

Association between Fathers' Involvement and Children's Marriage Outcome Among  
Church-Going Couples in Westlands Constituency, Nairobi County-Kenya

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## DECLARATION

I, the undersigned, declare that this thesis is a product of my own work and is not the result of anything done in collaboration. It has not been previously presented to any other institution. All sources have been appropriately cited and duly acknowledged in full.

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## **DEDICATION**

I dedicate this work to the Marriage and Family Department of Mamlaka Hill Chapel,  
Nairobi County.

## **ACKNOWLEDGMENT**

I am most grateful to my supervisors Dr Lucy Njiru and Dr Daniel Kitonga who accorded me the time, patience and guidance that I needed to successfully complete my research. Special thanks to Reverend Mwangi Muchiri, who leads the Marriage and Family Department of Mamlaka Hill Chapel for opening up his office and for allowing me to work closely with him and the couples in the church as I pursued my postgraduate studies. Also, I thank the management of Mamlaka Hill Chapel who have allowed me the environment and access to counselling couples in the Church which has, in turn, allowed me to develop my counselling skills. I thank my friends and family for being patient and for allowing me time to be away from them whenever necessary for me to fulfil the requirements of my course work. Of highest praise is to God who has given me life, time, skills and resources to be able to start and finish my master's degree.

## ABSTRACT

The role that a father plays is crucial in the development of a child's emotions, cognition and social adjustment and research has been done on the impact that fathers involvement has on a child's development right from infancy through adolescence and into adulthood. The purpose of this study was to determine the association between father involvement and their children's marriage outcome. The specific objectives of the study were to determine the level of fathers' involvement among individuals; to establish the effect the involvement of fathers has on marriage relationships; and to investigate the relationship between father involvement and demographic factors. The study was based on the Attachment Theory as well as the Theory of Psychoanalysis. This study employed the survey research design among married individuals both male and female from Westlands Constituency in Nairobi County who were above eighteen years of age. The data was collected using questionnaires from 384 participants using simple random sampling. The completed questionnaires were then analysed by the use of the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) whereby the descriptive statistics were analyzed using frequencies and percentages while the inferential statistics were analyzed by use of the Pearson correlation coefficient. The study found out that there was low father involvement among the respondents that participated in the study. Father involvement was also found to have a statistically significant negative effect on marriage relationship outcomes ( $r = -0.312$  at a  $p$ -value of 0.000). Moreover, the study found out that father involvement had a statistically significant positive relationship with age ( $r = 0.127$ ;  $p < 0.05$ ), gender ( $r = 0.294$ ;  $p < 0.05$ ), education ( $r = 0.603$ ;  $p < 0.05$ ), and marital status ( $r = 0.592$ ;  $p < 0.05$ ); but a statistically significant negative relationship with the number of years married ( $r = -0.232$ ;  $p < 0.05$ ) and type of father figure ( $r = -0.270$ ;  $p < 0.05$ ). The study recommends that a similar study be conducted to determine why marriage relationship satisfaction is low in cases where biological father figures are present in the children's lives.

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## **LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS/ACRONYMS**

<b>FIS</b>	Father Involvement Scale
<b>IEBC</b>	Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission
<b>KDHS</b>	The Kenya Demographic and Health Survey
<b>KNBS</b>	The Kenya National Bureau of Statistics
<b>NACOSTI</b>	The National Commission for Science Technology and Innovation
<b>RAS</b>	Relationship Assessment Scale
<b>TUCREC</b>	Tangaza University College Research Ethics Committee
<b>UK</b>	The United Kingdom
<b>USA</b>	The United States of America

## OPERATIONAL DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS

<b>Couple:</b>	A man and a woman who live together and raise children together.
<b>Development:</b>	Changes that a child experiences as they grow be it physically, emotionally, socially, cognitively or behaviorally.
<b>Father:</b>	The man who was present and involved in the life of the child while growing up be they the biological, step or adoptive father.
<b>Impact:</b>	The effect or influence that a father's involvement had on the child while growing up.
<b>Involved father:</b>	A father's presence and engagement while a child is developing right from conception, at infancy, in early childhood, in adolescence and adulthood.
<b>Marriage outcome:</b>	The level of one's satisfaction in a marriage relationship assessing if the individual feels their needs are met versus their original expectations.
<b>Marriage:</b>	The union between a man and a woman as a husband and a wife.

# **CHAPTER ONE**

## **INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1. Introduction**

This chapter offers a perspective on the role that a father plays in the development of a child and the effect it has on the outcome of marriage relationships. The chapter presents the problem, the purpose, the objectives, the research questions, significance of the study, the scope, the delimitations of the study and the assumptions made.

### **1.2. Background to the Study**

Many theories of social and personality development beginning with Freud, show the importance of a father in a child's experiences from conception, in adolescence and later in their adulthood (Pleck, 2010). Fathers matter and their presence in the lives of their children has optimum impact on the development of children (Amato, 2010). Cano, Perales and Baxter (2019), further add that parental involvement of both a mother and a father plays an important role in the growth of a child's personality. Their influence affects children both within and without the home context. Schober (2012) has explained that it affects them cognitively, socially and emotionally. A father's position, involvement and relationship with their child is critical to not only their development but also how their lives turn out to become in the long-term.

The role and responsibilities of a father have changed significantly over time. Fathers' involvement has been multifaceted from being seen as providers of protection, as breadwinners, as providers of moral guidance, providers of marital support, nurturance, mentorship and as role models (Lamb, 2010). There is often more talk about a mother's role in parenting and it is possible to underestimate the role and value that a father adds to a child's development. The role and presence of a father within families has however been complicated by urbanization. The pressures of work, unstable marriage relationships and the lack of role

models on how to parent as a father adds to the chaos fathers find themselves in with regards to how they ought to parent. Cummings, Goeke-Morey and Raymond (2013) say that when fathers are absent or are unsupportive and when marital conflict is high, children may end up suffering in the long term.

A father's engagement also influences the social competences of a child whether with their peers or in intimate relationships. Amato and James (2010), have shown that when a father is involved in the life of a child it affects the child positively in education and psychological adjustment. Ramchandani et al. (2013) says that when the interactions of a father are disengaged and remote with their children, as early as the third month of life, it has been found to predict externalizing problems in children longitudinally. A child's well-being is negatively affected by the absence of a father's involvement. Brookes et al. (2014) state that those in pre-school display aggression, depression or emotional dysregulation. Nielsen (2014) explains that daughters who have good relationships with their fathers can adjust better emotionally with other men. Academically they are likely to do well and may not find themselves in casual sexual engagements. They make wiser decisions regarding their relationships with men and they tend to have more stable and fulfilling relationships.

Kalil and Rege (2015) have shown that men who had loving and secure relationships with their parents were more sensitive, attentive, and involved than fathers who recalled poor relationships. Additionally, when they become parents, they were driven to become better than their fathers. The quality of a marriage relationship also affects the paternal involvement. Families where fathers are involved in child care are characterized by positive outcomes including better parenting practices, lower likelihoods of family breakdown, creating a safer and warmer environment that is conducive to the child's development be it socially, emotionally or cognitively (Jia, Kotila & Schoppe-Sullivan, 2012).

Eiden, Edwards, and Leonard (2011) say that the higher the marital satisfaction between parents, the higher their levels of both maternal and paternal engagement and functioning. When children from broken homes transition into adulthood and marriage, they become incapable of sustaining their marriages for lack of mentors or due to poor role modelling of what marriage ought to be or how it ought to be managed. Flouri and Buchanan (2010) observe that there is a correlation between a close relationship of a father with an adolescent and the psychological health from the age of 16 years as well as with their marital satisfaction at age 33.

Men's involvement in parenting activities is often influenced by several factors the main ones being employment and the relationship with the mother of the child. In many cultures, the expectation is that the father is the main financial provider in the family but despite the increase in gender equality over the past several years, a survey conducted in 20 countries shows that financial responsibility and provision is still the responsibility of the father (Munoz, Petesch, Turk, & Thumala, 2013). With fathers seen as the household providers, the assumption is therefore that fathers spend more time at work and less time with their children (Hook, 2012). Bianchi, Milkie, Sayer, and Robinson (2012) have observed that even when mothers have had to work for longer hours, they have still been able to secure time to spend with their children. For fathers, this does not seem to be the case. They spend fewer hours with their children which negatively influences their children (Hook, 2012). Fathers have been found not able to balance their time at work and time with their children.

Though the general expectation in most homes is that the father spends more time in the workplace than at home with the children, the level of father involvement is not homogenous across different cultures and countries. In the United States of America (USA) for example, 46 per cent of the fathers felt they did not spend enough time with their children compared to mothers who were at 23 per cent (Levton, van der Gaag, Greene, Kaufman &

Barker, 2015). Findings from a study done by Lang et al. (2014) in the USA shows that mothers engage more with their children between the ages of five and seven in more ways than just playing with them physically or in games. This is also similar within the United Kingdom that has a long way in achieving a balance in parenting activities with fathers working more hours than mothers (Gornick & Meyers, 2011). The balance between work and the parental involvement seems challenging to many fathers in the western countries.

Beyond the western societies, not much research has been done on fatherhood. In Asia though and other developing countries, Shwalb, Shwalb and Lamb (2013) suggest that Asian fathers compared to the Asian women are less involved with their children when compared to men in the western societies. Yeung (2013) observes that there is however the realization for the need to reconfigure the work schedules for men in Asian countries to allow them more time with their children. In China, the fathers there also resemble fathers from other cultural backgrounds in their involvement in the development and social attitudes towards their children though Li (2013) says that modern Chinese fathers tend to focus more on academic responsibility and success of their children. In India, Jaipaul, Krishnakumar, and Vadgama, (2013) say that fathers seem to be responsive to the needs of their children when they are young but mothers still play the major role in the responsibility of raising their children.

