gauteng have experienced the highest percentage of home robbery (36,3%), followed by those in Western Cape (15,4%) and KwaZulu-Natal (12,8%). Households with children in the Northern Cape had the lowest percentage of home robbery (1,5%).

Among households with children aged 17 years and younger who experienced housebreaking/burglary, more than a quarter (25,5%) were found in Gauteng, followed by KwaZulu-Natal (20,4%) and Limpopo (10,8%). The lowest percentage of the households which experienced a similar type of crime were found in Northern Cape (2,5%).

Figure 3.3: Percentage distribution of households with children aged 17 years and younger who experienced theft of motor vehicle by province, GPSJS 2022/23

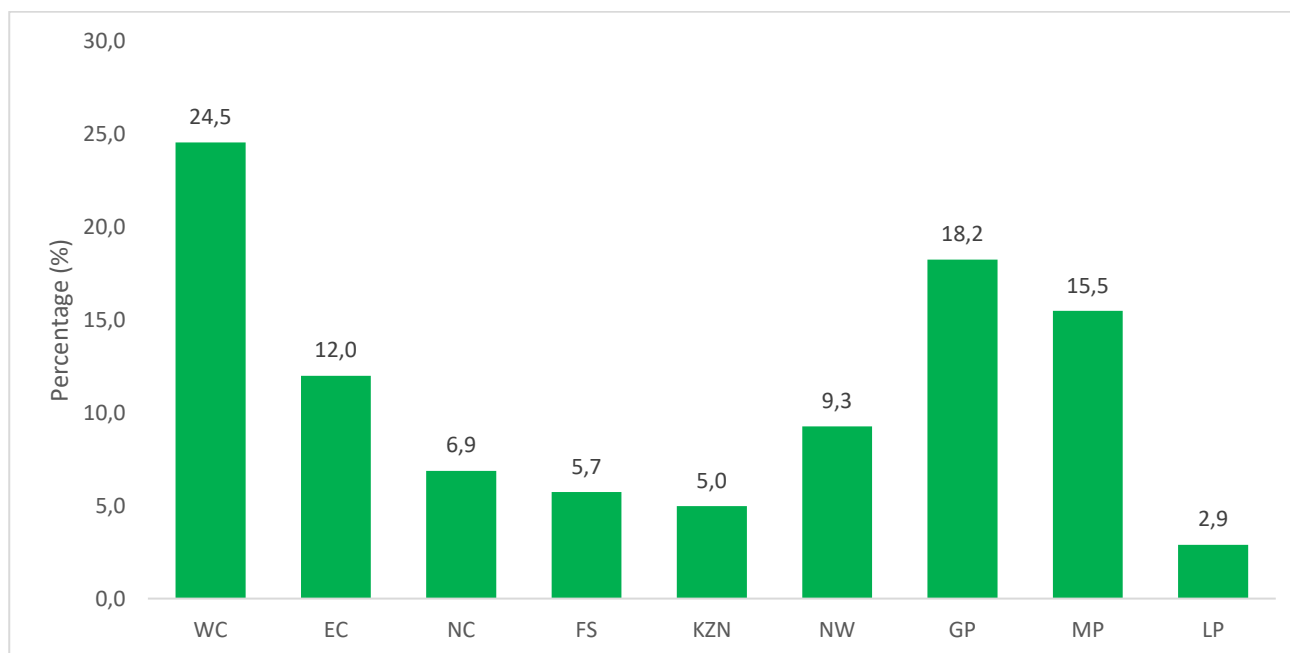


Source: GPSJS 2022/23

Reference period: in the past five years

Theft of motor vehicles is one of the most common crimes in South Africa, and it has a major negative effect on citizens' safety and the economy as a whole. Figure 3.3 presents the percentage distribution of households with children aged 17 years and younger that encountered theft of motor vehicles by province. Out of 89 315 households with children that experienced theft of motor vehicle, more than half (51,2%) were from Gauteng, whereas 21,0% were from KwaZulu-Natal, and 10,6% were from Western Cape. On the other hand, households with children in Limpopo had the lowest percentage of theft of motor vehicles relative to other provinces.

Figure 3.4: Percentage distribution of households with children aged 17 years and younger who experienced assault by province, GPSJS 2022/23

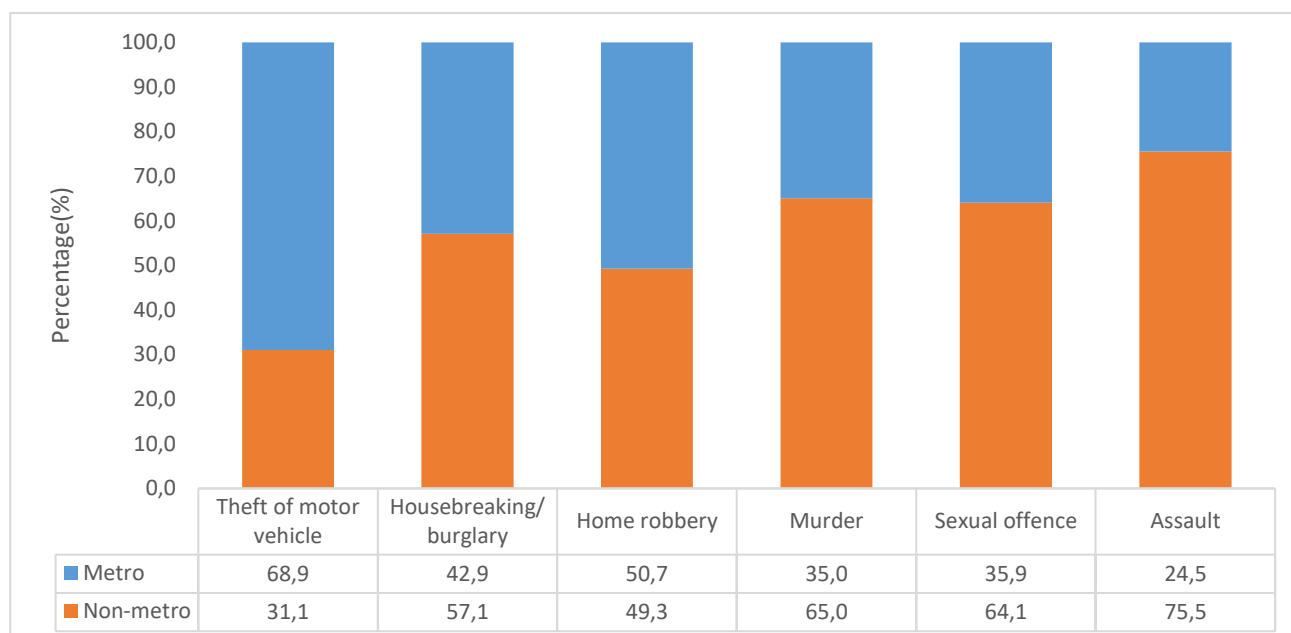


Source: GPSJS 2022/23

Reference period: in the past five years

Figure 3.4 displays that households with children aged 17 years and younger in the Western Cape encountered the highest incidents of assault (excl. sexual assault), followed by households with children in Gauteng and those in Mpumalanga relative to other provinces (24,5%, 18,2% and 15,5%, respectively). Data further shows that Limpopo encountered the lowest incidents of assaults (2,9%).

Figure 3.5: Percentage distribution of households with children aged 17 years and younger who experienced a specific type of crime by metropolitan status, GPSJS 2022/23

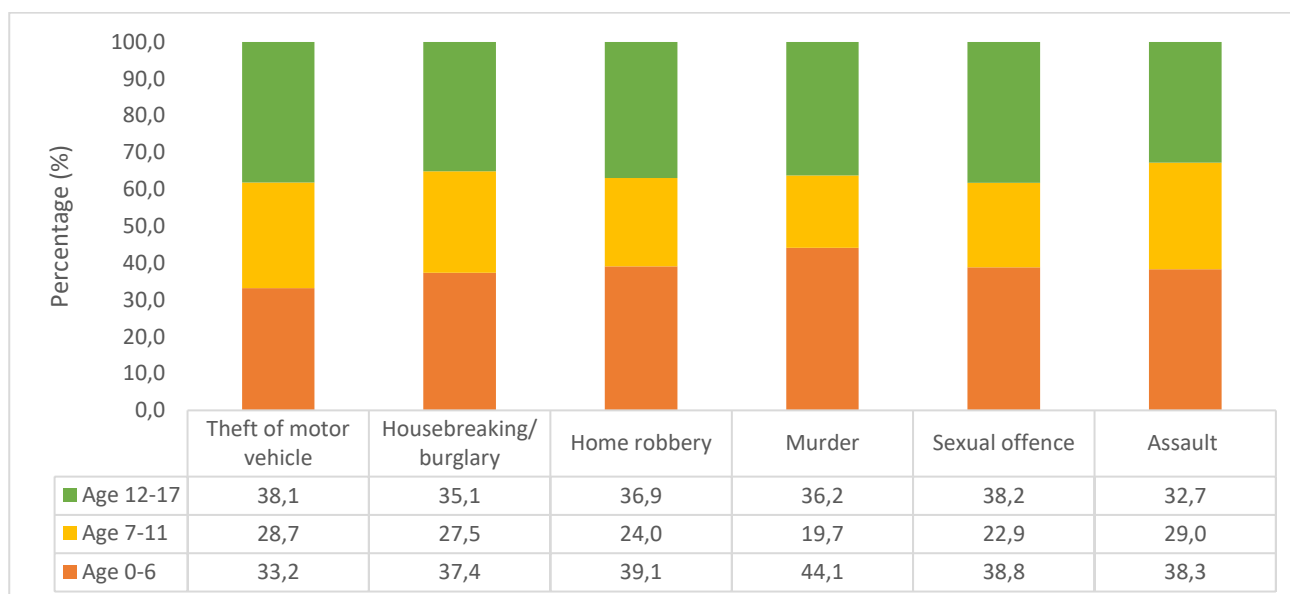


Source: GPSJS 2022/23

Reference period: in the past five years

The graph above illustrates the percentage distribution of households with children aged 17 years and younger who experienced certain crimes by metropolitan status. The data showed that households with children in non-metropolitan areas experienced crime more than those in metropolitan areas, with assault being the highest (75,5%), followed by murder (65,0%), sexual offence (64,1%) and housebreaking/burglary (57,1%). Households with children in metropolitan areas mostly experienced theft of motor vehicles and home robbery (68,9% and 50,7% respectively).

Figure 3.6: Percentage distribution of children aged 17 years and younger in the households who experienced some sort of crime by age, GPSJS 2022/23



Source: GPSJS 2022/23

Reference period: in the past five years

The graph above presents the percentage distribution of children aged 17 years and younger in the households who experienced some sort of crime by age. Data indicates that households comprised of children (0–6 years) experienced the highest percentage of murder (44,1%), home robbery (39,1%), sexual offence (38,8%), assault (38,3%), and housebreaking/burglary (37,4%) compared to households with children of other age groups. In addition, households comprised of adolescents (12–17 years) were more likely to be victims of theft of motor vehicles (38,1%) relative to households with children of other age groups (0–6 and 7–11 years).

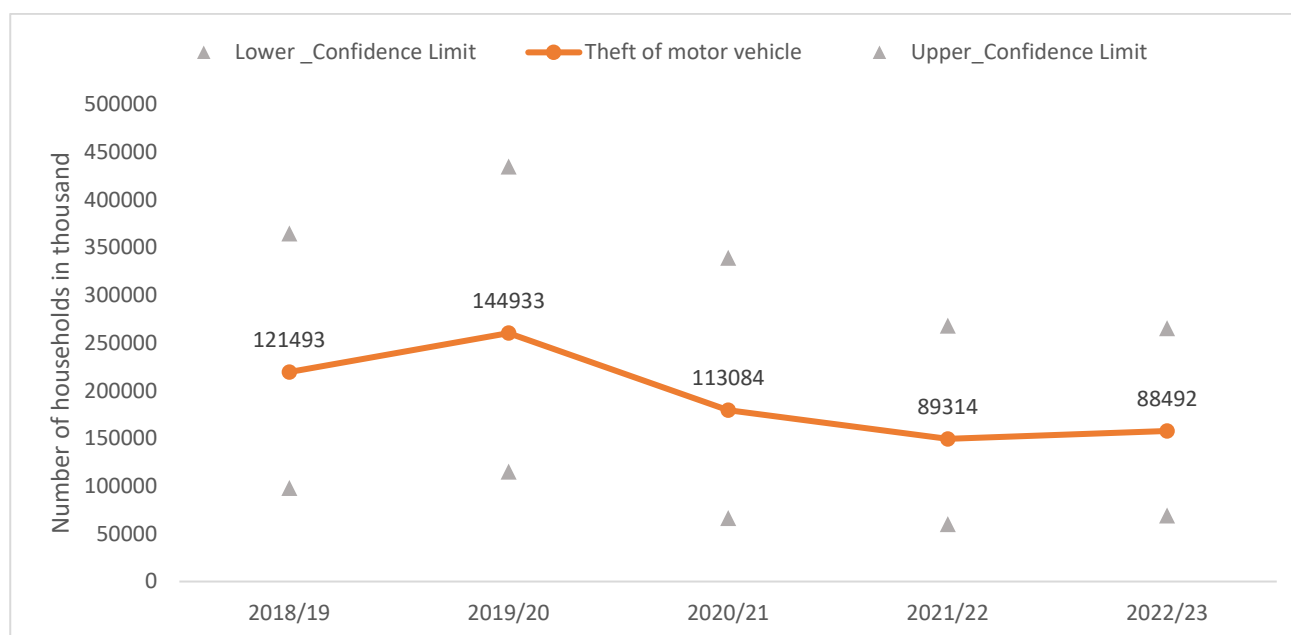
Figure 3.7: Percentage distribution of households with children aged 17 years and younger who experienced a specific type of crime by household composition, GPSJS 2022/23



Source: GPSJS 2022/23

Figure 3.7 above depicts the percentage distribution of households with children aged 17 years and younger who experienced certain crimes by household composition. According to the graph above, single-parent households with children had the highest percentage of murder (34,8%), whereas nuclear households encountered theft of motor vehicles (44,0%) more than other household compositions. Furthermore, extended households had a high percentage of sexual offences (63,6%), followed by assault (58,3%) and murder (54,9%). Data further shows that complex households with children are less likely to experience crimes presented above than any other household compositions.