A report from the Gender Equality Index (2019) shows that in Croatia 61 per cent of the men and 77 per cent of men in Chile would spend less time at work if they could spend more time with their children. The amount of time that parents spend with their children and the content of the time was also influenced by the social strata of the parents. Those who are highly educated spent more time with their children (Altintas, 2015). In Australia, for example, fathers with university degrees have been observed to spend ten minutes more in a day with their children than Australian fathers without university degrees (Craig, Powell, & Symth, 2014).



Caregiving practices in Africa reflect similarities to global trends and though data is limited, data suggests that men feel the pressure to adhere to social and cultural norms. Levtoy, Barker, Contreras, Heilman and Verma (2014) say that men are expected to earn money while women are expected to provide care and run the household. For example, in Rwanda, the International Men and Gender Equality Survey found that 61 % of men in Rwanda see the work of changing diapers, bathing and feeding children were the work of women. They say further that despite showing interest in caregiving, they run into the stigma that domestic-related chores and especially for child care belong to women. Across Africa until today and especially in the rural areas, men who do chores that are considered to belong to women are still looked down upon.

In South Africa, Hosegood and Madhavan (2013) pointed out that due to colonialism and apartheid, the level of father involvement is very low with the lowest rate of marriages in the continent and with the second-highest level of father absence after Namibia. Statistics by UNICEF South Africa indicate that in 2013, 48 per cent of South African children did not have their fathers living at home and an additional 16 per cent had their fathers deceased. This makes a total of 64 per cent of children growing up without their father in the home. This results in low paternal maintenance as well and high rates of abuse and neglect of children by their fathers (Hosegood & Madhavan, 2013). In most cases, therefore, mothers are left with the responsibility of providing for and raising their children.

In Kenya, the influence from the Western cultures, urbanization, globalization, modernity, Christianity, Islam, politics, science, technology, foreign lifestyles all have altered the mores and practices of the roles that fathers played in the cultural settings and the new trends have all had an impact on fatherhood and the involvement of fathers in the lives of their children (Nsamenang & Lo-oh, 2010). Though Kenya is not homogenous culturally, childbearing in the traditional and cultural practices of several communities in Kenya was

desirable to the extent that if a man did not have children, he could not hold an eldership role in the community (Lesser, Fite & Wadende, 2011). A father was traditionally seen as the protector and provider of a home and he was seen as powerful and responsible for his family and the community at large. Great respect was accorded to a father. Though in the traditional settings fathers in Kenya were not too involved in the early stages of a child, they got involved later in the socialization of their children and it was rare to hear of a father who had absconded his role as a father.

When colonialism came to Kenya, more men went to school, got jobs away from home and this meant that women were left back in the rural homes taking care of the children. This ultimately meant that there was less involvement, interaction, and influence with the children. With the evolution of the traditional family set-ups being influenced by urbanization, there has been a decline in the status of the family where more fathers spend more time away from their children (Abawi, 2013). With the education of the girl child, women are exposed to limitless choices. They pursue careers and the obligation to stay married is not as intense. Nyanchwani (2018) explains that with the leverage of personal income for women in Kenya, they no longer are fully dependant on a husband. As a result, we find that most families are single parented by women, reducing the influence of fathers in parenting with dire consequences in various aspects of children's development including their socialization and interrelationships.

### **1.3. Statement of the Problem**

Several factors have contributed to the change in the structure and management of families, marriages and the role that fathers play in societies. Within the cities especially, the situation seems to deteriorate. Paschall, Ringwalt, and Flewelling (2010) observed that separation and divorce are becoming prevalent leading to more children being raised by single parents and more often without the involvement of their fathers. McLanahan, Tach and Schneider (2013) studied that divorces that occurred during early childhood and adolescence

had worse outcomes than divorces that occurred during middle childhood with boys having more negative outcomes than girls on their social behaviour. Children who are raised outside of a marriage context or within a marriage that breaks are prone to experience divorce or themselves end up raising children outside wedlock (Flouri & Buchanan, 2010).

Though a lot of effort in the last couple of years has been put and continues to be put by pastoral teams to prepare dating couples on the expectations of marriage, the unfortunate scenario seems to be that more couples are finding it difficult to sustain their marriage relationships. The resultant effects of how a father influences their child during the childhood years have been well documented but little attention has been given to how paternal involvement impacts the outcome of children's marriage relationships.

It has been explained that the involvement of a father has an effect on the social behaviour of children but little is known, especially in the Kenyan context, on how the linkages that involvement and interaction with a father during the upbringing of a child affects the outcome of marriage relationships. This research, therefore, sought to fill that gap on informing what impact a father's involvement has on children's marriage outcomes.

#### **1.4. Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study was to determine the impact that involvement of fathers during child development has on the outcome of marriage relationships among couples who live in Westlands Constituency, Nairobi County.

#### **1.5. Objectives of the Study**

The proposed study was guided by both the general objective and specific objectives.

### **1.5.1. General Objective**

The general objective of this study was to assess the association between fathers' involvement and children's' marriage outcome among church-going couples in Westlands Constituency, Nairobi County-Kenya

### **1.5.2. Specific Objectives**

The specific objectives of this study were as follows:

- i. To determine the level of fathers' involvement among couples in Westlands Constituency, Nairobi County.
- ii. To establish the extent to which a father's involvement affects the level of marriage satisfaction of couples in Westlands Constituency, Nairobi County.
- iii. To investigate the relationship between father involvement and demographic factors among couples in Westlands Constituency, Nairobi County.

### **1.6. Research Questions**

This study focused on the following research questions:

- i. What is the level of fathers' involvement of individuals living in Westlands Constituency?
- ii. To what extent does a father's involvement affect the level of marriage satisfaction of couples in Westlands Constituency?
- iii. Is there a relationship between father involvement and the demographic factors of couples of Westlands Constituency?

### **1.7. Significance of the Study**

The study will serve a number of purposes. Firstly, hardly any academic research has been done in marriage and family programmes that the researcher is privy to on the impact that

involvement of fathers has on the outcome of marriages of couples within Westlands in Nairobi County. This study will make a scholarly contribution to this area.

Secondly, the study will assist the counsellors to know how couples feel about their marriage relationships when they indicate their satisfaction levels and it will also help to emphasize to couples attending pre-marital counselling and those already married the importance of having the involvement of both parents while parenting.

Thirdly, the findings of the study will be shared with other church communities in Nairobi County for wider readership and it will also act as a guide while addressing marital challenges while counselling couples who are seeking pre-marital counselling and those already married.

Fourthly, the study will be shared in various libraries of Tangaza University College for wider readership as well as inform further those pursuing family counselling the value of involving fathers in parenting and the effects it bears on relationships.

### **1.8. Scope/Delimitations of the Study**

It was not possible to carry out research on all the couples within Nairobi County so this study was restricted to studying marriage relationships of people who reside within Westlands Constituency in Nairobi County. The study reached out to couples of different denominations within the constituency. This allowed for a representative view of couples within the constituency. The study aimed to find out if growing up with an involved father had an impact in shaping the outcome of their marriage relationships. The study included individuals who are 18 years and above.

### **1.9. Assumptions**

This study assumed that the respondents had experienced father involvement in their lives and they had been married at one point of their lives. This would assist in studying the association between father involvement and respondents' marriage outcomes. Also, the respondents would provide responses that were honest and truthful to help achieve the objectives of the study.

### **1.10. Summary**

This chapter has explored how the involvement of fathers affects the overall development of a person be it emotionally, cognitively or socially. The chapter has also discussed the background to the study and statement of the problem from a global, regional and local perspective. Further, it has stated the purpose of the study, objectives of the study (general and specific) and the research questions. The significance of the study scope/delimits and assumptions of the study were also elaborated on. The next chapter will provide the theoretical underpinnings of the study, show relevant empirical studies, show the research gap and discuss the conceptual framework of the study.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.1. Introduction**

This chapter provides an overview of the theoretical underpinnings of the importance of father involvement during development and how it impacts the outcome of marriage relationships. Also, the chapter will show relevant empirical studies that have been carried out. In addition, the chapter shows the research gap and discusses the conceptual framework of the study.

#### **2.2. Theoretical Literature Review**

Several theories have been proposed to explain the crucial role that fathers have in parenting children right from infancy and how it affects their development. This review focused on two theories, namely the Attachment Theory by John Bowlby and Mary Ainsworth (1958) and the Theory of Psychoanalysis by Sigmund Freud (1856-1939). The Theory of Psychoanalysis showed how the involvement of fathers impacts children in their development right from infancy and the Attachment Theory helped to establish the knowledge of the involvement of fathers and the impact it has in shaping long term relationships. These two theories hence served as the grounding theories of this study.

##### **2.2.1. The Attachment Theory (1958)**

The psychological theory of attachment by John Bowlby and Mary Ainsworth (1958) is the theory that shows the effects of infants being separated from their parents. This theory was appropriate for this study because it explains that right from infancy, a child seeks proximity and develops an attachment to any caregiver who provides protection and emotional support and that the involvement of a caregiver impacts the child socially and emotionally both in the short term and in the long term (Fraley, 2010). The theory explained that attachment is

a learned behaviour and how the relationship between a parent and a child develops and how this relationship influences how they relate as adults and especially in how they relate in the intimate and romantic relationships.

Initially, the attachment was deemed as relevant only to a mother due to the oral stage of development but as John Bowlby and Mary Ainsworth developed the theory, they learnt that children also grew in responsiveness to their fathers. According to Crossson (2013), right from birth if both parents are present, a child develops a connection and a bonding with the parents which forms a basis for their future relationships. The connection is made from the touch, eye contact, facial expression, listening and talk that the parents express to their child. This way a child develops trust which forms the basis for future relationships. An infant shows the need for attention, support, security and comfort and how the parents respond and their ability to understand, perceive and respond to the needs of a child ultimately affects and influences the quality of their relationships (Di Folco, Messina, Zavattini & Psouni, 2016). The relationship developed with the parents forms a basis for the developmental outcomes and also influences the quality of future relationships with peers and partners.

The theory shows that unfamiliar situations or separations from parent would make infants to have either of the three reactions when they are reunited with their parents as presented by Bowlby and Ainsworth (1958). One group is that of children with a secure attachment who would show distress on separation with a parent but sought comfort once reunited with the parents (Sanghag, 2012). In stressful situations, the child can regulate their emotions, they can explore their environment with confidence, they can foster their cognition, emotional and language development and they display positive social behaviours which form a foundation for future positive relationships (Sanghag, 2012). In relating with others, they are likely to see other people as supportive and beneficial while perceiving themselves as proficient and estimable. They are better able to take the perspectives of others and they trust



other people. As adults, they have more satisfying relationships and they feel secure with their partners without feeling the need to always be with them. They may have more honest, more secure, more independent and deeper emotional connections (Firestone, 2013). Involvement of both parents therefore plays a role in children's future relationships but the involvement can also yield to both positive or negative effects.

Another group of children that the theory explains are those children who develop an anxious-resistant attachment. According to Bowlby and Ainsworth (1958), children who undergo great levels of anxiety when their parents are away seek comfort from their parents and as well as seem to punish their parents for having left them. These children who do not receive consistent and predictable responses from their caregivers become ambivalent or unsure. There is a likelihood that they children lack self-confidence and they start exhibiting emotional reactions that are exaggerated and social isolation occurs where they isolate themselves from their friends and peers (Michael, 2018). In relationships as adults, Fraley (2010) says that they rarely form secure bonds and feel more distressed for love or affection. There is an expectation that their partners will fix their problems through provision of security and safety. There is a feeling that in their romantic relationships, they are jealous, demanding, easily angered and clingy (Fraley, 2010). Unknown to many parents, when they are present and involved in the lives of their children, they influence their children's future social interactions.

The third category is those children who develop the avoidant attachment. These children show little or no stress when they face separation from their parents especially when they feel that they have been ignored by their parents. Upon their return, the children actively avoid the parents (Fraley, 2010). The children are less effective at dealing with stressful situations and often will withdrawal or not seek assistance which prevents them from experiencing fulfilling relationships with other people. They tend to be more aggressive and antisocial distancing themselves to reduce emotional stress. As adults, they are unable to

develop ways of dealing with separation distress (Michael, 2018). They tend to display aggressive and disruptive behaviour as well as social isolation. They often will perceive others as dangers instead of pillars for support. They would often move from between defensively aggressive behaviour and social withdrawal (Fraley, 2010). As adults they avoid dealing with their feelings, they suffer from impulsive sudden mood swings and are afraid of being hurt in their romantic relationships (Firestone, 2013). They are afraid of getting close and it becomes tough to form or sustain significant or healthy relationships with them. Many other factors could contribute to adults developing avoidant tendencies but the involvement of parents at a young age seems to play a part.

A child and father relationship is one that is special and unique and is also one of the most important and most influential relationships in a child's life (Michael, 2018). This unique and special attachment influences the development and values of a child and can determine the psychological well-being of a child either positively or negatively (Warshak, 2015). Though mothers are often considered the main caregivers and even seen as the more important parent in the life of a child the role of the father cannot be underestimated.

Though this theory explains how the bond that children develop with their parents affects their future relationships, it does not detail for us how these attachments shape the outcome of marriage relationships and more so, within the African context.

### **2.2.2. The Theory of Psychoanalysis (1856 -1939)**

Sigmund Freud worked to prove that childhood events have long-term effects through their teenage years and into their adult life (Kenny, 2015). In 1900, Freud observed that losing a father is one of the greatest losses an individual has to endure and was the first one to offer a psychoanalytic view saying that fathers play a valuable rule both in the pre-oedipal and oedipal phases of the development of a child. Makhijani (2018) explains that a study done at Princeton University showed that the loss of a father by whatever means be it through natural death,

divorce, separation or imprisonment, it is a real cause of stress and distress in the life of a young person and the effects are more visible with boys than girls.

The impact of a father's involvement and absenteeism can best be comprehended within the setting of the father's role in the development of his child. Freud suggested that when fathers develop a loving attachment with their child, especially boys, they create an opportunity for the child to develop in an healthy and resolved manner at the oedipal stage. If this oedipal stage was not effectively resolved the boys become fixated on their mothers which in the future could lead to the boy having challenges in adult romantic relationships (Cherry, 2019). The negative effects of non-involvement were visible right from the prenatal stage and it was thought that if a child lost the father before they were two years of age, they would suffer profound effects resulting to the development of narcissistic tendencies (Angela et al, 2017).

Father involvement is also correlated positively with a child's overall social competence, social engagement, social maturity, and capacity for being able to relate with others as well as having fewer negative emotional reactions with peers (Kenny, 2015). This impact begins to show from the early years of a child's development. For example, Jeremy, Andrew, Emily, and Bethany (2018) found that there is a direct influence when a man was involved in childcare in on the social development of children who were three years of age.

According to Sigmund Freud, the choice of a marriage partner and marriage relationship are influenced by relationships with parents or other significant persons in the life of a child. He also explains that individuals are drawn to partners who are models of their mother or father and that the choice often influences the outcome of a marriage (Lemma, & Patrick 2010).

The theory sheds light into the importance of involvement by both parents right from conception and through the developmental years of a child and even in adult relationships, but this study sought to specifically find out if fathers alone play a significant role in shaping the

outcome of marriages especially within the Kenyan context where fathers are seen mainly as providers and are not necessarily emotionally engaged or actively involved in child development.

### **2.3. Empirical Literature Review**

This section of the study reviewed empirical studies relevant to the objectives of this study.

#### **2.3.1. Level of Fathers' Involvement in their Children**

Children have fathers whether living with them or separately, creating variations in how fathers get involved with their children. The status of parenthood affects in many cases the involvement of fathers. Some children live with both parents, some live with single mothers, some live with single fathers while some live in blended families. In recent years and across many countries, more fathers are being seen to want to spend more time caring for and being with their children with many fathers taking time off from work around childbirth (Moss, 2012). The International Labour Organization, ILO. (2014) reports that “only two countries in Latin America and the Caribbean, three in Asia, five in the Middle East and five in Africa provide leave that can also be used by fathers”. Perhaps with more women working and an increase in combined incomes, fathers are finding more flexibility in their time schedules and affording more time to spend with their children.

In USA, Jones, Mosher and William (2013) report there was an estimated 214,000 stay home dads in 2013 who were taking care of 434,000 children who were less than fifteen years of age while their mothers worked outside of the home. There is twice as much likelihood for children who feel close to their fathers as to those who do not go to college or are in unstable employment after high school. About 75% are not likely to give birth as teenagers, 80% are not likely to go to jail, and half are likely to have symptoms of multiple depression. 71 % of

school dropouts in the USA are from fatherless homes while children of fathers who are actively involved are more likely to have A's in school by 43% and they have a 33% less likelihood of repeating a grade as compared to children whose fathers are not engaged.

The USA Bureau of Statistics (2013) states that from 2000 to 2007, there was an increment of father involvement in the USA from 60.1 million to 64.3 million and in 2012, the figure increased to 70.1. It also says that single fathers raising children in the last ten years also rose from 1.96 million in 2012 an increase of 60 % in ten years. This is a remarkable increase which ought to show a significant difference in those children raised in the last ten years with the involvement of the father and those without. McLanahan, Tach and Schneider (2013) however explain that approximately one-fifth of children born in the USA will not have a chance of living with their fathers which consequently leads to several repercussions in the areas of education, health and social services within the country (Galatzer-Levy, Kraus & Galatzer-Levy, 2010).

The U.S Census Bureau (2017) states that 19.7 million children, meaning more than one in every four children in the USA live without a father in the home. This, in turn, leads to two times superior the infant mortality risk, two times more likelihood that children will drop out of school, four times greater poverty risk, seven times higher teenage pregnancies risk, a higher risk of behavioural problems and a higher propensity that they will commit crimes. In comparing subgroups in USA, Moore, Kinghorn and Bandy (2011) further explain that those fathers who live with their children, 65 % of fathers talked with their children about things that happened in their day. 70 % of black fathers bathed, dressed or changed the diapers of their children compared to 60 % white fathers and 45 % Hispanic fathers. Among the black fathers, every day, only 41 % helped their children with homework while 28 % of white fathers and 29 % of Hispanic fathers were engaged in their children's homework.

In the UK when patterns were analysed between 2000 and 2015, surveys showed that in 2015, fathers in the country spent more time on child care as compared to 2000 where they spent less time together with their children (Henz, 2017). In Sweden, national practices of involved fathers have been regarded as a role model for many countries. The presence of fathers with their children right from birth in Sweden has risen over time. Tanturri et al. (2017) say that the proportion of parental leave days taken by men in Sweden has increased from 7 % in 1990 to 14 % in 2001, reaching 26 % in 2015. Among other European Union countries, twenty of the member states have statutory paternity leave ranging from two to ninety-working days and the compensations range from no payment to full payment. The take-up by fathers of these leave days has been high with two-thirds of the fathers taking the days up were available (Nicolas, 2010).

In Africa, the lowest marriage rate is found in South Africa, as well as the second highest father-absence rate. Khunou, (2016) highlights that there are “low rates of paternal maintenance for children with 60 % of children growing without the involvement of their fathers” and “very high rates of abuse and neglect of children by men” (pp. 265-276). According to Statistics South Africa (2016), in 2016, about 44.4% (which is about 4 in 10 divorces) of the 25,326 divorces were from marriages that had lasted for less than ten years. Despite the population group, there was an indication that the highest number of divorces was from couples that had been married for 9-5 years. This led to a high rate of neglected children with a high rate of the absence of fathers in the development of children. Namibia has the highest rate of father absence with only 12 % of fathers present meaning 88 % of the children grow up without a father figure (Braga, 2014).