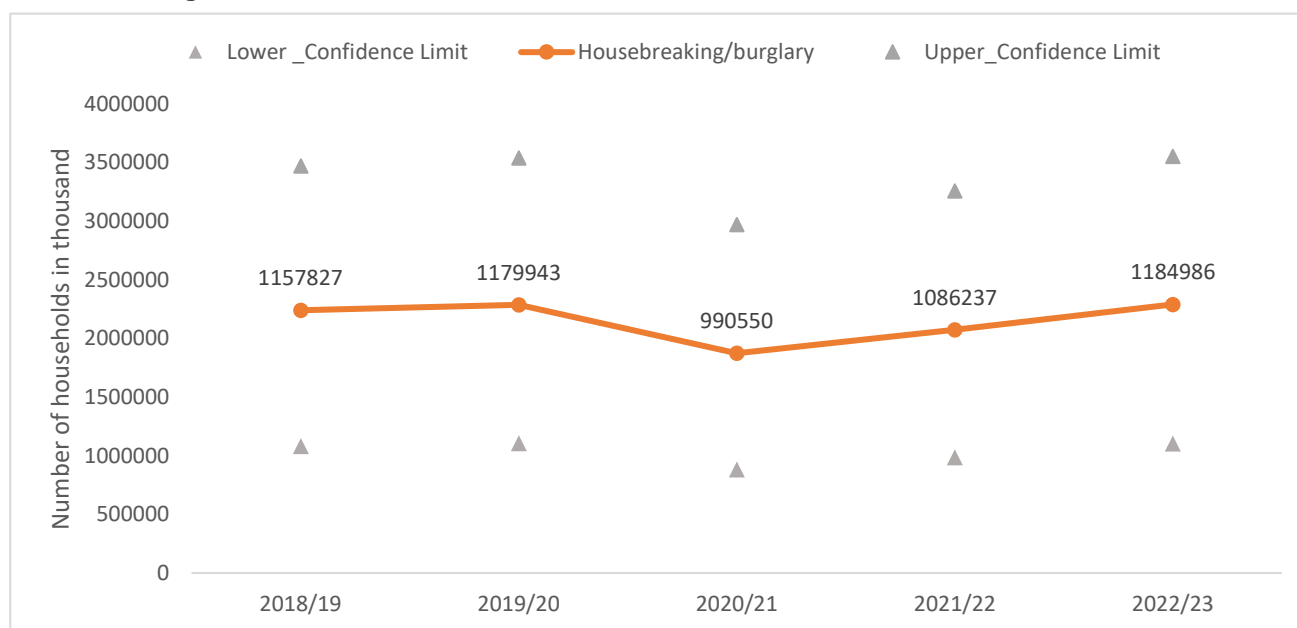
Figure 3.8: Number of households with children aged 17 years and younger who experienced theft of motor vehicle, GPSJS 2018/19–2022/23



Source: GPSJS 2018/19–2022/23

The graph above, illustrates trends of theft of motor vehicles among households with children aged 17 years and younger over a five-year period. During this timeframe, there was an overall decline in the number of households with children who experienced theft of motor vehicles. Between 2018/19 and 2019/20, this crime increased from 121 493 to 144 933; however, the rise was not statistically significant. Subsequently, there was a sharp decrease to 88 492 in 2022/23, though this decline was also not statistically significant.

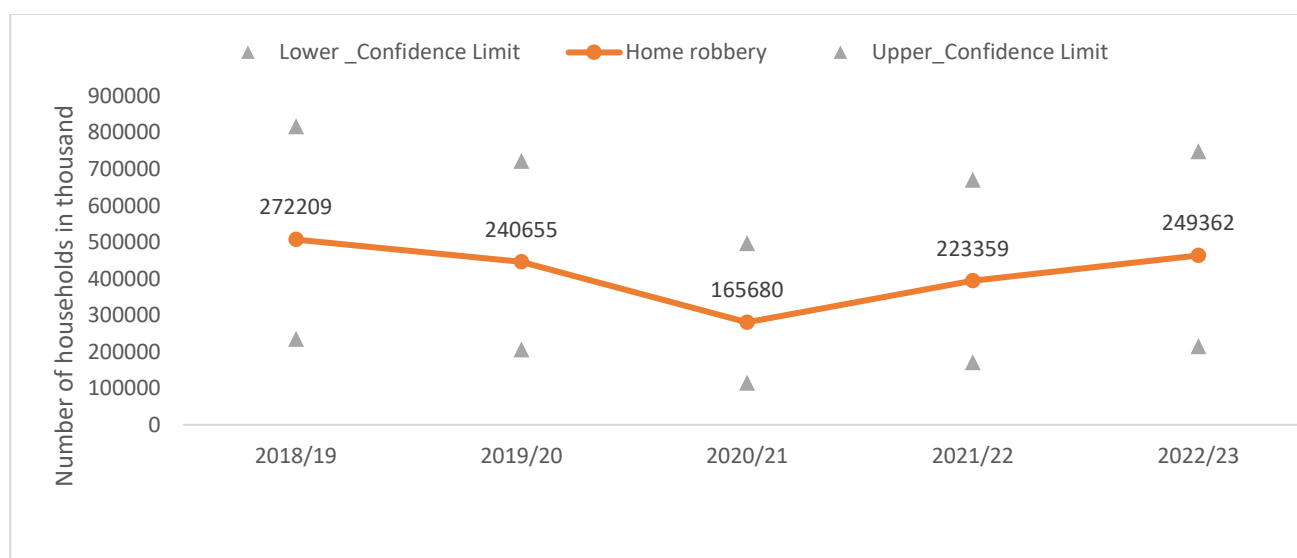
Figure 3.9: Number of households with children aged 17 years and younger who experienced housebreaking, GPSJS 2018/19–2022/23



Source: GPSJS 2018/19–2022/23

Figure 3.9 depicts that households with children aged 17 years and younger experienced the highest number of housebreakings in 2019/20, with a total of 1 179 943 incidents. This number notably decreased in 2020/21 to 990 550, however, the decrease was not considered statistically significant. Subsequently, there was an increase of 1 184 986 in 2022/23, and again, this rise was not statistically significant.

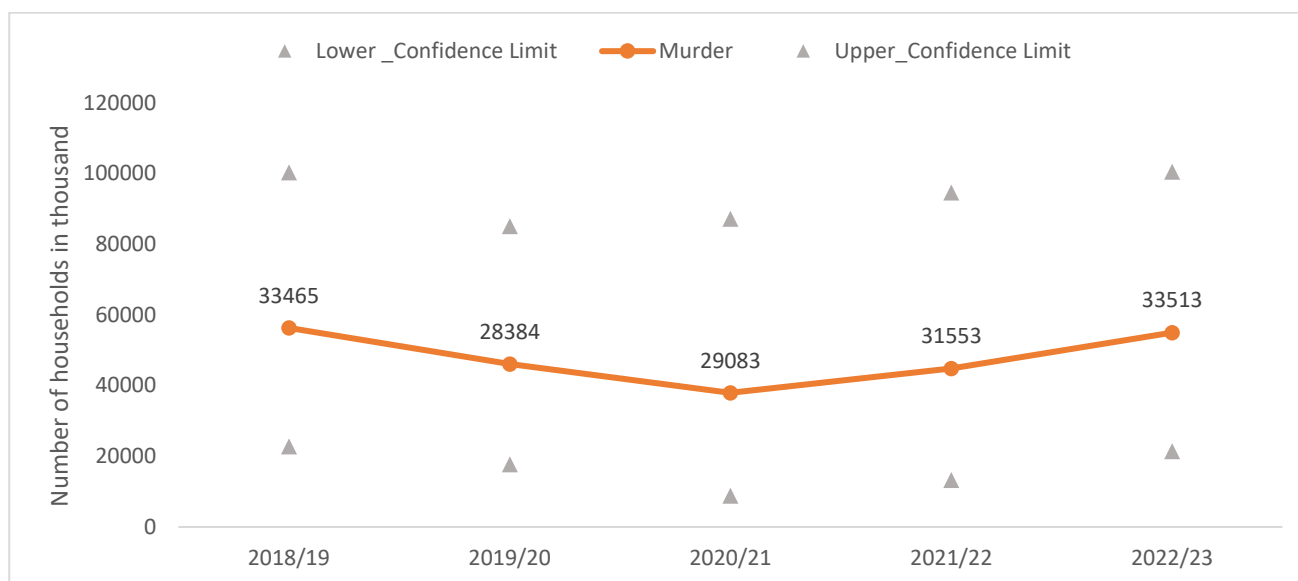
Figure 3.10: Number of households with children aged 17 years and younger who experienced home robbery, GPSJS 2018/19–2022/23



Source: GPSJS 2018/19–2022/23

The number of households with children who experienced home robbery showed a significant decline from 272 209 to 165 680 between 2018/19 and 2020/21. Despite the drastically decrease, the change was not statistically significant. Furthermore, there was an increase in the number of households with children who experienced home robbery from 165 680 in 2020/21 to 249 362 in 2022/23. However, this increase was also considered not statistically significant.

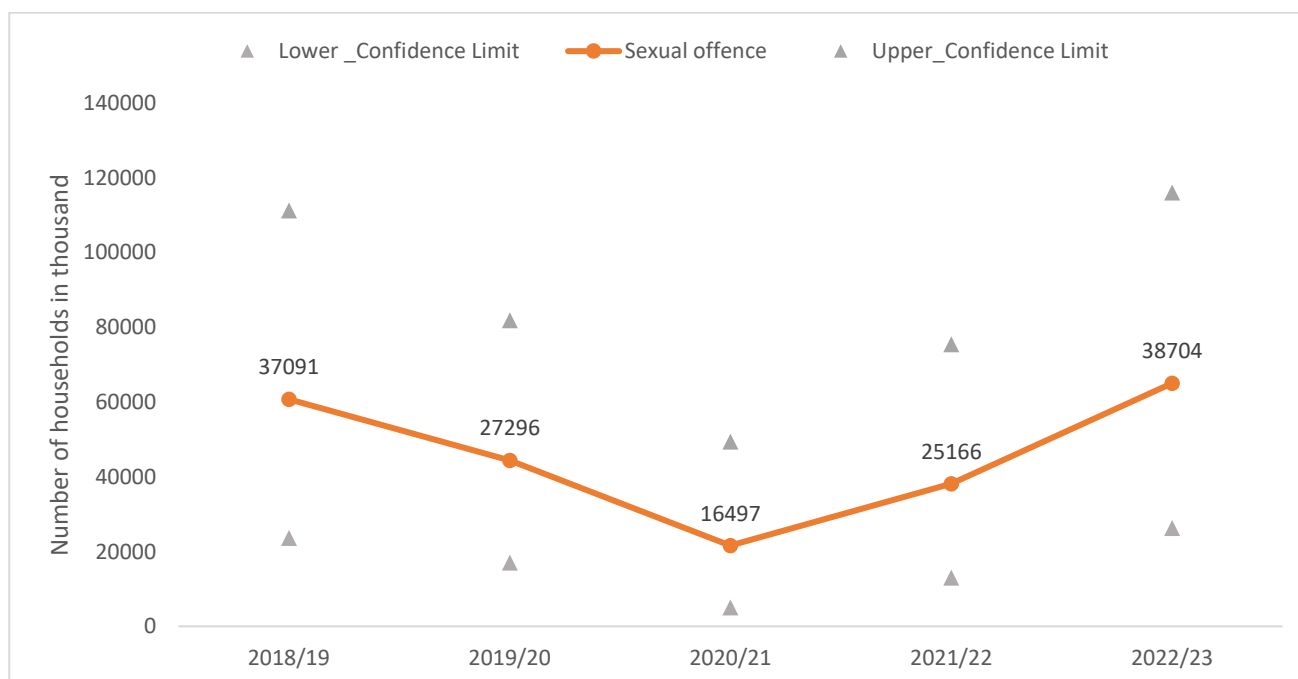
Figure 3.11: Number of households with children aged 17 years and younger who experienced murder, GPSJS 2018/19–2022/23



Source: GPSJS 2018/19–2022/23

The number of households with children who experienced murder decreased from 33 465 in 2018/19 to 29 083 in 2020/21, although this decline was not statistically significant. However, between 2020/21 and 2022/23, the number increased to 33 513, with this change also not being statistically significant.