In 2014, the Kenyan Demographic and Health Survey (KDHS), showed that children in Kenya who do not live with both biological parents either due to death, divorce, separation or by the fact that the father has to work far away from the wife in search of an income were

nearly 45%. This means that almost half of the Kenyan children are raised without the involvement of their fathers. Njunge (2019) says research done in two Kenyan prisons, namely, Industrial Area Prison and Nairobi West Prison shows that 78 % and 72 % respectively of the male inmates grew in fatherless homes suggesting a correlation between non-involvement of fathers and crime. Perhaps programmes should be created to fill the gaps left by fathers who are imprisoned to minimise the negative effects on the children's well-being.

The trend in the Western countries seems to be that more fathers are embracing paternal leave after the birth of their children but not yet so in the African countries. Separations and divorces rates are however still raising in both contexts leading to compromised and reduced amounts of time that fathers can be involved in the lives of their children.

### **2.3.2. Effect of father involvement on marriage relationships**

Fatherlessness has an impact that can be seen in schools, homes, hospitals and prisons. Liess (2012) explains that the absence of fathers in the formative years leads to children developing mistrust between themselves and their parents and by extension this leads to the development of mistrust with other people when they grow up. A project done on fatherless daughters by Denna and Karin (2016) shows that out of 2,000 females who responded between the ages of 15 and 80 years and from diverse backgrounds, 50 % said they were fatherless either due to never having met their father, due to separation, emotional absence, death, desertion, addiction, abuse or incarceration. The reports show that there was a missing sense of security, learning of masculine behaviours that are positive, and special social skills.

Krampe and Newton (2012) in a study on the importance of fathers in children's welfare, found out that a father's love is of great importance in developing the right self-concept and values and it acts as a deterrent to maladaptive behaviour. Paternal involvement is more than just having the existence of a father in the house. It involves his active participation in the physical companionship, emotional involvement and active upbringing of his children. His

involvement, in the long run, affects the child's self-esteem, self-confidence, the child's abilities to make sound judgement and having meaningful relationships including marriages.

Tavris (2014) says that when the Harlow's monkey experiment was done to confirm the Bowlby's attachment theory, it showed that the monkeys that were socially deprived of a caregiver ended up being emotionally damaged. When those monkeys became parents, they smashed their infants face on the floor and rubbed them back and forth providing insight into the value of attachment and its impact on social behaviour (Herman, 2012). The kind of attachment and relationships that a child develops in the future is conditioned by how they interacted with their parents in childhood (Tavris, 2014).

Guardia, Nelson and Lertora (2014) in their study of 342 female undergraduates in the USA found out that girls from fatherless families developed more liberal attitudes regarding sexual activities and that they tended to find it difficult to form and maintain romantic relationships as they further developed. As a result, the researchers posited that these patterns are often passed to their adult life and end up causing unfulfilled relationships with men. A study done in Indonesia among 384 adolescents by Damayanti and Djuwita (2017) showed that the higher a father was participating in a child's life the less the likelihood of dating violence in middle adolescence. It shows that when children grow up with their fathers, they are better able to control their emotions rather than resulting to physical violence to solve their conflicts.

Though divorce is becoming less stigmatized, the result is that more children are being raised by single parents and are mostly fatherless. In cases of separation or divorce where the fathers play a peripheral role and provide financially, Gogineni and Fallon (2013) say that the absence of the direct involvement of a father has been shown to have long term repercussions on their relationships. Hofferth (2016) found that children raised by woman-headed families had more behavioural problems, engage in early sexual activity and have poorer academic achievements and are twice as likely to commit suicide. He also observed that the same child



experienced difficulty developing and maintaining intimate relationships as well as maintaining autonomy. Unfortunately, not many people understand the great necessity of the presence of both parents in raising children and neither are the repercussions well known.

The traumatic experience of growing up without a father shapes the worldview of the child. The child grows up not easily trusting people, has low self-esteem, fear abandonment, is easily angered and grows up learning to look out for him or her herself. Early attachments between daughters and fathers have a noteworthy influence on the daughter's capability to trust, be thankful, and relate to other males who come into their lives. Guardia, Nelson and Lertora, (2014) say that daughters, with absent fathers, also report feelings that their fathers were not able to provide them with the relationship they needed.

A research was done in the USA by Granger (2016) among 24 women aged 18 and 29 years on how father's involvement affected their romantic relationships, most of the participants said that by observing their fathers' behaviour, they learned more about the need for support, loyalty, trust, and closeness in relationships. Fathers have been found to give daughters hope for romantic relationships, especially when fathers are committed in their romantic relationships, and also fathers can influence daughters' perceptions of relationships. In the absence of a fathers' involvement, the daughters become unsure about what to expect of romantic relationships.

Another study done by Rostad, Silverman and McDonald (2014) found out that females who had supportive and affectionate fathers had a high likelihood of expecting similar qualities from their romantic partners when they become adults which made them to be more careful as they chose their sexual partners. On the contrary, the female who had unaffectionate and unsupportive fathers were less selective when choosing their intimate partners and their encounters with their fathers made them perceive men as cold-hearted, unloving, and noncommitting.

In Kenya, three out of every ten girls get pregnant before the age of thirteen. Additionally, out of every 10 Kenyan women, six are likely to be single mothers by the time they reach 45 years of age, one of the highest rates for single-parent families in Africa (Kiberenge, 2013). This means that more than 50% of children in Kenya are being raised without the involvement of their fathers. Kiberenge (2013) also says that on comparing other African countries, in Tanzania and Zimbabwe, only 18 per cent of women give birth before they get married, in Malawi, it is 10 per cent while in Ethiopia, it is five per cent. DelPriore and Hill (2013) have shown that children who come from a divorced family are more prone to divorce themselves because they may not hold interpersonal skills to keep a relationship and they are likely to see divorce or separation as a viable solution to their marital problems. Their marriage relationships become difficult to sustain due to the underlying insecurities and poor modelling of a marriage relationship.

The observations above from various studying were indicative that when a child does not have the opportunity to observe meaningful male relations in childhood, it makes it more difficult for them to develop interpersonal skills that are necessary for making several life adjustments.

### **2.3.3. Relationship of father involvement and demographic factors**

Demographics such as gender influences the involvement of a father. The male and female children are influenced differently. The behaviour of a child is it a girl or a boy is often indicative of the disruption of bonding between a father and a son or daughter. According to an analysis done by Parker (2019), the U.S. Department of Justice, children without their fathers in their homes account for 63% of youth suicides, 85% exhibiting behavioural disorders, 71% school dropouts, 70% juvenile detentions, 75% substance abuse and 75% with displaced anger. Liess (2012) further explains that the children with absent biological fathers were twice more likely to repeat a class in a school year and were violent at school. These children may

take a longer time to develop and to keep strong relationships and this research wanted to find out if their marriage relationships also get affected.

Among girls, growing up without paternal involvement has detrimental effects. It denies the girl the irreplaceable father-daughter bonding time which eventually affects her well-being. In the USA, a link has been shown between the high levels of teenage pregnancies and high divorce cases with the absence of fathers (Leiss, 2012). They are more likely to suffer from identity issues, engage in abusive relationships, to become school dropouts, suffer depression and become sexually promiscuous leading to early pregnancies (Jackson, 2010). Another study that was done with 1409 adolescents, 851 females and 558 males who are aged between 11 and 18 years showed that those children whose fathers were not involved were more likely to be sexually active as compared to those whose fathers were involved. Newland and Coyl (2010) explain that growing up with an involved father provides a platform for safety and security.

The girls whose fathers are absent start associating with males early in their lives as an attempt to fill the void they feel from having an absent father. They hit puberty earlier and they start menstruating earlier than the peers. 75%, in turn, begin to be sexually active often leading to adolescence pregnancies (La Guardia, 2015). The social intelligence on how to deal with males is hugely determined by the presence or absence of a father. When fathers leave their daughters especially at a young age, the girls are left emotionally wounded and vulnerable and it alters their perception of men. The girls in wanting to be accepted, seek refuge and attention from other men who eventually take advantage of them sexually and if they get pregnant, their education is also affected.

Brooks (2012) says that when the biological father is absent, a boy is more likely to become a father by the age of 23. This was observed among boys with absent fathers by the time they were 7 years old whereby, at least 44% had at least one child by the time they were

23 years while among boys who had both parents, 37% had at least one child at 23 years. Boys are more prone to youth crime which includes violent crime and delinquency. Among the youth in prison, 85% had absent fathers and the children were likely to go to jail as adults. The fatherless children were also likely to abuse drugs and alcohol in both adulthood and childhood. Paschall, Ringwalt, and Flewelling (2010) observe that among the African American adolescent boys, the absence of fathers has a negative effect on the development of boys. They become antisocial, are prone to delinquent behaviour and acts of violence.

Statistics from American societies show that sixty-three per cent of suicides come from homes without fathers, seventy per cent of juveniles in state-operated institutions are from fatherless homes, eighty per cent of men charged with rape that is motivated by displaced anger come from homes where fathers are absent, ninety per cent of homeless children come from fatherless homes, and seventy-one per cent of children who do not finish school don't have a present father in their homes (Goodsell & Meldrum, 2010).

In Sweden, the involvement of men in the home has evolved over the years with paternity now encouraged and as a result, more fathers are now involved in the lives of their children right from birth. Tan (2017) explains that both parents get 16 months of parental leave for either of the parents. Hansson (2013) further explains that the fathers get involved in raising of their children and even in taking care of the house chores like cleaning, feeding and bathing the children as well as picking and dropping off their children to and from school.

Furthermore, demographics such as marital status in a family leads to differences in the degree of father involvement. For example, in Africa, South Africa has the highest number of non-involved fathers with an estimate of 2.13 million children living without their fathers and 9 million growing up without their fathers (Dube, 2013). Most homes are run by single mothers and this ultimately leads to problems such as poverty, broken families, aggressive behaviour among children, social and financial problems (Freeks, 2013). The single mothers are often

overwhelmed by the responsibility of being a provider as well as parent and mentor to her children leading to an emptiness that the children seek to fill all their lives. Goodsell and Meldrum (2010) call it a father hunger or a persistent desire for an emotional connection with a father.