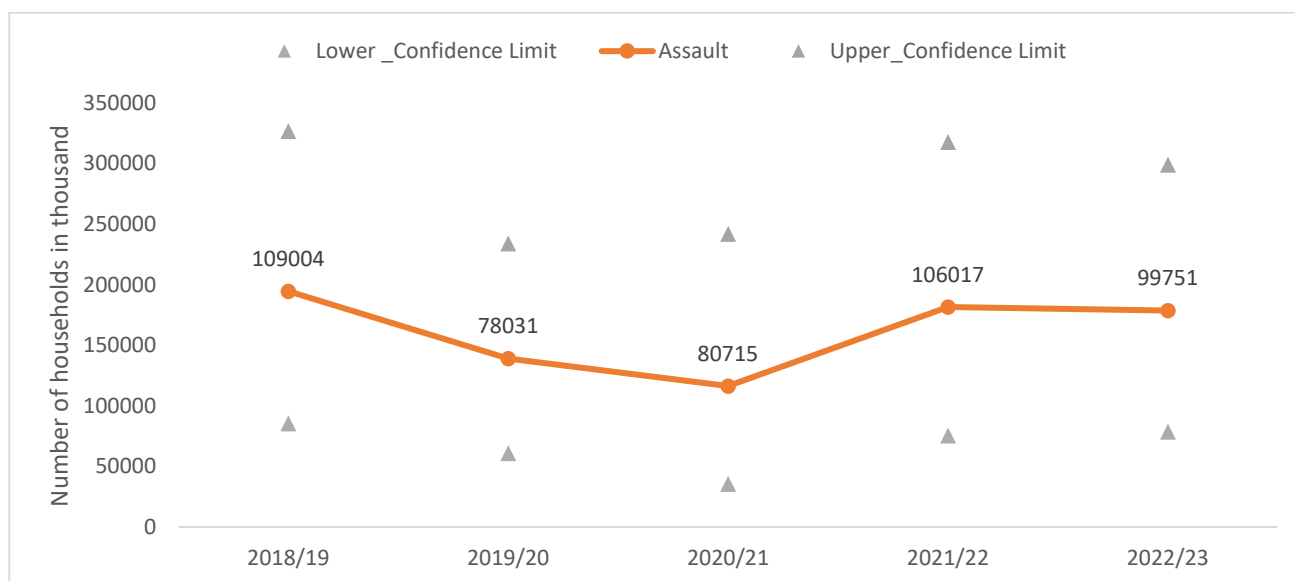
Figure 3.12: Number of households with children aged 17 years and younger who experienced sexual offence, GPSJS 2018/19–2022/23



Source: GPSJS 2018/19–2022/23

Figure 3.12 illustrates a decline in the number of sexual offenses among households with children aged 17 years and younger, from 37 091 in 2018/19 to 16 497 in 2020/21. However, this decrease was not found to be statistically significant. Subsequently, the figure shows an increase to 38 704 in 2022/23, and the change was not statistically significant.

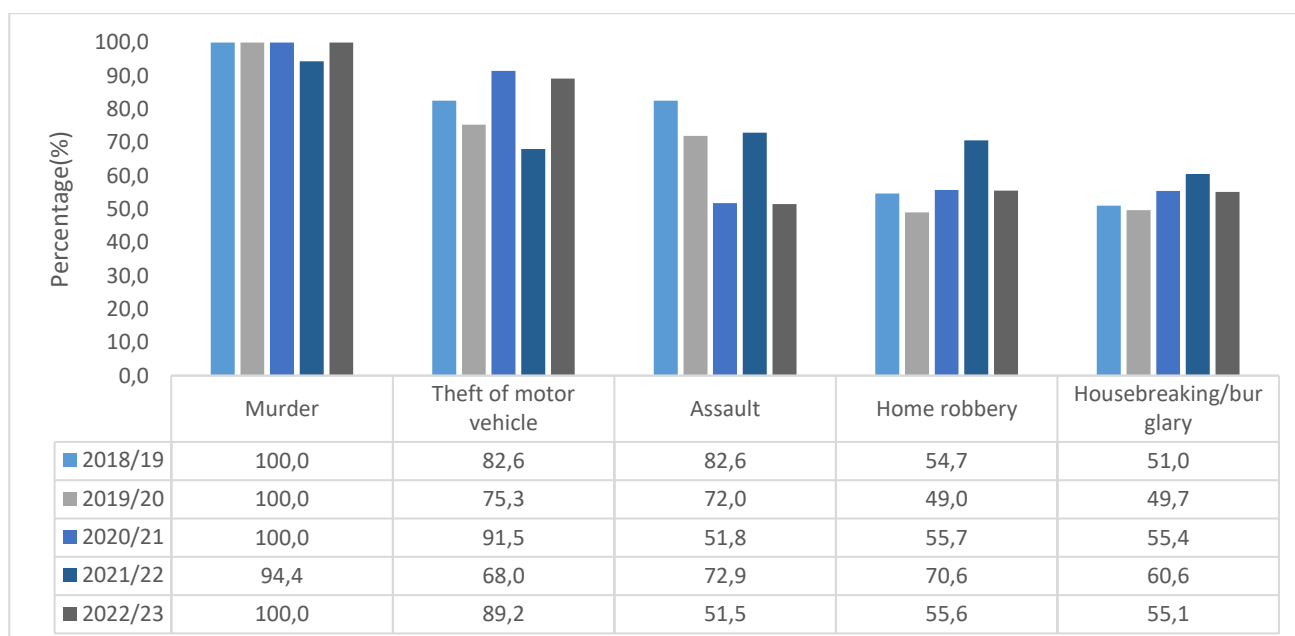
Figure 3.13: Number of households with children aged 17 years and younger who experienced assault, GPSJS 2018/19–2022/23



Source: GPSJS 2018/19–2022/23

Results above indicate that the number of households with children who experienced assault dropped sharply between 2018/19 and 2020/21, from 109 004 to 80 715; however, the decrease was not statistically significant. Subsequently, the number of households with children who experienced assault increased to 106 017 in 2021/22, and this increase was not statistically significant. It then slightly decreased to 99 751 in 2022/23, however this decrease was also not statistically significant.

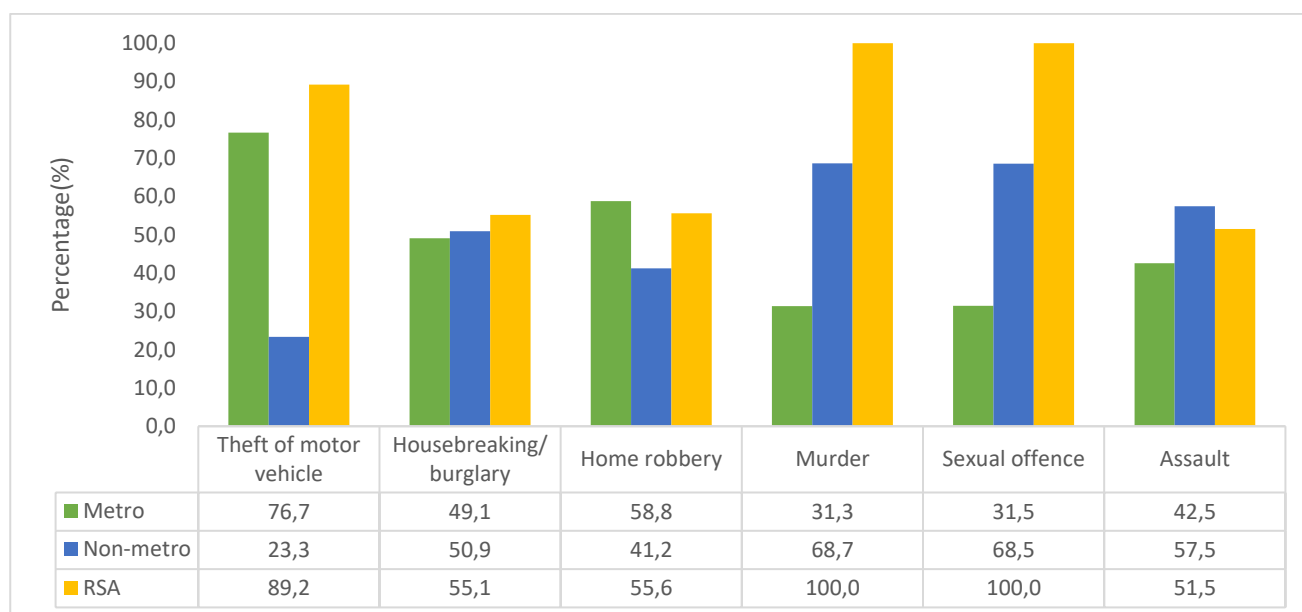
Figure 3.14: Percentage distribution of households with children aged 17 years and younger who experienced specific types of crime and reported cases to the police, GPSJS 2018/19–2022/23



Source: GPSJS 2018/19–2022/23

Figure 3.14 shows the percentage distribution of households with children aged 17 years and younger who suffered specific crimes and reported them to the police. The most reported crime to the police was murder, accounting for 100% for all years presented above, except for 2021/22 recording 94,4%. Furthermore, theft of a motor vehicle was predominantly reported in 2020/21. However, assault, home robbery, and housebreaking/burglary had high percentages of reported incidents to the police in 2021/22 (72,9%, 70,6%, and 60,6%, respectively).

Figure 3.15: Percentage distribution of households with children aged 17 years and younger who experienced specific types of crime and reported those cases to the police by metropolitan status, GPSJS 2022/23

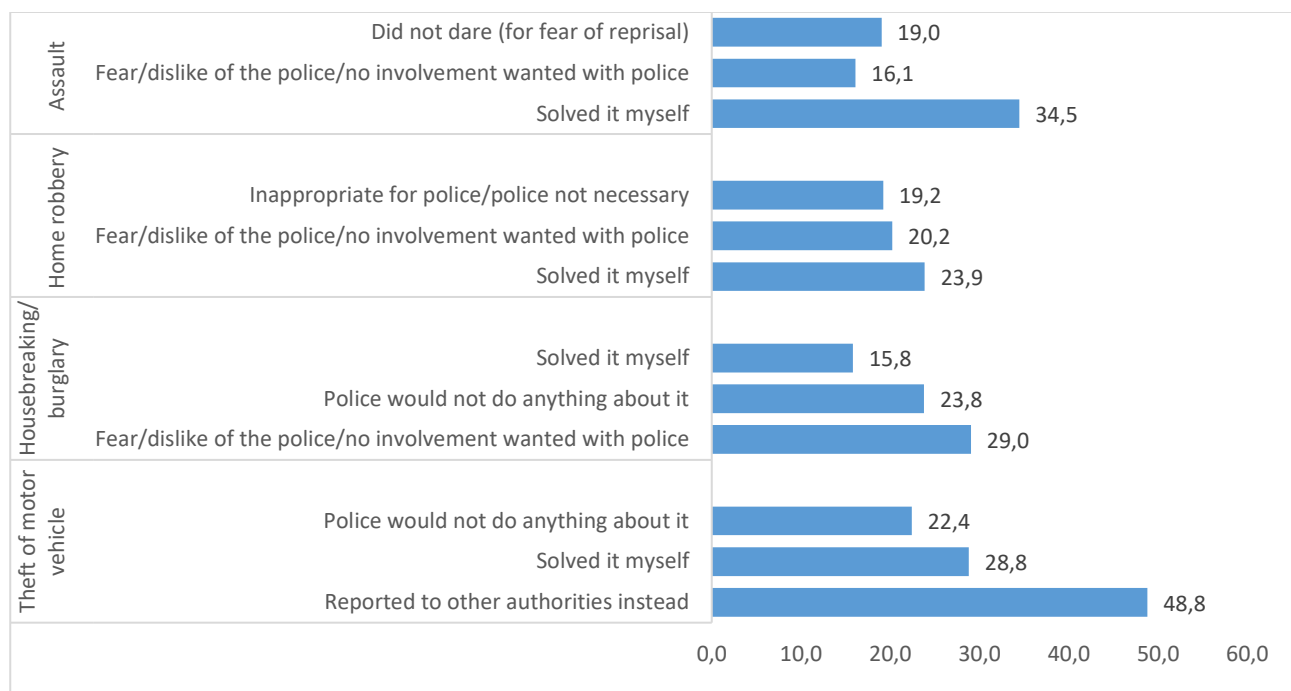


Source: GPSJS 2022/23

Reference period: in the past five years

The graph above illustrates the percentage distribution of households with children aged 17 years and younger who experienced certain crimes and reported them to the police by metropolitan areas. According to data shown above, households with children in non-metropolitan areas were more likely to report murder, sexual offence, assault and housebreaking/burglary (68,7%, 68,5%, 57,5% and 50,9% respectively) to the police as compared to those households with children in the metropolitan areas. However, households with children in metropolitan areas were more likely to report theft of motor vehicle and home robbery cases to the police relative to households in non-metropolitan areas.

Figure 3.16: Percentage distribution of households with children aged 17 years and younger who experienced certain crimes in the past 5 years and top 3 reasons for not reporting it to the police, GPSJS 2022/23



Source: GPSJS 2022/23

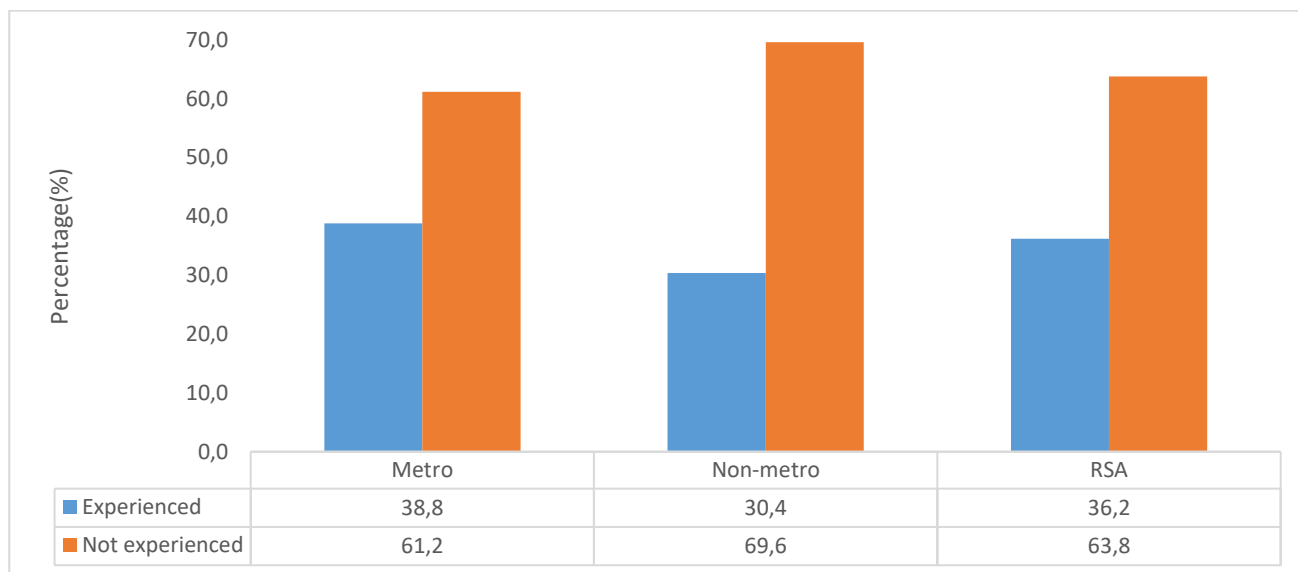
Note: Murder and sexual offence were excluded due to insufficient data

The figure above depicts households with children aged 17 years and under who experienced specific crimes and the top three reasons why they did not report it to the police. According to data presented above, approximately 49,0% of the households with children reported theft of motor vehicles incident(s) to other authorities instead, whereas 28,8% solved the cases themselves and 22,4% stated that they did not report the incident(s) because they think police would not do anything about it.

Among households with children who experienced housebreaking, 29,0% did not report it to the police due to fear/dislike of the police/no involvement wanted with police, followed by 23,8% of the households with children who felt that police would not do anything about it, and around 16,0% of the households with children who solved housebreaking/burglary by themselves.

In terms of home robbery (contact between perpetrator and victims), a higher percentage was observed for those who solved home robbery by themselves, followed by those households with children who stated that they did not report the incidents due to fear/dislike of the police/no involvement wanted with police and other households indicated that it was inappropriate for police/police not necessary (23,9%, 20,2% and 19,2% respectively). Similar patterns were observed for households with children aged 17 years and younger who encountered assault.

Figure 3.17: Percentage distribution of households with children aged 17 years and younger who experienced theft of motor vehicle in the past 12 months by metropolitan status, GPSJS 2022/23

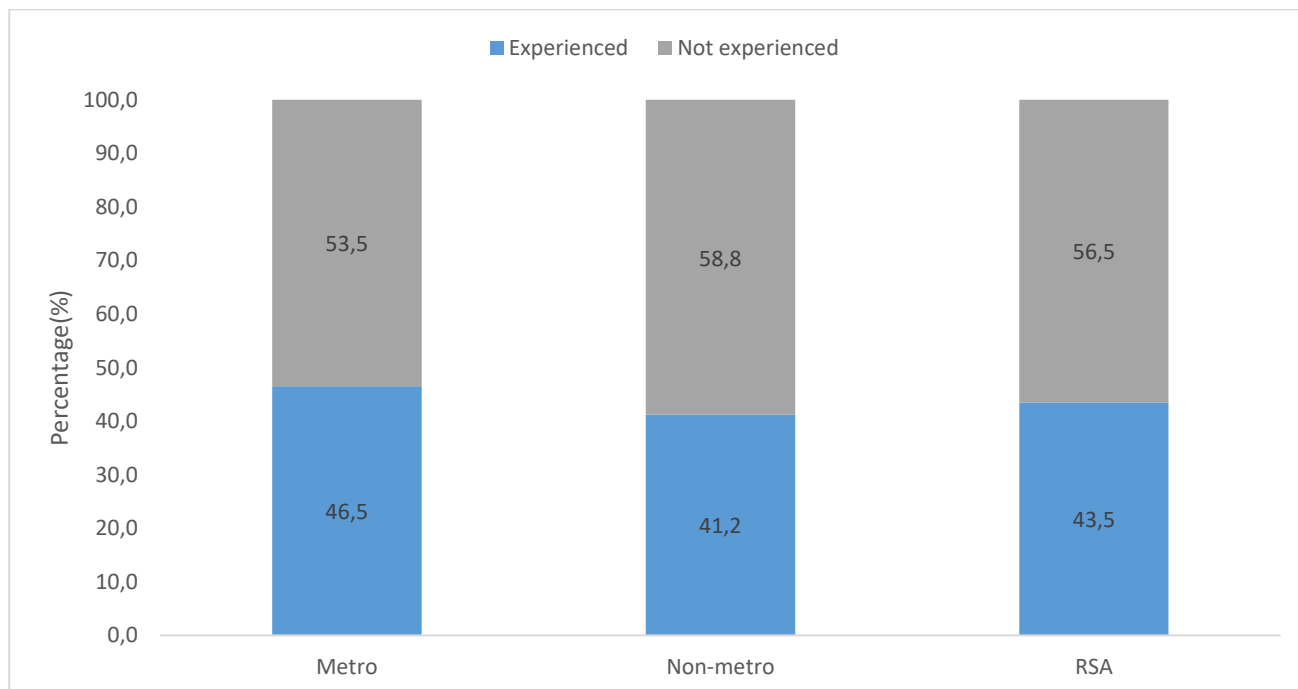


Source: GPSJS 2022/23

Reference period: in the past 12 months

Figure 3.17 shows the percentage distribution of households with children aged 17 years and younger who experienced theft of motor vehicles in the past 12 months by metropolitan status. Nationally, 36,2% of the households with children reported that they experienced theft of motor vehicle. Furthermore, the results demonstrate that theft of motor vehicles is most prevalent in households with children in metropolitan areas, accounting for 38,8% of all occurrences they have encountered.

Figure 3.18: Percentage distribution of households with children aged 17 years and younger who experienced housebreaking/burglary in the past 12 months by metropolitan status, GPSJS 2022/23

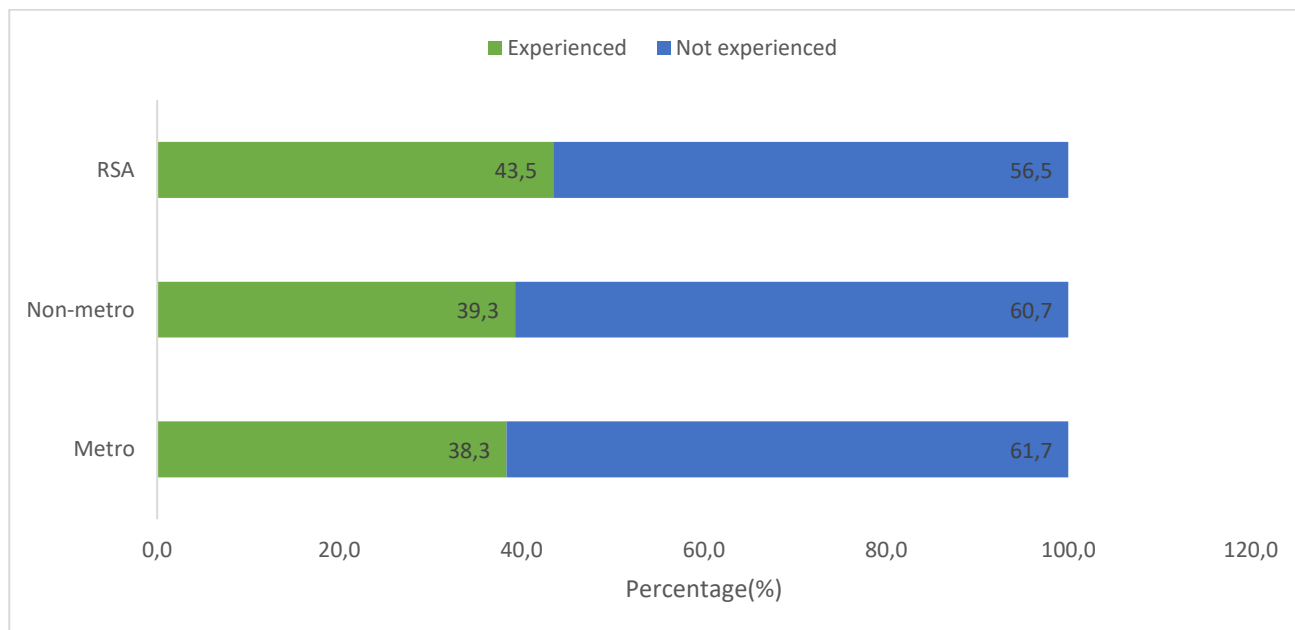


Source: GPSJS 2022/23

Reference period: in the past 12 months

Overall, the graph above displays that in the past 12 months, close to 44,0% of households with children aged 17 years and younger suffered from housebreaking/burglary. The highest percentage of households with children who experienced housebreaking/burglary was observed in the metropolitan areas (46,5%).

Figure 3.19: Percentage distribution of households with children aged 17 years and younger who experienced home robbery in the past 12 months by metropolitan status, GPSJS 2022/23

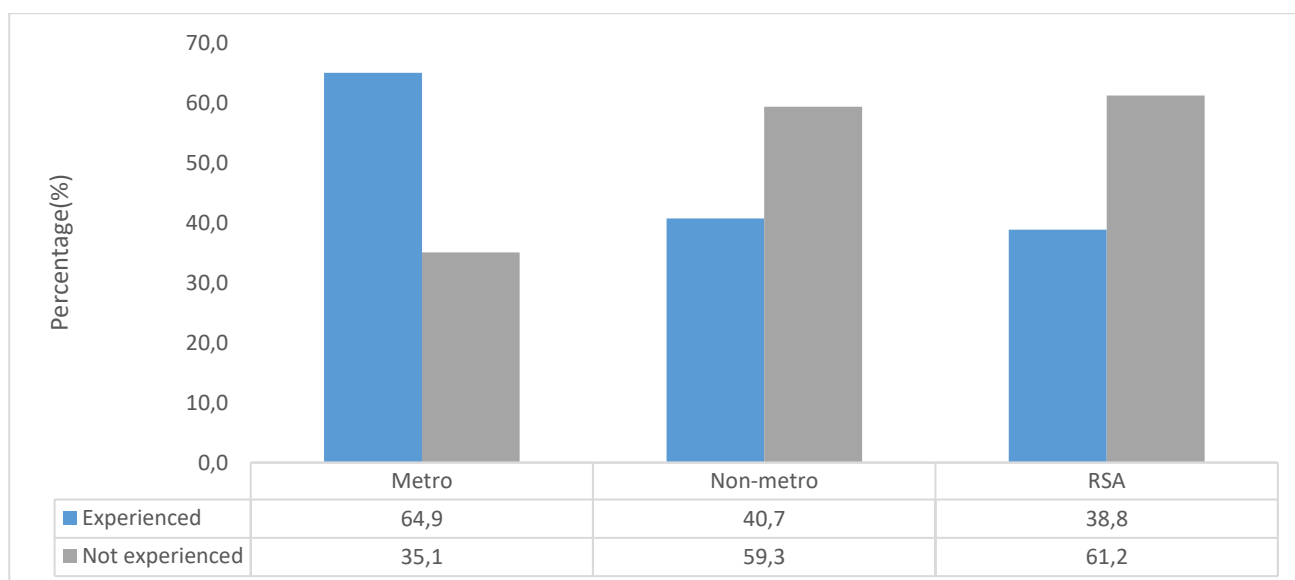


Source: GPSJS 2022/23

Reference period: in the past 12 months

Home robbery is one of the most terrifying crimes since it occurs when people are at home and can inflict emotional distress. According to the results above, 39,3% of households with children in non-metropolitan areas encountered home robbery 12 months prior. Nationally, around 44,0% of households with children aged 17 years and younger experienced home robbery.