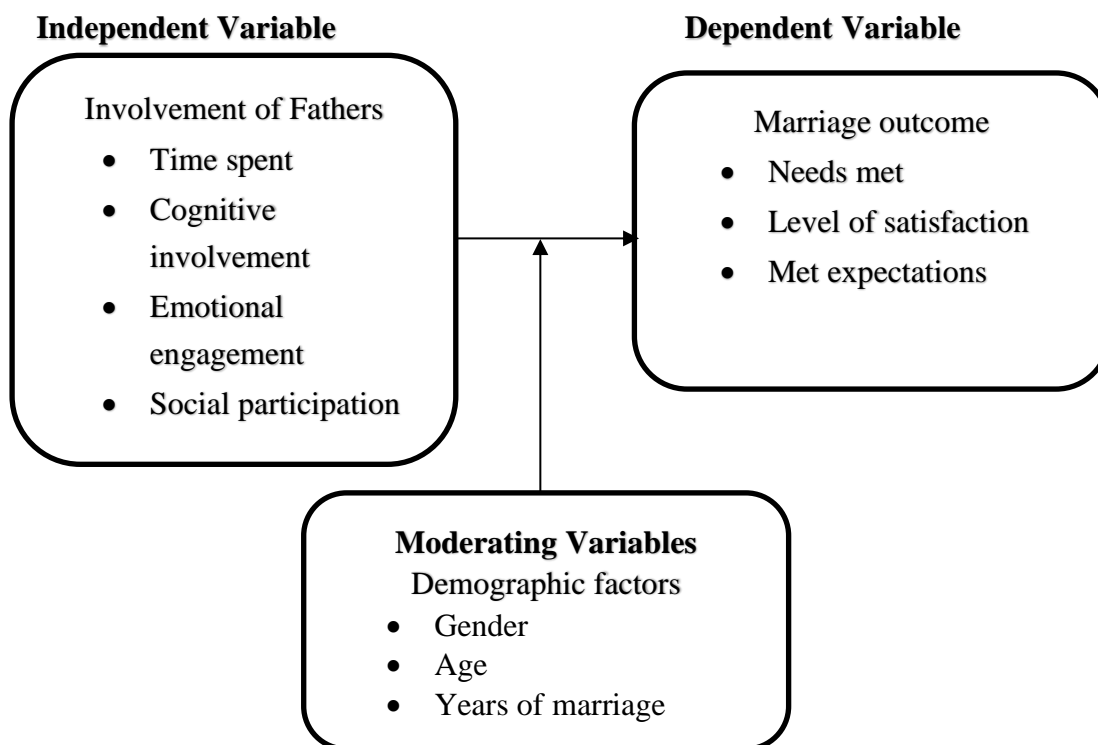
In Kenya, A pan-African study reported that there is 60% chance that a Kenyan woman would be single by the time she is 45 years of age attributed by birth outside of marriage or due to a marriage break up (Naomi, 2013). As a result, Kenya has one of the highest levels of children living without their fathers in Africa. 1 in every 3 households is headed by a woman, 36% in the rural areas and 28% in the urban areas. In Turkana for example, 52% of households are headed by women. In April 2019, Child Kenya through their helpline reported that 64% of the case reported was mainly related to father's abandonment, child maintenance, neglect or rejection. A research conducted in 2009 in prisons by Transform Kenya showed that 3 out of 4 inmates grew up without the involvement of their fathers showing a strong correlation between father's non-involvement and crime in our society and it, therefore, means that if fathers were more involved with their children our society would even be safer.

## **2.4. Research Gap**

There have been several studies done showing that there are long term consequences of involvement of a father be it emotionally, cognitively and socially especially during the adolescent years. Studies are done especially in the Western countries and some within the African context have shown that in adulthood the attachments developed at childhood play a significant role in the outcome of intimate relationships. There is however hardly any research done within Westlands Constituency in Nairobi County on children's perspective of their relationships with their fathers and how their relationships with their fathers impact the outcome of their marriage relationships. This study, therefore, sought to fill that gap.

## 2.5. Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework shown below identifies the main variable of this study. The independent variable of this study was the involvement of a father while the dependent variable was the outcome of marriage relationships. The independent variable measured time spent with father, some had their fathers always involved, others often, sometimes, rarely and some never. It also measured how the involvement of fathers affects individuals cognitively, emotionally and socially. The dependent variable was an individual's outcome in a marriage relationship and it was measured by evaluating if they feel if their needs are met; if they feel satisfied; and if the marriage has met their original expectations.



**Figure 2.1: Conceptual Framework**

The independent and dependent variables were moderated by the individual's demographic factors being their age, their gender as well as the number of years they have been married. These moderating variables helped to show the relationship between the independent

and dependent variables and the degree of the relationships of the variables was determined once data is collected and analysed.

## **2.6. Summary**

This chapter has discussed John Bowlby and Mary Ainsworth's theory of attachment as well as Sigmund Freud's theory of Psychoanalysis to illustrate how the role of the father influences development and relationships. It has also shown various studies done on the involvement of fathers, how intimate relationships are influenced by the involvement of fathers as well as the male and female differences when fathers are involved. The chapter has identified the research gap that the study sought to address and it has also identified the dependent, independent and moderating variables of the study. The next chapter will describe the research methodology that the study used.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

This chapter describes the details of the research methodology that was used in this study. It includes the design, location, target population, sampling technique, sample size, tools used, the validity and reliability of the instrument, data collection procedure, data analysis and the ethical considerations.

#### **3.2. Research Design**

This was quantitative research that employed the descriptive cross-sectional design to estimate the prevalence of father involvement and the result of marriage relationships among couples residing within the Westlands Constituency in Nairobi County. The design allowed people with different interests but who share similar characteristics such as social economic and educational backgrounds to take part in the study.

Orodho (2015) explains that data collected quantitatively produce accurate and unbiased results. The data demonstrated the relationship between two variables of this study namely the involvement of fathers and the outcome of marriage relationships.

#### **3.3. Location of the Study**

This research was carried out among participants in Westlands Constituency in Nairobi County, Kenya. Westlands is one of the seventeen constituencies found in Nairobi County and is situated within the former Westlands District. The constituency has an area of approximately 72.4 square kilometres and it is 4.2 km from the city centre. As shown in Appendix 8, the Constituency is comprised of five county Assemblies namely Kitisuru, Parklands, Karura, Kangemi and Mountain View. According to the Kenya National Bureau of National Statistics, KNBS (2014), the population of Westlands Constituency stood at 201,930. Of those 101,943



were male and 99,987 female. KNBS (2014) also showed that Westlands constituency is largely youthful with 35.68% of the population being less than 20 years of age and 61.85% of the population is less than 30 years of age. Among them, 132,953 are married persons, 2,584 are divorced and 2,893 are separated.

### **3.4. Target Population**

Target population represents the total set of people from which a sample is drawn for purposes of a research study (McLeod, 2013). The population of this study were those who are married within the Kenyan population. The census released by the Kenya Population and Housing (2014) shows that Kenya had a total population of 38,412,088 and these, 24,353,490 married, 894,853 widowed, 212,972 divorced and 355,018 separated.

The sample size came from Westlands Constituency which is one of the seventeen constituencies in Nairobi County. According to the Kenya National Bureau of National Statistics (2014), Westlands Constituency has 75,457 households with a population of 247,102 and of these, 132,953 are married persons, 2,584 are divorced and 2,893 are separated. The sample size was made up of both male and female individuals over the age of eighteen years who live within Westlands Constituency. The legal marriage age in Kenya is above eighteen years. The Kenya National Bureau of Statistics (2014) shows that 23% of girls are married by 18 years of age with 40 % above 25 years of age. This age bracket was, therefore, representative of the married, separate or divorced people in the constituency.

This age group of participants had finished school and was able to read, understand and respond adequately to the data collection tool. They represented the different cultural backgrounds in the constituency and they spoke different languages with English and Kiswahili being the most commonly spoken languages. They, therefore, offered a rich diversity that was representative of the target population.

### **3.5. Sampling Techniques**

Sampling is a procedure, practice or technique which, from a population, aims to choose a sub-group to take part in a study and those chosen to participate can be referred as respondents, subjects, or interviewees (McLeod, 2013). The research used the simple random sampling method to select the people who were involved in the study. This technique involved random selection from a chosen population whereby each population member has an equal chance of being selected (Abawi, 2013). In this case, the population from which the sample was derived from included the interested church-going members of Westlands constituency who are either married, divorced or separated. This sampling technique was chosen for the study since it had one of the lowest sampling biases compared to other sampling techniques. It was relatively simple to form the sample groups.

#### **3.5.1. Sample Size Determination**

A sample is a smaller number of a population that shall be used to make conclusions of the whole population and it will help in making estimates of unknown characteristics of the larger population (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2012). The accessible population has 132,953 married persons, 2,584 are divorced and 2,893 are separated within the Westlands constituency (Kenya National Bureau of Statistics, 2014).

As shown in appendix 5, the table developed by Krejcie and Morgan (1970) indicates that when a population has over 100,000 individuals, the desired sample size is 384. The Cochran formula also indicates the same as shown below.

$$n_0 = \frac{Z^2 pq}{e^2}$$

**Cochran (1977)**

- e is the desired level of precision or the margin of error - at least 5 per cent, plus or minus
- p is the estimated proportion of the population of 0.5.
- q is 1 – p
- Z is the value found in the Z table. A 95 % confidence level gives us Z values of 1.96, per the normal tables.

Calculation of sample size:

$$\frac{((1.96)^2 (0.5) (0.5))}{(0.05)^2} = 384$$

The sample size was 384 respondents who included both men and women with a 5% margin of error and confidence level of 95%.