Figure 3.20: Percentage distribution of households with children aged 17 years and younger who experienced assault in the past 12 months by metropolitan status, GPSJS 2022/23

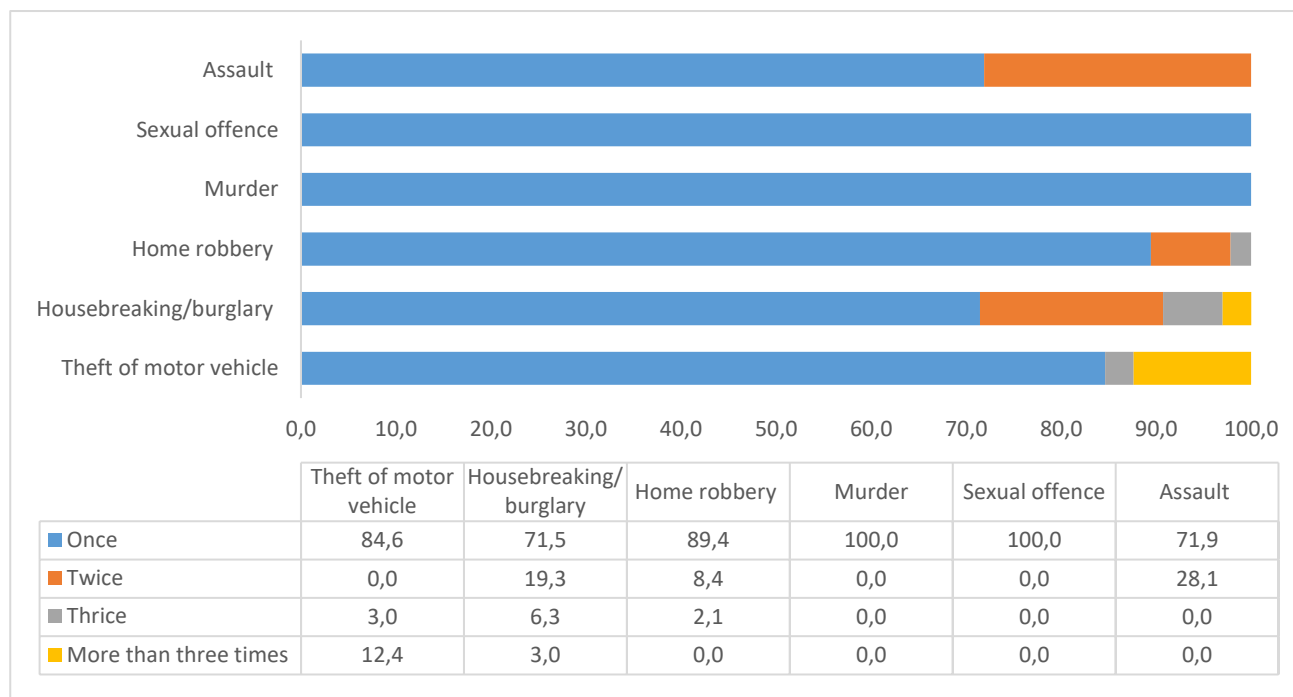


Source: GPSJS 2022/23

Reference period: in the past 12 months

Assault occurs when any deliberate and undesired physical force is used against a victim. Data reveal that approximately 39,0% of South African households with children aged 17 years and younger had been assaulted in the previous year. In addition, close to 65,0% of households with children in metropolitan areas suffered from assault.

Figure 3.21: Number of times a household with children aged 17 years and younger experienced household crime in the past 12 months, GPSJS 2022/23



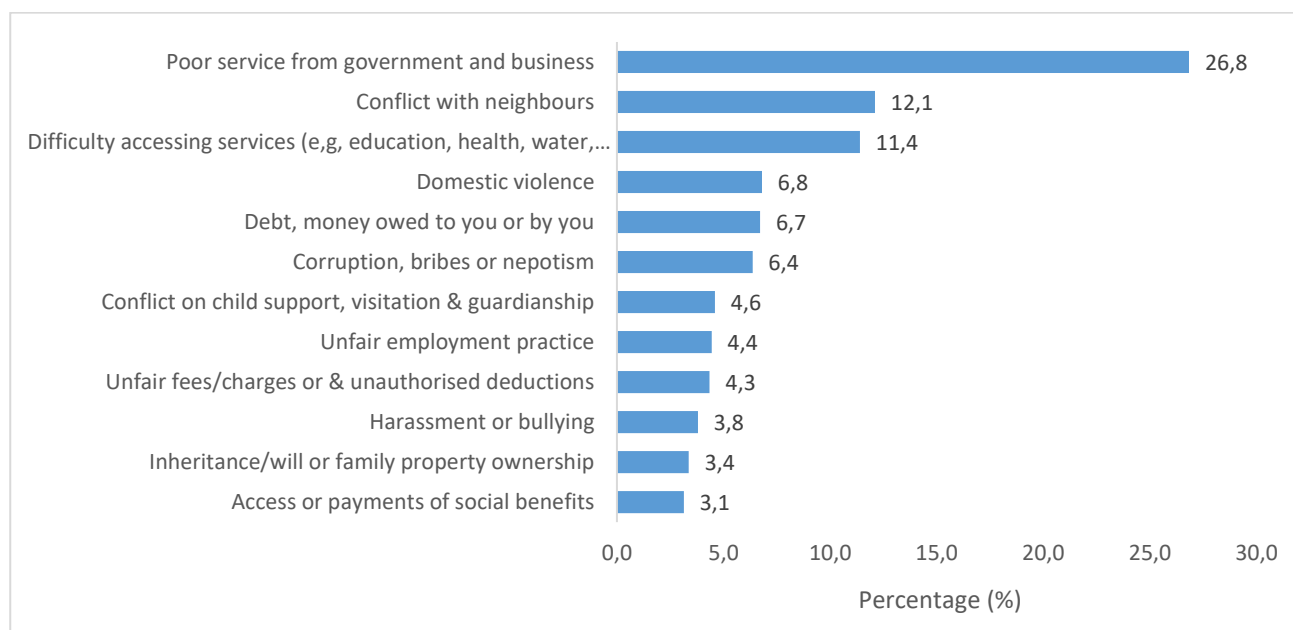
Source: GPSJS 2022/23

Reference period: in the past 12 months

The graph above, depicts that households with children aged 17 years and younger experienced murder and sexual offence once. Additionally, 89,4% of the households with children experienced home robbery once, while 8,4% of the households encountered it twice and 2,1% experienced it three times. In relation to theft of motor vehicles, close to 85,0% of the households with children experienced it once, 3,0% encountered it thrice and 12,4% experienced it more than three times.

The graph also suggested that the majority of households with children experienced housebreaking/burglary once (71,5%), followed by 19,3% who experienced it twice, and 6,3% who experienced it three times. Furthermore, in terms of assault, almost 72,0% of households experienced housebreaking once and just 28,1% experienced it twice.

Figure 3.22: Percentage distribution of problems or disputes experienced by households with children aged 17 years and younger in the past two years, GPSJS 2021/22

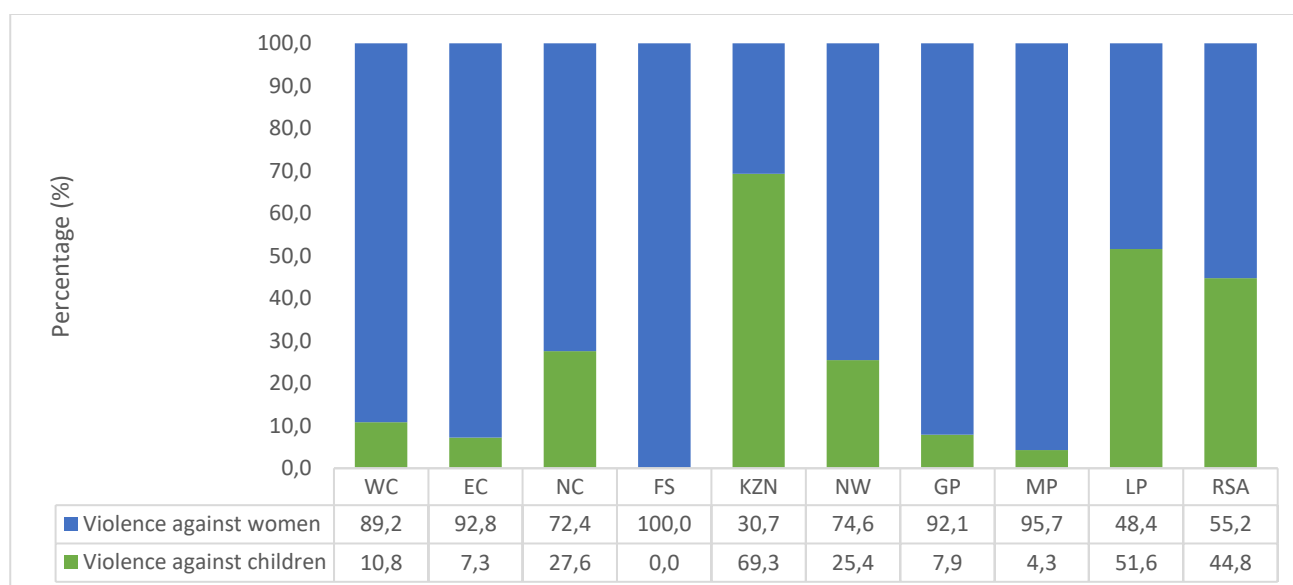


Source: GPSJS 2021/22

Reference period: in the past two years

The figure above displays households with children aged 17 and younger who experienced disputes or problems in the past two years. Out of 7 803 940 households with children that experienced disputes or problems in the past two years, 26,8% of households with children experienced poor service from the government and businesses. The second dispute or problem that households with children encountered in the past two years was conflicts with neighbours (12,1%) and difficulty accessing services such as education, health, and water (11,4%). Data additionally reveals that access or payment of social benefits was the least of their problems (3,1%).

Figure 3.23: Percentage distribution of households with children aged 17 years and younger who experienced domestic violence dispute/problem in the past two years by province, GPSJS 2021/22

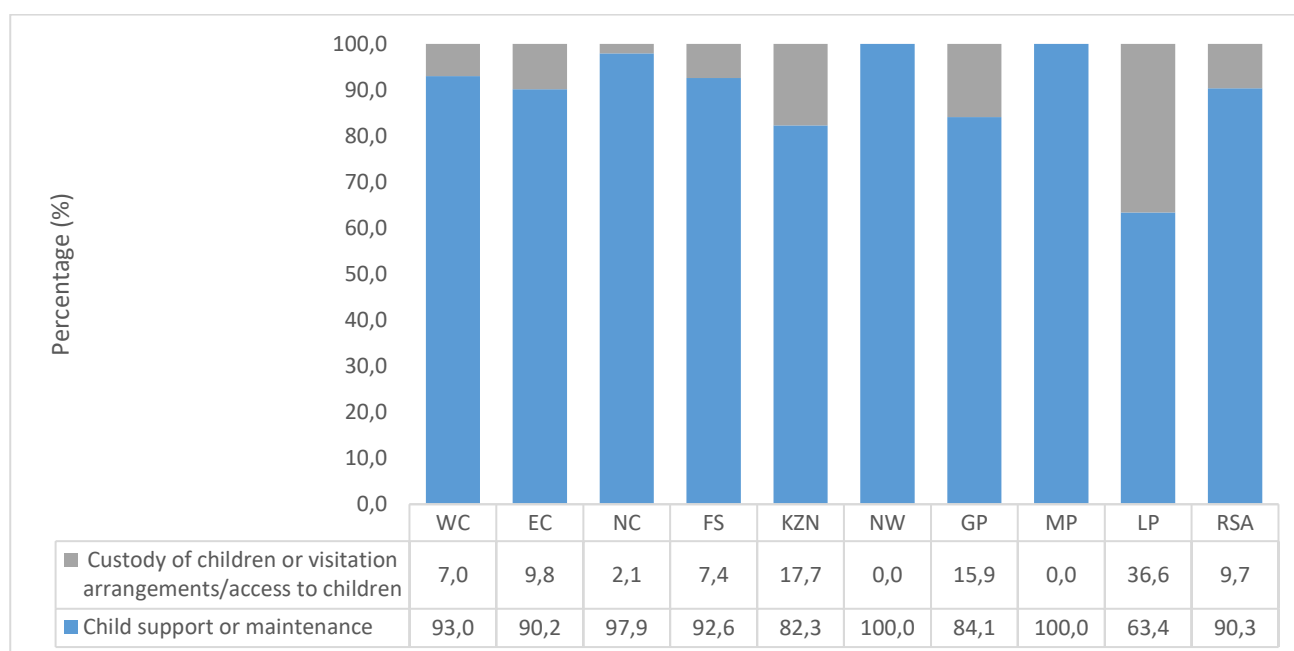


Source: GPSJS 2021/22

Reference period: in the past two years

Figure 3.23 shows percentage distribution of households with children aged 17 years and younger who experienced domestic violence in the past two years. Overall, 55,2% of households with children encountered violence against women, whereas 44,8% experienced violence against children. The results further indicate that majority of the households with children who suffered violence against women were from Free State, whereas about 70,0% of the households in Kwazulu-Natal experienced violence against children.

Figure 3.24: Percentage distribution of households with children aged 17 years and younger who experienced conflict on child support, visitation and guardianship dispute/problems in the past two years by province, GPSJS 2021/22

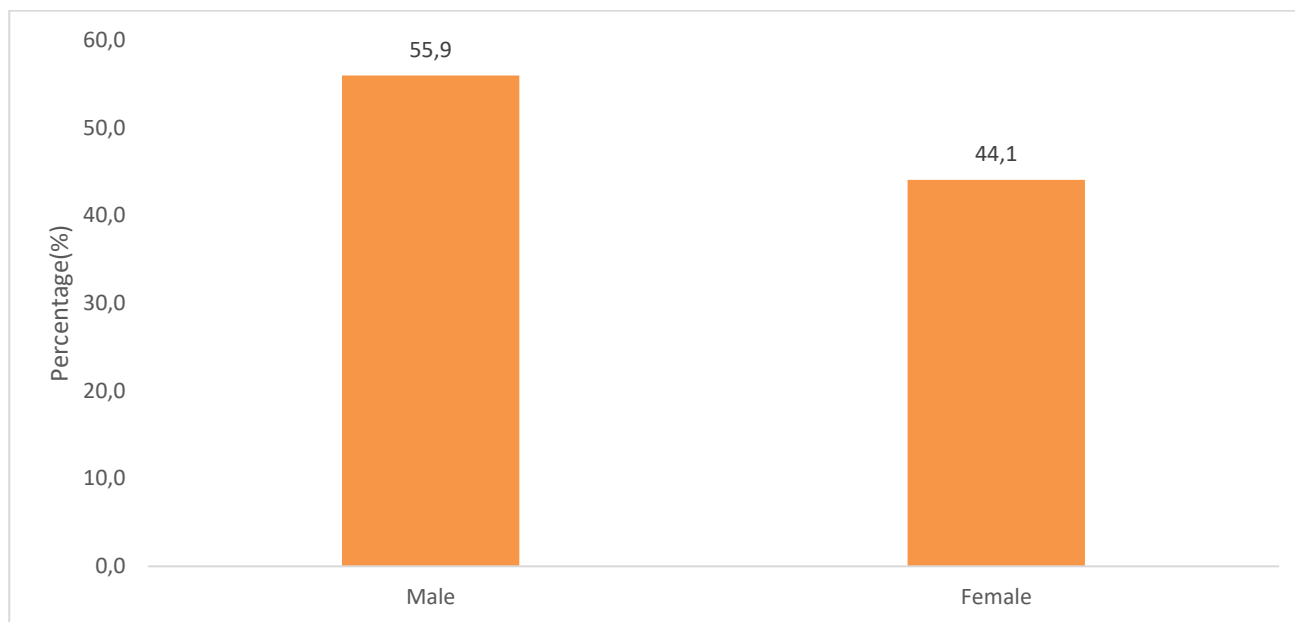


Source: GPSJS 2021/22

Reference period: in the past two years

The above graph shows that the majority of the households with children aged 17 years and younger in South Africa experienced child support or maintenance disputes more than custody of children or visitation arrangements/access to children (90,3% and 9,7% respectively). Additionally, households with children in North West and Mpumalanga had the highest percentages of disputes related to child support or maintenance while disputes related to custody of children or visitation arrangements/access to children was high in Limpopo (36,6%).

Figure 3.25: Members of households with children aged 17 years and younger who experienced assault by sex, 2022/2023

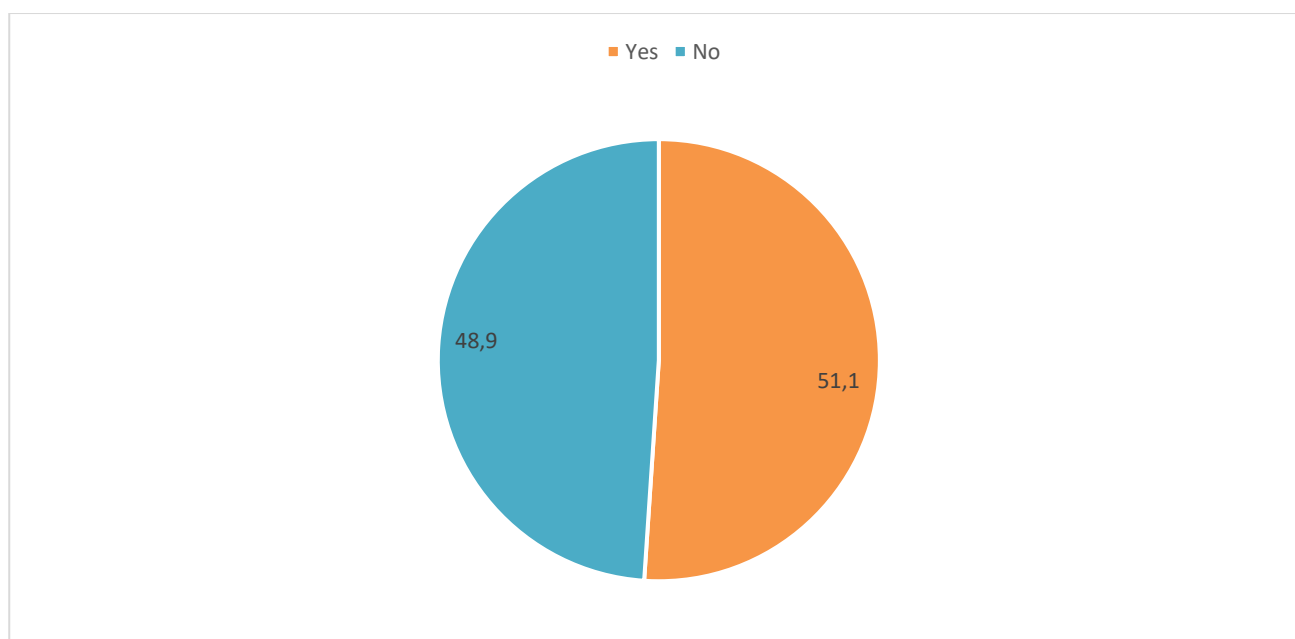


Source: GPSJS 2022/23

Assault is a serious criminal offence in South Africa, and it is one of the most reported crimes in the country. According to the South African Police Service (SAPS), there were over 207 000 reported cases of assault in 2022/23 alone. Assault can take many forms, ranging from common assault and assault with GBH which are threats to physical violence that causes injury to another person.

Overall, the share of male individuals aged 17 years and younger were more likely to experience any form of assault compared to their female counterparts. Close to 4 out of 10 of the total population experienced any form of assault (44,1%) were females whilst more than half (56,0%) were males.

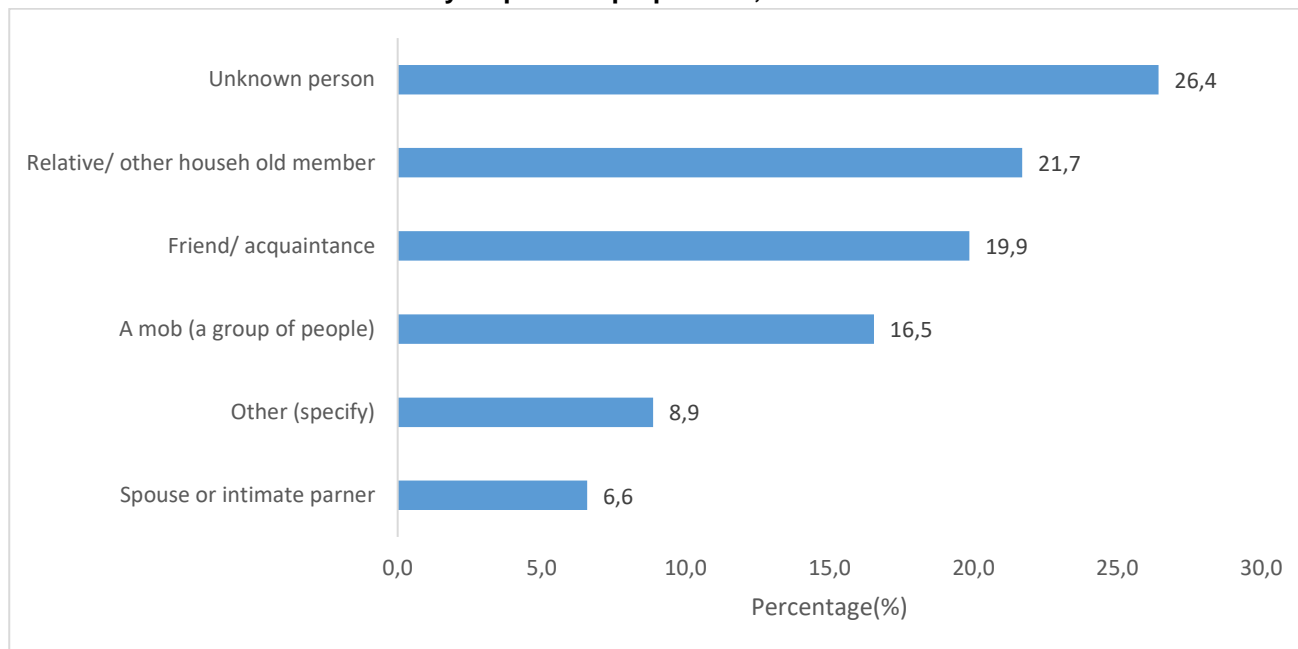
Figure 3.26: Percentage of households with children aged 17 years and younger that were satisfied with the police response, 2022/23



Source: GPSJS 2022/23

Figure 3.26 shows of all households that reported incidences of assault to the police, almost half (51,1%) of households with children aged 17 years and younger were satisfied with the police response compared to about 48,9% in 2022/23.

Figure 3.27: Percentage of households with children aged 17 years and younger who experienced incidences of assault committed by a specified perpetrator, 2022/23

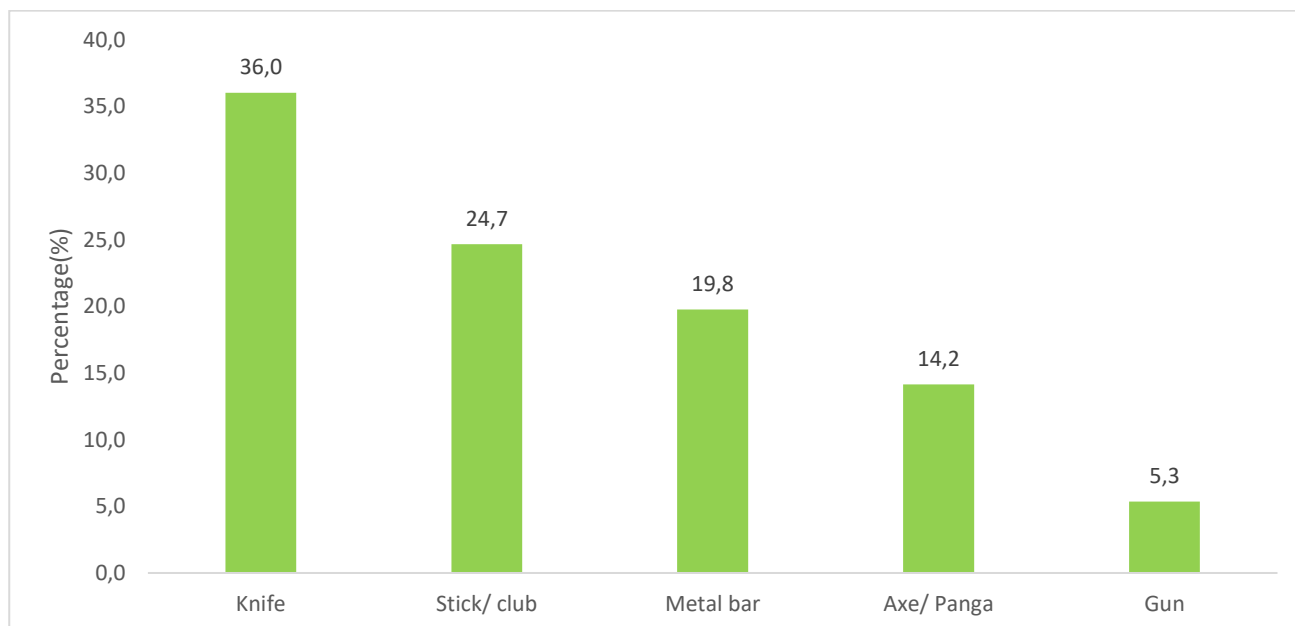


Source: GPSJS 2022/23

Perpetrators who committed assault can be anyone, including strangers, but more often, they are someone known to the victims.

Figure 3.27 indicates that more than a quarter (26,4%) of the assaults were committed by unknown persons, 48,2% committed by someone known to the victim, such as a relative, other household member, a friend or acquaintance, or a spouse or intimate partner, while 16,5% were committed by a mob.

Figure 3.28: Type of weapons used in incidents of assault in a household with children aged 17 years and younger during a home robbery, 2022/23

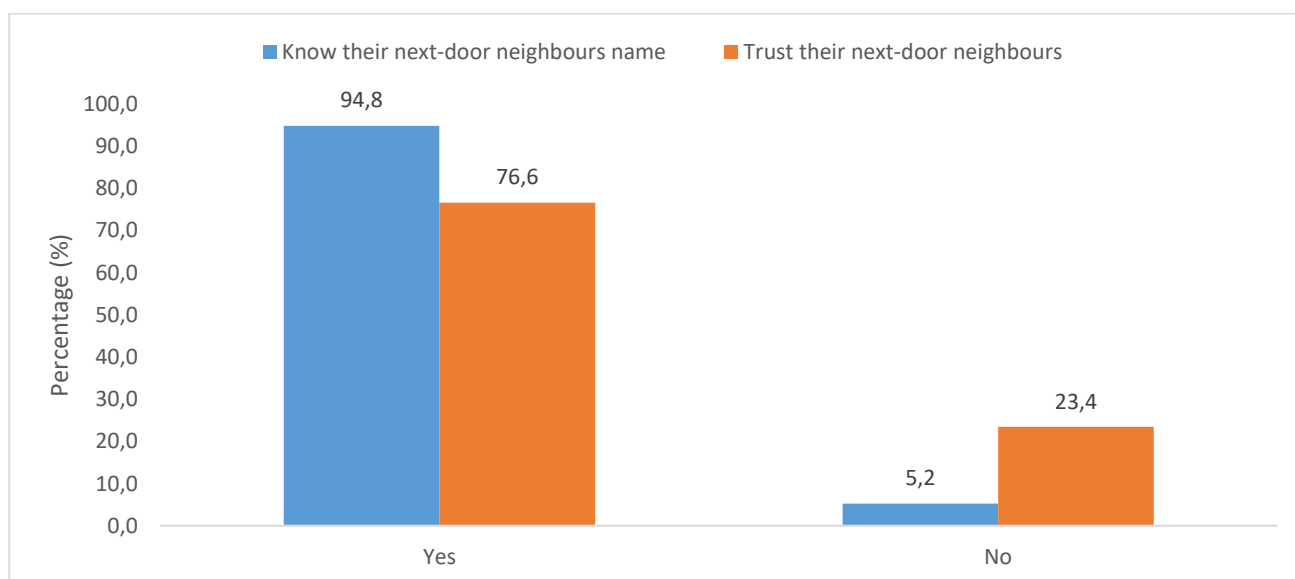


Source: GPSJS 2022/23

Assault can be violent in nature with deadly weapons which can cause death or grievous bodily harm, this can include a gun and knife.