### **3.6. Research Instruments**

This research was conducted using questionnaires. A questionnaire is described as a list of questions that require the input of the sample population (Saunders et al., 2012). The respondents were allowed to read the questions, make their interpretation and then give their best-suited answer. Questionnaires are ideal because they are a fast and convenient way of collecting data and they are a good tool for protecting the participant's identity (Abawi, 2013). They are also relatively easy to analyse and can be given to a large sample population.

Questionnaires, however, are limited in that participants may fail to understand the questions and could lead to filling out the questions incorrectly or illegibly and even some questions can go unanswered and this could influence the quality of the data collected (Saunders et al., 2012). To mitigate this limitation, the research assistants were trained adequately on how to brief the participants so that the responses received are of high quality.

### **3.6.1. Demographic Survey Questionnaire**

The questionnaire was self-administered and the participants begun by filling out demographic questions to capture their age, gender, education, occupation, marital status and the years in marriage. Hughes, Camden, and Yangchen (2016) say that demographic questions are useful in gathering background information about the respondents and they also improve on the clarity when describing the sample, generalizing the findings and replicating the findings from the study. Demographic questions were also useful for generalization of findings as well as the replication of the findings

### **3.6.2. Father Involvement Scale (Hawkins & Palkovitz, 1999)**

To assess the variable on father involvement this study employed the Father Involvement Scale provided by Hawkins and Palkovitz (1999). The scale was used to determine the level at which young men and women considered their fathers to have been a part of their lives as children and as teenagers. According to Finley and Schwartz (2004), the subject on Father Involvement Scale is compatible with the instrument of Parson's and Bales which assesses the social and emotional aspects of fathers within a family. The Father Involvement Scale (FIS) has a total of 20 areas and with each of the areas mentioned, respondents were asked to show first, the involvement of their fathers on a scale from 1 which is not involved to 5 which is very involved and second, how they would have wanted their

fathers to be involved compared to how they were involved. None of the items in the scale was reversed.

The FIS assesses 20 domains in the lives of adults and their perceptions on their father's involvement. The Scale was developed and initially pilot-tested on a small group ( $n = 15$ ) of university students. The feedback the student provided on the content of the items suggested that there was a need for the items to be reworded to be able to assess the fathering domain more effectively. Gender, family forms and ethnicity were used to provide internal consistency and factor structures estimates. The university students used were 2,353 (69% were female while 31% were male). On the form of family, among the participants, 63 per cent were from married-parent families, 21 per cent were from divorced families, 2 per cent had deceased fathers, 6 per cent had step-fathers, 1 per cent had been adopted, 2 per cent were from other forms of families (5 per cent of the participants did not provide data on their form of family). The test was found to be valid and reliable and compatible with the Parson's and Bales instrument that assesses the social and emotional aspect of fathers within a family (Finley & Schwartz, 2004).

The Father Involvement Scale lists 20 domains of father involvement (Hawkins & Palkovitz, 1999). For each fathering domain listed, participants are asked to indicate the following: (a) how involved, on a scale of 1 (not at all involved) to 5 (very involved), their fathers were in their lives and (b) how involved they wanted their fathers to have been, relative to how involved their fathers actually were, on a scale of 1 (much less involved) to 5 (much more involved). No items are reverse scored. The tally of the scores for what is reported and what is wished for in the involvement of fathers was determined by adding up each domain with the likely scores ranging from 20 to 100 depending on the experience of the different participants. The participants should take 10 to 20 minutes to fill out the questionnaire (Finley & Schwartz, 2004). This scale was useful to determine the involvement of fathers and was

correlated with a scale on the outcome of marriages to determine if there is a relationship between the two.

### **3.6.3. Relationship Assessment Scale (Hendrick, 1988)**

To measure the outcome of marriage relationships, this study used the Relationship Assessment Scale, RAS, (Hendrick, 1988), which contains seven items measuring relationship satisfaction. The scale indicates marital satisfaction measurements, consistent measurements and good test-retest reliability that are moderate to high correlations. The measurement properties are across ethnicity, age diversity, and marital and family therapy (Hendrick & Hendrick, 1998).

The RAS is a suitable, beneficial and brief measure for partners who are in a love relationship in wide and varied areas (Hendrick & Hendrick, 1998). Although this scale has previously been used to evaluate relationships in several different contexts, it is not obvious whether it has been used to demonstrate whether there is a relationship between the involvement of fathers and the outcome of marriage relationships that was investigated by this study.

In the RAS, there are seven items which are rated on a five-point Likert scale which measure ethnicity diversity, age diversity, and marital and family therapy among couples. The scale indicates the extent of moderate to high correlation measures based on marital satisfaction, consistency, and reliability. Graham, Diebels and Barnow (2011) say that the RAS is a suitable, beneficial and brief measure for partnered love associations in varied research settings.

### **3.7. Pre-testing Tools**

This study used two standard scales, the Father Involvement Scale, FIS (Hawkings & Palkovitz, 1999) and the Relationship Assessment Scale, RAS (Hendrick 1988). The role of

pre-testing in the current study was to ensure that all items on the two instruments of the measure were well stated and understood. The pre-testing was done digitally among couples of Mamlaka Hill Chapel in Nairobi. The pre-testing helped in assessing the clarity of the items in the instruments of measure as well as how much time was required by each individual to fill and return the filled questionnaires.

### **3.8. Data Collection Procedures**

Data collection is a very important part of a study and it can impact the quality of the outcome of the results (Orodho, 2015). All the processes and actions undertaken should therefore ensure the successful collection of data. After the proposal of this study had been approved, the researcher requested the Tangaza University College Research Ethics Committee (TUCREC) for approval and then sought to obtain a permit and authorization from the National Commission for Science Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI) to carry out the research. The permits were presented to the church administrators and then the researcher began collecting the data from the sample.

The researcher worked with three assistants who were trained beforehand. The assistants were required to have a least a bachelor's degree in psychology. They were able to work in a highly accurate manner, paying close attention to their work and they should be able to be accurate and detailed in keeping records. They were self-driven and able to manage time to keep to the deadlines that were given. Research assistants were briefed on the study, its objectives as well as the target population. They were instructed on how to brief the participants, how to obtain their consent as well as how to clarify the instructions of the questionnaire. The research assistants helped with the distribution, collection of the questionnaires from the 384 respondents and they also assisted with statistical analysis of data.

To reach the sample of 384, the researcher, by use of the simple random sampling method, sought to find couples of different denominations within Westlands Constituency. The researcher worked with church administrators who were in charge of the marriage and family departments to explain the objective of the study and showed how the study would contribute to the knowledge of the involvement of fathers and how it would shape the outcome of marriage relationships.

The researcher explained that the results of the research could be shared with the administrators on completion of the study for ease of reference. With their consent, the researcher enquired from the administrators the ideal time and location that the data could be collected from the couples of the various churches. At the onset of filling out each questionnaire, the participants were given enough information about the research ensuring that they were able to comprehend the information to make an informed choice to participate in the research. The timeline for the response was shared with the participants.

### **3.9. Data Analysis**

After collecting data, the researcher confirmed that the questionnaire was completely filled. The data was then entered into computer spreadsheets. To assess the correlation between the two variables of father involvement and the outcome of a marriage relationships, the completed questionnaires were analysed. The demographic data was also entered and summarized using frequencies. From the questionnaire, the quantitative data was first coded and then inputted in to the computer to enable descriptive statistics computation. The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) was applied to calculate the frequency and percentages of the descriptive statistics so as determine and present the quantitative data (Arkkelin, 2014). The inferential statistics was analysed by use of the Pearson correlation coefficient to determine the strength of association between the two variables of father involvement and outcome of a marriage relationship (Saunders et al., 2012).



**Table 3.1. Data Analysis Matrix**

<b>Objective</b>	<b>Variable</b>	<b>Analysis Method</b>
1. To determine the level of fathers' involvement among couples in Westlands Constituency, Nairobi County	Cognitive involvement  Emotional engagement  Social participants	Frequencies and percentages for descriptive data by use of the Statistical Package for Social Sciences
2. To establish the extent to which a father's involvement affects the level of marriage satisfaction of couples in Westlands Constituency, Nairobi County	Needs met  Level of satisfaction  Met expectations	Frequencies and Percentages for descriptive data by use of the Statistical Package for Social Sciences.  Inferential data will be analyzed by use of the Pearson correlation coefficient
3. To investigate the statistical association of father involvement and demographic factors among couples in Westlands Constituency, Nairobi County	Gender  Age  Years of marriage	Inferential data will be analyzed by use of the Pearson correlation coefficient

### **3.10. Ethical Considerations**

Ethical consideration in research is an important part of the research and it should not be overlooked (Saunders et al., 2012). The researcher sought approval from Tangaza University College Research Ethics Committee (TUCREC) for as well as obtain authority from the National Commission for Science Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI). The researcher sought authorization from church administrators from various churches in Westlands constituency to collect data from couples of their congregations.

A clarification was given on the purpose of the study, there was no deceptions or exaggerations of the objectives of the research and the value or risks of participating in the research was explained to the participants. Participants were given full information about the study, their dignity was prioritised and respected, the anonymity of the individuals was ensured and the information they shared was treated with the utmost confidentiality.

Participants were assured of privacy and confidentiality for those who filled in the questionnaires. The participants participated voluntarily in the research and they were not coerced to fill out the questionnaires. The participants were informed that they also had a choice to withdraw from the study at any time. The researcher explained that this being a school project, there was no monetary gain once they chose to participate. Once sufficient information was shared and assurances made about taking part in the study, full consent was then obtained from the participants.

This research collected data on information that may be very intimate and personal so the researcher and research assistants were careful to explain how the data collected would be handled. The researcher respected the participants' autonomy and dignity causing no harm to the participants with the collected information. The participants' personal details were not disclosed and the data collected was treated with confidentiality. Akaranga and Makau (2016) say that the researcher should endeavour and is required to protect the dignity of their

participants. The researcher respected and protected the values and interests of the participants and in the data analysis, the researcher did not reveal the identity of the participants.