Figure 3.28 depicts that during incidents of home robbery, knives were the most used weapons in incidents of assault (36,0%), followed by sticks/clubs (25,0%), metal bars (20,0%), and axes/pangas (14,0%). Guns (5,0%) were the least weapons used in incidents of assault during home robberies.

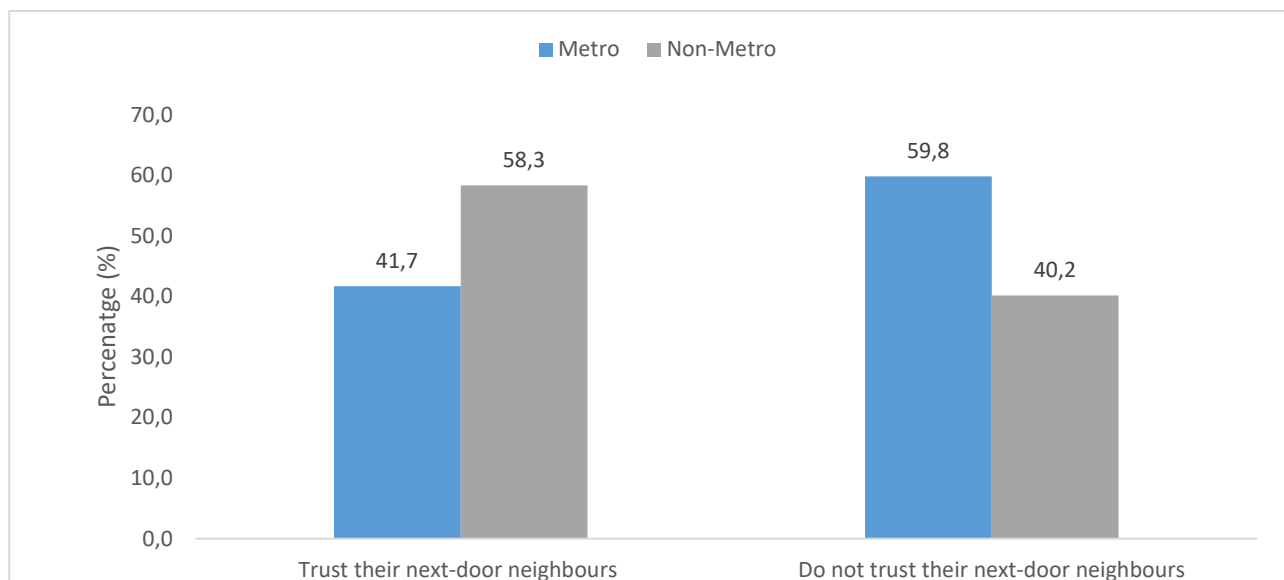
Figure 3.29: Percentage of households with children aged 17 years and younger that know/trust their next-door neighbours enough to let them look after their children for more than an hour, 2022/23



Source: GPSJS 2022/23

Figure 3.29 shows that, 94,8% of the households knew the name of their next-door neighbour regardless of their demographic characteristics. This figure also illustrates that 76,6% of those households indicated that they trust their next-door neighbours enough to let them look after their children for more than an hour.

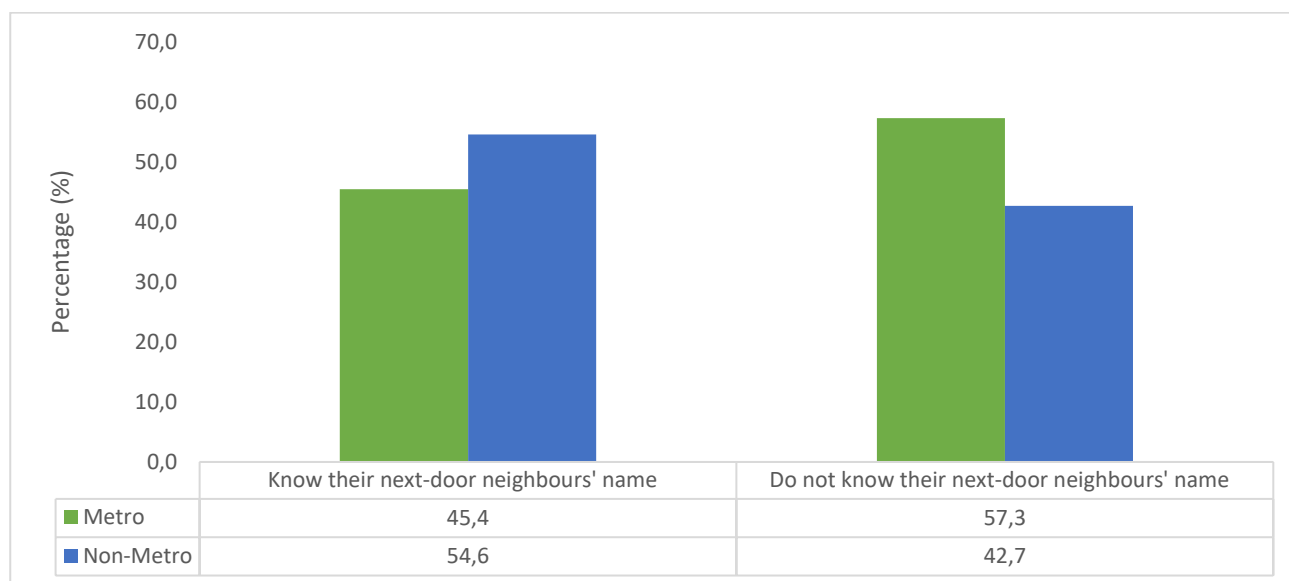
Figure 3.30: Percentage of households with children aged 17 years and younger that trust their next-door neighbours enough to let them look after their children for more than an hour by metropolitan status, 2022/23



Source: GPSJS 2022/23

Figure 3.30 shows that, more than half (58,3%) of the households who trusted their next-door neighbour enough to let them look after their children for more than an hour were located in non-metropolitan areas. This figure also illustrates that close to 60,0% of the households which indicated that they did not trust their next-door neighbours enough to let them look after their children for more than an hour were residents of metropolitan areas.

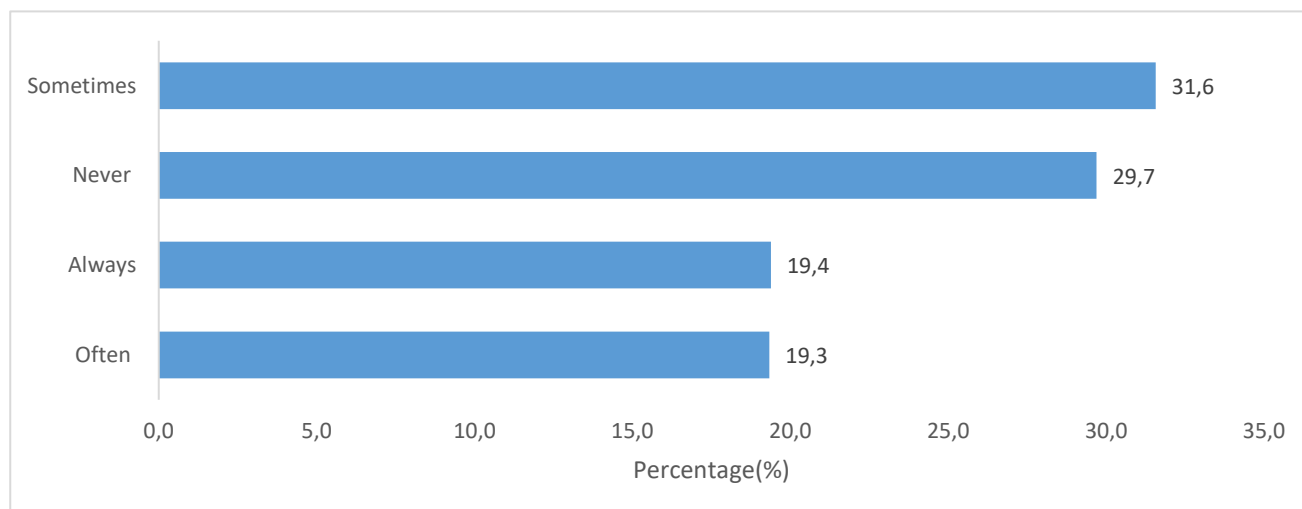
Figure 3.31: Percentage of households with children aged 17 years and younger that know the names of their next-door neighbours by metropolitan status, 2022/23



Source: GPSJS 2022/23

Figure 3.31 shows that, more than half (54,6%) of the households who knew their next-door neighbours' names were located in non-metropolitan areas. This figure also shows that 57,3% of the households which indicated that they did not know their next-door neighbours' names were residents of metropolitan areas.

Figure 3.32: Percentage of households with children aged 17 years and younger by the level of participation in community forums, 2022/23



Source: GPSJS 2022/23

Figure 3.32 shows the level of participation in community forums by households with children aged 17 years and younger. The results show that 31,6% of households in 2022/23 sometimes participated in the community forums whilst 29,7% never participated in the community forums. Furthermore, the results also show that 19,4% of the households always participated in the community forums, and 19,3% often participated in the community forums.

3.2 Summary

In South Africa, housebreaking/burglary (71,3%) was the most prevalent crime experienced by households with children aged 17 and younger. The results further showed that housebreaking/burglary (25,5%), home robbery (40,2%), and theft of motor vehicles (51,2%) were the most prominent crimes in Gauteng, while assault was common in Western Cape (24,5%).

Moreover, it was observed that children aged 0-6 years were victims of almost all the crimes except for theft of motor vehicles (33,2%). Extended households with children were more likely to be victims of crimes relative to other household compositions. Murder and theft of motor vehicles were incidents more likely to be reported to the police. In 2021/22, almost 45,0% of households with children suffered violence against children. Furthermore, KwaZulu-Natal (69,3%) and Limpopo (51,6%) had the highest percentages of households experiencing violence against children.

The results further reveal that the majority of the assault cases (48,2%) were committed by individuals known to the victim, including relatives, other household members, friends, or acquaintances or spouse or intimate partner. Moreover, knives were the most commonly used weapons in incidents of assault during home robberies, accounting for 36,0% of them. In addition, 94,8% of households with children knew the name of their next-door neighbour, and 76,6% of these households indicated that they trust their next-door neighbours enough to let them look after their children, for more than an hour.

Chapter 4: Summary and Conclusion

Findings of this report are based on crimes affecting children aged 17 years and younger using SAPS data as well as the GPSJS survey data. The results have shown that crime is a major problem in South Africa affecting children regardless of gender, age, population group and geographical areas.

According to SAPS data, in South Africa, crimes that were highly experienced in 2019/20 by children aged 17 years and younger were rape, common assault and assault with GBH (39,9%, 24,1%, and 17,0% respectively). Provincially, Western Cape (20,6%), followed by Gauteng (15,9%) and KwaZulu-Natal (15,5%) recorded the highest proportions of cases of assault with GBH among children aged 17 years and younger. In addition, most murder cases reported to the police were for children aged 17 years and younger residing in Western Cape (23,8%), KwaZulu-Natal (20,7) and Gauteng (17,8). Furthermore, in 2019/20, it was notable that reported cases of sexual assault for children aged 17 years and younger were high in the Western Cape at 24,6%, followed by Gauteng (21,8%) and KwaZulu-Natal (14,9%). KwaZulu-Natal (20,2%) recorded the highest proportion of reported rape cases to the police for children aged 17 years and younger, followed by Gauteng (17,1%) and Eastern Cape (16,3%). Child trafficking was most common in Gauteng, KwaZulu-Natal, and Eastern Cape (26,9%, 22,2%, and 14,2%, respectively). Moreover, abduction was experienced more by children who lived in KwaZulu-Natal (49,1%) compared to other provinces.

Common robbery, assault with GBH, common assault, attempted murder, and murder were encountered more by males relative to females throughout the reference period (2015/16-2019/20). Whereas, child trafficking, abduction, sexual assault, rape and attempted common robbery were experienced more by females in comparison to males across all years. Moreover, most reported cases of assault with GBH for children aged 17 years and younger were recorded in Waterberg, Greater Sekhukhune, City of Tshwane, Bojanala, Metsweding, Nkangala, West Rand, Sedibeng, Fezile Dabi and Dr Kenneth Kaunda districts, whereas common assault cases were most common at Overberg district. Furthermore, sexual offence cases for households with children were highest in Waterberg, West Coast, Cape Winelands, City of Cape Town and Overberg districts. Rape cases were most common in Greater Sekhukhune district.

Between 2006 and 2021, there was an overall decrease in child marriages for both customary and civil marriages. Furthermore, customary marriage has been the most prevalent in the Eastern Cape, Limpopo, and KwaZulu-Natal over the years, while civil marriages were most common in Gauteng, KwaZulu-Natal, and Free State. In 2022/23, the most common crime experienced by households with children aged 17 years and younger in South Africa was housebreaking/burglary (71,3%). Provincially, housebreaking/burglary (25,5%), home robbery (40,2%), and theft of motor vehicles (51,2%) were most common in Gauteng, while assault was highly experienced in Western Cape (24,5%).

The results further revealed that households with children in non-metropolitan areas were more likely to encounter crime than households situated in metropolitan areas, except for theft of motor vehicles (68,9%) and home robbery (50,7%), which were highly experienced by households in the metropolitan areas. Overall, it was observed that children aged 0–6 years were victims of almost all the crimes except for theft of motor vehicles (33,2%). Extended households with children were more likely to be victims of crimes relative to other household compositions. There was a decrease in the number of households with children who encountered theft of motor vehicles, home robbery, and assault. However, housebreaking/burglary, murder, sexual offence slightly increased between 2018/19 and 2022/23. Murder and theft of motor vehicles were the most commonly reported incidents to the police. Furthermore, Households with children in non-metropolitan areas were more prone to report murder, sexual offences, assault, and housebreaking/burglary incidents to the police than households in metropolitan areas, whereas those in metropolitan areas had high percentages for reporting theft of motor vehicle (76,7%) and home robbery (58,8%) cases to the police.

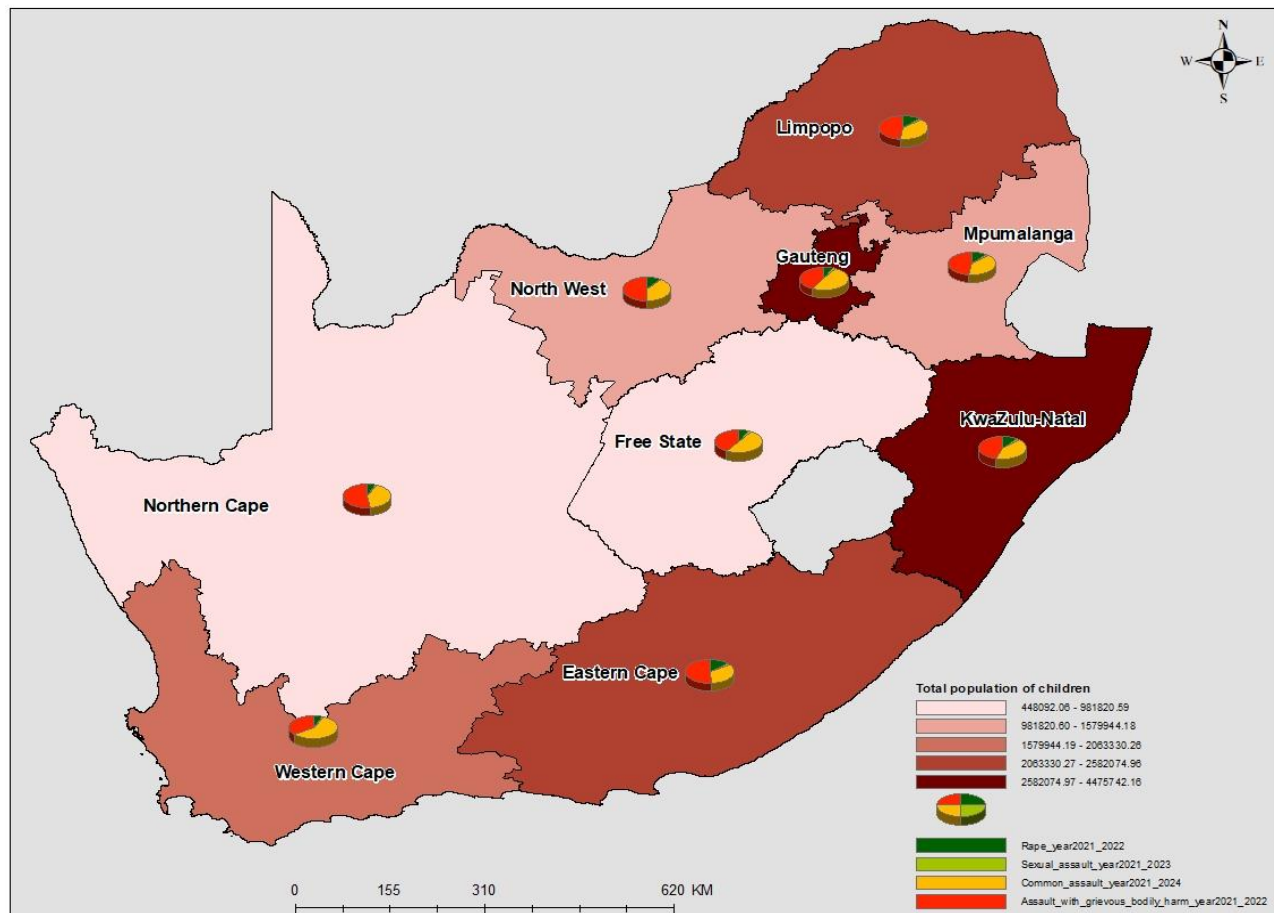
Households with children aged 17 years and younger who experienced crimes had various reasons for not reporting crimes to the police. Approximately 49,0% of the households with children who experienced theft of motor vehicles have reported it to other authorities instead of reporting to the police. It was observed that households with children who experienced assault and home robbery preferred to solve it by themselves instead of reporting to the police. Those who experienced housebreaking/burglary did not report due to fear or dislike of the police. In the past twelve months, theft of motor vehicles, housebreaking/burglary and assault were most common in households with children in metropolitan areas, while home robbery was mostly experienced by households with children situated in non-metropolitan areas. Moreover, more than 71,0% of households with children encountered crime at least once.

In South Africa, approximately 45,0% of the households with children experienced violence against children in 2021/22. In addition, KwaZulu-Natal (69,3%) and Limpopo (51,6%) recorded the highest percentage of households that experienced violence against children. Majority of households with children experienced disputes related to child support and maintenance more compared to disputes related to custody of children or visitation arrangements or access to children. According to the GPSJS, in 2022/23, males aged 17 years and younger were more prone to any form of assault compared to their female counterparts, with males accounting for 56,0%, while females constituted only 44,1%. Furthermore, 51,1% of households with children aged 17 years and younger were satisfied with the police response, whereas approximately 49,0% of households with children expressed dissatisfaction.

Assault can be committed by any individual regardless of the relationship with the victim. The majority of assault cases (48,2%) were perpetrated by individuals known to the victim, followed by 26,4% committed by an unknown person, and 16,5% by a mob. Knives were the most common weapons used in cases of assault that occurred during home robberies. In South Africa, more than 90,0% of households with children aged 17 years and younger knew the name of their next-door neighbours, and approximately 77,0% of these households indicated that they trust their next-door neighbours enough to let them look after their children for more than an hour. Additionally, the majority of households with children only sometimes participated in community forums (31,6%).

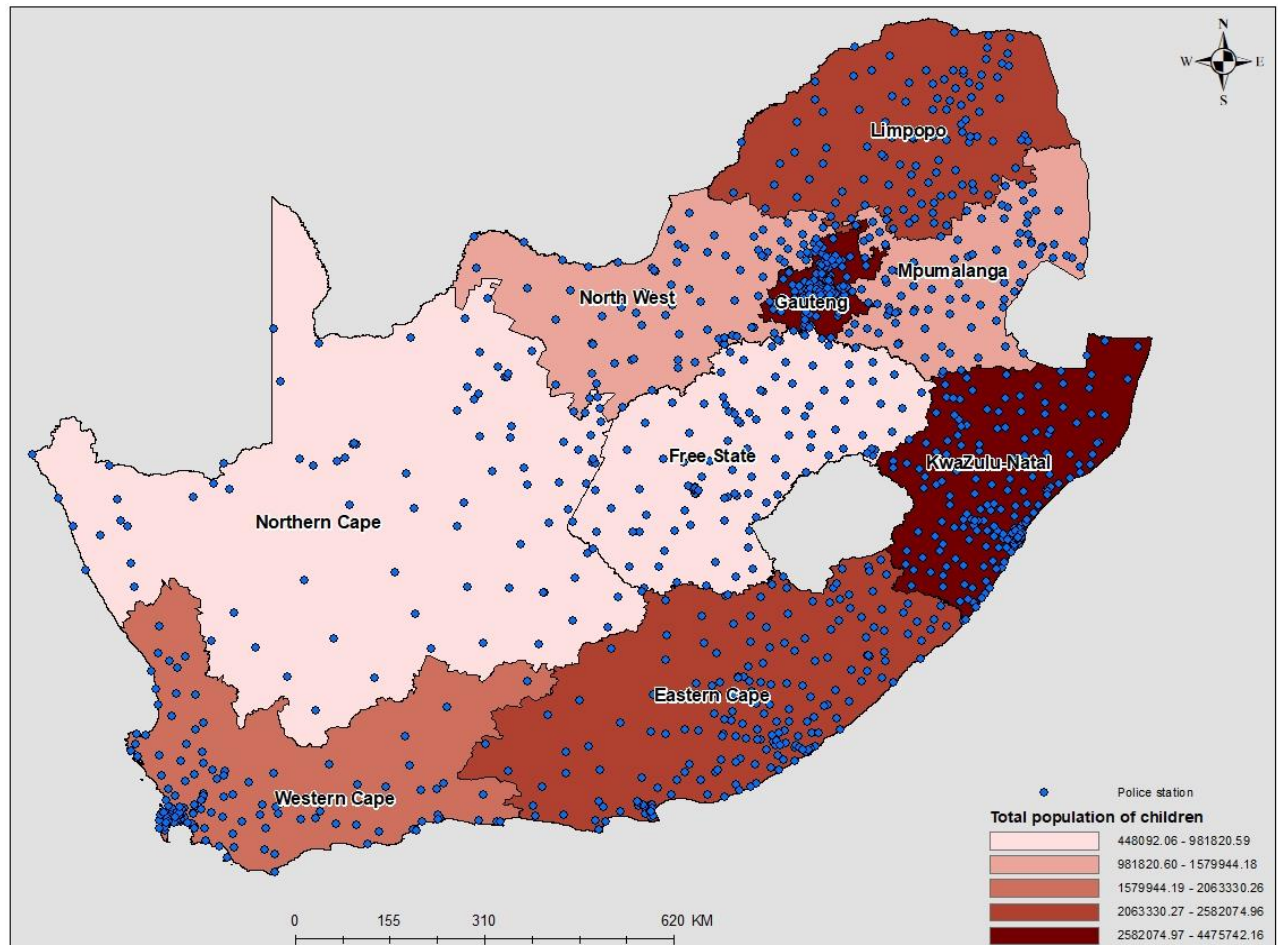
Annexure

Map A.1: Total population of children and total number of crimes reported to the police by province, SAPS 2021/22



Source: Mid-year population estimates 2022, SAPS 2021/22

Map A.2: Distribution of the ratio of population of children aged 17 years and police station, SAPS 2021/22



Source: Mid-year population estimates 2022, SAPS 2021/22

Table A1: Number of offences for children aged 17 years and younger reported to the police, 2015/16-2019/20

	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20
Assault: grievous bodily harm	10 974	8 473	8 914	8 999	7 667
Common assault	14 071	11 112	11 902	12 157	10 865
Attempted murder	1 109	989	1 047	990	1 021
Murder	1 077	1 012	1 094	1 030	967
Attempted common robbery	81	62	51	53	29
Common robbery	4 039	2 591	2 542	2 545	2 104
Rape	18 057	18 184	18 819	19 302	18 011
Sexual assault	3 785	3 718	5 227	4 258	3 798
Child trafficking	111	238	258	275	275
Abduction (common or statutory law)	443	381	275	304	385
Total	53 747	46 760	50 129	49 913	45 122
Total crime reported for children	58 416	50 829	54 510	54 177	49 311

Source: SAPS: 2015/16-2019/20

Table A2: Number of households with children aged 17 years and younger who experience theft of motor vehicle

	Lower _Confidence Limit	Theft of motor vehicle	Upper _Confidence Limit
2018/19	97 946	121 493	145 041
2019/20	115 294	144 933	174 572
2020/21	66 457	113 084	159 711
2021/22	60 171	89 314	118 456
2022/23	69 077	88 492	107 908

Source: GPSGS 2018/19 -2022/23

Table A3: Number of households with children aged 17 years and younger who experience housebreaking/burglary

	Lower _Confidence Limit	Housebreaking/burglary	Upper _Confidence Limit
2018/19	1 084 531	1 157 827	1 231 124
2019/20	1 108 557	1 179 943	1 251 329
2020/21	883 784	990 550	1 097 316
2021/22	988 524	1 086 237	1 183 950
2022/23	1 105 790	1 184 986	1 264 181

Source: GPSJS 2018/19-2022/23

Table A4: Number of households with children aged 17 years and younger who experience home robbery

	Lower _Confidence Limit	Home robbery	Upper _Confidence Limit
2018/19	234 710	272 209	309 707
2019/20	205 695	240 655	275 614
2020/21	114 885	165 680	216 475
2021/22	171 164	223 359	275 554
2022/23	214 270	249 362	284 454

Source: GPSJS 2018/19-2022/23

Table A5: Number of households with children aged 17 years and younger who experience Murder

	Lower _Confidence Limit	Murder	Upper _Confidence Limit
2018/19	22 875	33 465	44 055
2019/20	17 733	28 384	39 034
2020/21	8 888	29 083	49 278
2021/22	13 323	31 553	49 782
2022/23	21 515	33 513	45 511

Source: GPSJS 2018/19-2022/23

Table A6: Number of households with children aged 17 years and younger who experience sexual offence

	Lower _Confidence Limit	Sexual offence	Upper _Confidence Limit
2018/19	23 675	37 091	50 507
2019/20	17 095	27 296	37 498
2020/21	5 112	16 497	27 881
2021/22	13 019	25 166	37 313
2022/23	26 315	38 704	51 092

Source: GPSJS 2018/19-2022/23

Table A7: Number of households with children aged 17 years and younger who experience assault

	Lower _Confidence Limit	Assault	Upper _Confidence Limit
2018/19	85 620	109 004	132 388
2019/20	60 943	78 031	95 119
2020/21	35 656	80 715	125 774
2021/22	75 517	106 017	136 517
2022/23	78 866	99 751	120 637

Source: GPSJS 2018/19-2022/23

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