After data was collected, debriefing was conducted whereby the researcher was able to deal with any queries from the respondents and to ensure that no emotional, physical or psychological harm came to the respondents as a result of participating in the study. The results of the researched information and the findings were published and the researcher remained trustworthy when collecting data. The researcher did not fabricate the findings and neither were the results falsified during analysis.

### **3.11. Summary**

This chapter has indicated how it used quantitative research employing the descriptive cross-sectional design. The study was located within the Westlands Constituency of Nairobi County among participants who attend churches within the Constituency. The sample size was made up of both men and women who were either married, divorced, separated or widowed and had 384 respondents. The study was conducted using questionnaires and used the Father Involvement Scale (Hawkings & Palkovitz, 1999) to measure the variable on father involvement and the Relationship Assessment Scale (Hendrick, 1988) to measure the outcome of marriage relationships. The data was analysed by use of the sample Pearson correlation coefficient to determine the strength of association between the two variables.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### RESULTS

#### 4.1. Introduction

The purpose of this study was to determine the impact that involvement of fathers during child development has on the outcome of marriage relationships among couples who live in Westlands Constituency, Nairobi County. This chapter discusses the findings of this study. The chapter presents the study's response rate, reliability of scales used in the study, demographic characteristics of the respondents, and limitations of the study.

#### 4.2. Response Rate

The sample size for the study was 384 respondents who were given the questionnaires to fill. The findings are recorded in Table 4.1

**Table 4.1: Response Rate**

Category	Frequency (n)	Per cent (%)
Completely Filled	309	80.5
Incomplete	75	19.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>384</b>	<b>100.0</b>

As shown in Table 4.1, 309 respondents filled in the questionnaires which gave a response rate of 80.5% while 19.5% of the respondents had not completely filled in the questionnaire (n=384). This response rate was considered to be representative and sufficient as it conforms to Mugenda and Mugenda (2012) who present that a response rate of 70% and above is excellent.

### 4.3. Reliability of Scales Used in the Study

In this study, two main standard scales which are the Father Involvement Scale and Relationship Assessment Scale were used. A pre-test was conducted digitally among couples of Mamlaka Hill Chapel in Nairobi. To test the reliability of the two scales, a Cronbach's Alpha reliability test was used. The Cronbach's Alpha test also helped to determine the internal consistency of the scales. Using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS 23), 49 items were tested for internal consistency and the overall Cronbach's Alpha value for the Father Involvement Scale was 0.724 while that of the Relationship Assessment Scale was 0.701. According to Jiang et al. (2018), a Cronbach's Alpha coefficient value of between 0.7 and 0.9 shows that the scales have satisfactory internal consistency. Therefore, the Father Involvement Scale and Relationship Assessment Scales were deemed to be suitable to measure the impact of fathers' involvement on children's marriage outcome

### 4.4. Demographic Characteristics of Participants

The study sought to understand the demographic characteristics of the respondents through age, gender, education, marital status, the years in marriage and father figure presence.

#### 4.4.1. Age of the Respondents

The age of the respondents who participated in the study was analysed as recorded in Table 4.2.

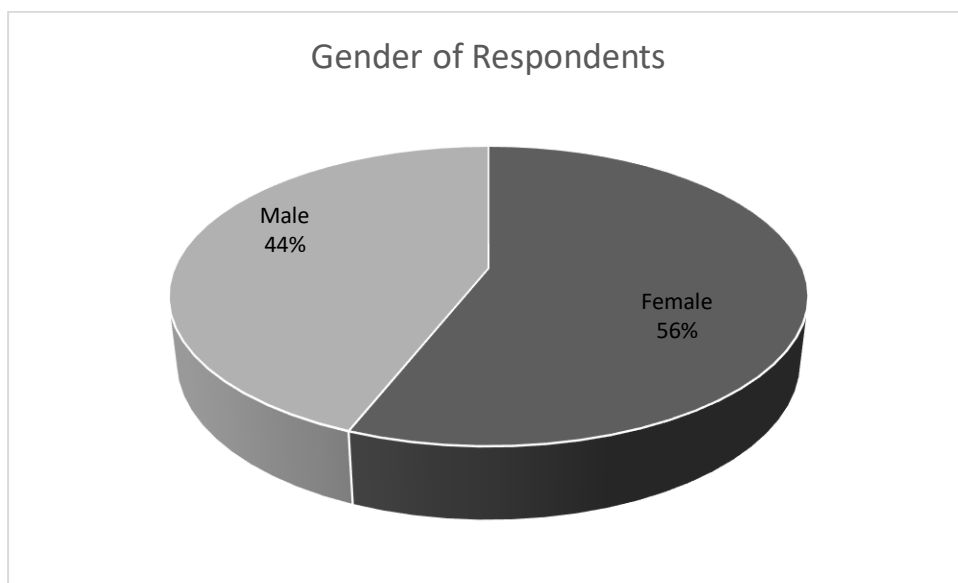
**Table 4.2: Age of the Respondents**

Age Category	Frequency	Per cent (%)
20-30 Years	62	20.1
31-40 Years	100	32.4
41-50 Years	73	23.6
51 years and Above	74	23.9
<b>Total</b>	<b>309</b>	<b>100.0</b>

The findings show that that 20.1% (n=62) were aged between 20 and 30 years, 32.4% (n=100) were aged between 31 and 40 years, 23.6% (n=73) were aged between 41-50 years, and 23.9% (n=74) were 51 years and above. Therefore, most of the respondents were aged between 31 and 40 years.

#### **4.4.2. Gender of the Respondents**

This study sought to determine the respondents' gender and the findings were recorded in Figure 4.1.



**Figure 4.1: Gender of the Respondents**

As indicated in Figure 4.1, 56.0% (n=173) of the respondents were female while 44.0% (n=136) were male. This is an indication that there was gender parity among the respondents of the study. This was useful to the study as it ensured that the responses attained were no biased towards a particular gender.

#### **4.4.3. Highest Level of Education**

The study sought to find out the highest level of education that the respondents had completed and these findings are shown in Table 4.3.

**Table 4.3: Highest Level of Education**

<b>Level of Education</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Per cent (%)</b>
Diploma	87	28.2
Bachelor's Degree	158	51.1
Master's Degree	64	20.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>309</b>	<b>100.0</b>

As indicated in Table 4.3, 28.2% (n=87) of the respondents had a diploma as the highest level of education, while 51.1% (n=158) had bachelor's degrees, and 20.7% (n=64) had master's degrees. These findings implied that the respondents had an educational beyond high school and they were able to read and provide required responses that were presented in the questionnaire.

#### **4.4.4. Marital Status of the Respondents**

The study presents the marital status of the respondents on Table 4.4.

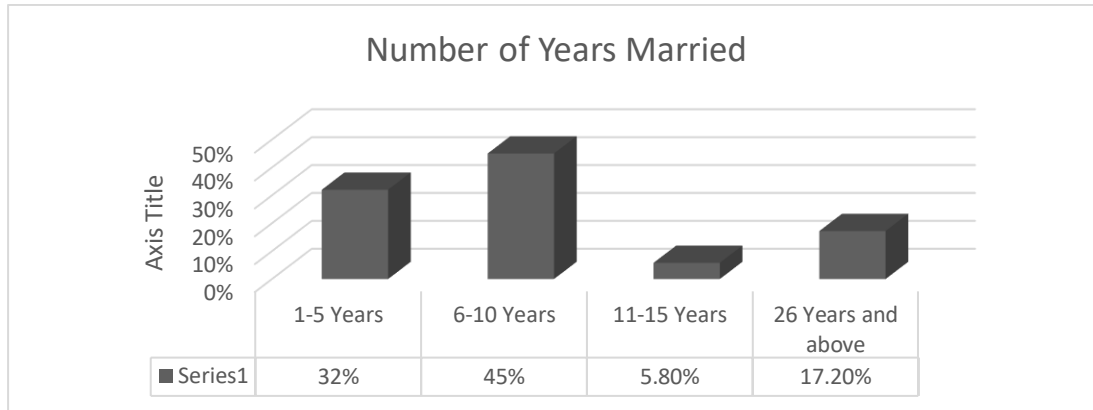
**Table 4.4: Marital Status**

<b>Marital Status</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Per cent (%)</b>
Married	152	49.2
Separated	72	23.3
Widowed	35	11.3
Divorced	50	16.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>309</b>	<b>100.0</b>

As indicated in Table 4.4, 49.2% (n=152) of the respondents were married, 23.3% (n=72) were separated, 11.3% (n=35) were widowed, and 16.2% (n=50) were divorced.

#### 4.4.5. Number of Years Married

The study wanted to find out the number of years the respondents had been married and the results are shown in Figure 4.2.



**Figure 4.2: Number of Years Married**

As the result indicate, 32.0% (n=99) of the respondents had been married for 1-5 years, 45.0% (n=139) had been married for 6-10 years, 5.8% (n=18) had been married for 11-15 years, and 17.2% (n=53) had been married for 26 years and above.

#### 4.4.6. Father Figure

The study wanted to find out the father figure that the respondents had when growing up and the results are shown in Table 4.5.

**Table 4.5: Father Figure**

Father Figure Category	Frequency	Per cent (%)
Biological Father	259	83.8
Step-Father	45	14.6
Adoptive Father	5	1.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>309</b>	<b>100.0</b>

The result in Table 4.5 shows that 83.8% (n=259) of the respondents had their biological fathers as their father figure, while 14.6% (n=45) had step-fathers, while 1.6% (n=5) had adoptive fathers.



#### 4.5. Level of Fathers' Involvement

The first objective of this study was to determine the level of fathers' involvement among individuals in Westlands Constituency. This was measured using the Father Involvement Scale which has 20 items and was measured on a Likert scale which had ranged from 1=never involved to 5=always involved. The scores of the items ranged from 20 to 100. To determine the level of fathers' involvement, the variables were computed into a new variable which was 'actual father involvement' the variable was then recorded to determine the level of involvement which ranged from low, average and high. The findings are recorded in Table 4.6.

**Table 4.6: Level of Fathers' Involvement**

<b>Father Involvement Level</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Per cent (%)</b>
Low	193	62.5
Average	63	20.4
High	53	17.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>309</b>	<b>100.0</b>

According to Table 4.6, 62.5% (n=193) indicated a low level of father involvement, 20.4% (n=63) indicated an average level of father involvement, and 17.2% (n=53) indicated a high level of father involvement. These findings implied that there was a low level of father involvement among the respondents.

#### 4.6. Effect of Involvement of Fathers on Marriage Relationship Outcome

The second objective of the study was to establish the extent to which a father's involvement affects the level of marriage satisfaction of couples in Westlands Constituency, Nairobi County. To determine this, first, the Relationship Assessment Scale which measures the level of satisfaction and had 7 items was scored and the scores ranged from 7-35. The level of satisfaction was then determined by computing the items into a new dummy variable called

‘Marriage Relationship’. The level of marriage relationship satisfaction was then computed and recorded in Table 4.7.

**Table 4.7: Level of Marriage Relationship Satisfaction**

<b>Marriage Relationship Satisfaction Level</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Per cent (%)</b>
Low	222	71.8
Average	67	21.7
High	20	6.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>309</b>	<b>100.0</b>

According to Table 4.7, 71.8% (n=222) indicated a low level of marriage relationship satisfaction, 21.7% (n=67) indicated an average level of marriage relationship satisfaction, and 6.5% (n=20) indicated a high level of marriage relationship satisfaction. These findings implied that there was a low level of marriage relationship satisfaction among the respondents.

As aforementioned, the variables on fathers’ involvement had already been recorded into a variable called actual father involvement. Therefore, the new variables that were called marriage relationship and actual father involvement helped the researcher to conduct a Pearson Correlation test. The findings are recorded in Table 4.9.

**Table 4.8: Effect of Involvement of Fathers on Marriage Relationship**

		<b>Actual Father Involvement</b>	<b>Marriage Relationship</b>
<b>Actual Father Involvement</b>	Pearson Correlation	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)		
	N	309	
<b>Marriage Relationship</b>	Pearson Correlation	-.312**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	309	

\*\*. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

As shown in Table 4.8 the Pearson correlation value (r) is -0.312 at a p-value of 0.000. These results imply that there is a negative correlation between actual father involvement and

marriage relationships among the respondents. Therefore, the low father involvement negatively affects the marriage relationships of the respondents.

#### **4.7. Relationship between Father Involvement and Demographic Factors**

The third objective of this study was to investigate the relationship between father involvement and demographic factors among couples in Westlands Constituency. To measure the relationship, a Pearson Correlation test was conducted and the results were recorded in Table 4.9. The demographic factors that were used in the test are age, gender, education, marital status, number of years married and father figure.

**Table 4.9: Relationship between Father Involvement and Demographic Factors**

		Actual father involvement	Age	Gender	Highest Level of Education	Marital Status	Number of years married	Father figure
Actual father involvement	Pearson Correlation	1						
	Sig. (2-tailed)							
	N	309						
Age	Pearson Correlation	.127*	1					
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.026						
	N	309	309					
Gender	Pearson Correlation	.294**	.540**	1				
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000					
	N	309	309	309				
Highest Level of Education	Pearson Correlation	.603**	.433**	.311**	1			
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000				
	N	309	309	309	309			
Marital Status	Pearson Correlation	.592**	-.003	.020	.486**	1		
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.952	.722	.000			
	N	309	309	309	309	309		
Number of years married	Pearson Correlation	-.232**	.682**	.351**	.339**	-.314**	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000		
	N	309	309	309	309	309	309	
Father figure	Pearson Correlation	-.270**	-.326**	-.204**	.012	.185**	-.100	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.833	.001	.080	
	N	309	309	309	309	309	309	309

\*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

\*\*. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The findings show that the demographic factors had a relationship with father involvement. Age had a positive relationship with father involvement ( $r=0.127$ ;  $p<0.05$ ); gender also had a positive relationship with father involvement ( $r=0.294$ ;  $p<0.05$ ); highest level of education had a positive relationship with father involvement ( $r=0.603$ ;  $p<0.05$ ) and marital status also had a positive relationship with father involvement ( $r=0.592$ ;  $p<0.05$ ). These findings are indicative of a positive relationship between age, gender, education levels, and marital status. For these demographic factors, it is an indication that father involvement has led to positive results such as achieving post-secondary education. However, the number of years married had a negative relationship with father involvement ( $r=-0.232$ ;  $p<0.05$ ). Also, the father figure had a negative relationship with father involvement ( $r=-0.270$ ;  $p<0.05$ ). These findings imply that demographic factors such as number of years married had a negative correlation with the father's involvement. This points out that low father involvement can be associated with separations and divorces among the respondents.

#### **4.8.Limitations of the Study**

In the process of carrying out the study, there were several challenges that the researcher faced especially during the collection of data. The study was limited only to church-going couples in Westlands Constituency, Nairobi County. Accessing respondents that were willing to participate in the study was a challenge since the study was deemed to be sensitive. Many individuals were uneasy and unwilling to talk about their family backgrounds and marriage relationships. To deal with this limitation, the researcher and the research assistants made sure that they explained the purpose of the study and that the data collected would only be used by the researcher and for academic purposes. There was an insistence on upholding confidentiality and anonymity of the respondents to ensure that no harm came to them as a result of participating in the study.

Additionally, there were challenges in ensuring that the respondents returned the questionnaires on time to enable the study to be completed on the stipulated time-frame. This limitation was overcome by continuous follow-ups which helped to remind the respondents of the study's timelines. This is also a factor that contributed to a high response rate of the study.

#### **4.9.Summary**

This chapter has presented the findings of the response rate of the 384 respondents who participated in the study, presented the reliability scales, shown the results of the demographic characteristics which included age, gender, level of education and the number of years the respondents were married. The chapter also presented the findings of father involvement and the effect that involvement of fathers has on the marriage relationship outcome.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **DISCUSSION**

#### **5.1. Introduction**

In this chapter, discussions are presented based on the results of the study that were discussed in the preceding chapter. The discussions mainly focus on the objectives of the study which include the level of fathers' involvement, the effect of fathers' involvement on marriage relationship outcomes, and the relationship between father involvement and the respondents' demographic factors.

#### **5.2. Level of Fathers' Involvement**

The first objective of this study was to determine the level of fathers' involvement among individuals in Westlands Constituency. The Father Involvement Scale was used to measure the father involvement level. The results presented the involvement as low, average and high. The study found out that there was a low level of father involvement among the individuals of Westlands constituency (62.5%; n=193). These findings are in line with those of Braga (2014) who found out that there was low father involvement among the respondents due to high levels of father absence as evidenced by only 12% of the respondents' fathers being present as the children were growing. The children grow up without having a father figure and this affects their behaviour in later lives.

Equally, Khanou (2016) supports these findings by indicating that in the recent past, there has been an upsurge in the father involvement levels and that more fathers less involved in the growth and development of their children. On the contrary, Henz (2017) found that there is an increase of interest among fathers in the recent past to be involved in their children's lives. The increased father involvement has had positive outcomes on the children which positively influences their intimate relationships.

The Father Involvement Scale provided by Hawkins and Palkovitz (1999) implies intellectual, social, ethical, cognitive, spiritual and physical factors are affected by the degree of involvement of a father in their child's life. This can affect the child later in their relationships which includes marriage relationships. From this standpoint, it is derived that the father involvement levels result in behaviours among children which can be externalized which are directed towards others or internalized which are self-directed. According to a study by De Santis and Barham (2017), low father involvement can be as a result of factors such as access to information, life experiences and expectations, financial resources, work conditions and early fatherhood involvement. The lack of interaction, accessibility and responsibility is also viewed as a contributing factor to the development of a child. This affects how a child performs socially, functions cognitively, achieves academically, develops physically, and how they perceive themselves.

Furthermore, Pruett, Pruett and Cowan (2017) highlight that the involvement of fathers in the growth and progress of their children is consistently associated with the relationships that they enter into as they grow. For instance, socio-economic status of the father determines the level of income of the family. Where there is low income, paternal engagement reduces as the father works to fend for the family leading to weakened family relationships. Low levels of father involvement led to negative outcomes in a child.

### **5.3. Effect of Involvement of Fathers on Marriage Relationships**

The second objective of the study was to establish the extent to which a father's involvement affects the level of marriage satisfaction of couples in Westlands Constituency, Nairobi County. Through a Pearson Correlation test, the study found out that there was a statistically significant negative effect between father involvement and marriage relationships ( $r=-0.312$ ;  $p\text{-value}=0.000$ ). The findings are in accord with those of Denna and Karin (2016) who observed that when individuals did not have fathers either due to separation, death,



desertion, or emotional absence, they were likely to have negative intimate relationships. There was a lack of sense of security, positive learning of masculine behaviour and social skills among the respondents.

Correspondingly, using the Father Involvement Scale, Damayanti and Djuwita (2017) recognised that there was a significant negative correlation between father involvement and romantic relationships. The study specifically focused on violence while dating and it concluded that the lower the involvement of a father in a child's life, the higher the chances of violence while dating. The children who grew with their fathers involved in their lives were in more control of their emotions and they can solve conflicts better as compared to children with no or little father involvement. Generally, father involvement helped to reduce problem behaviour in children.

In the same breath, Granger (2016) found out that father's involvement especially among women affected the romantic relationships of the women. This was attributed to learning from their fathers in terms of aspects such as behaviour, loyalty, and support. The fathers who were committed in their romantic relationships were deemed to give their daughters hope to also positively build their own relationships. It is from the fathers that the daughters were able to gain healthy perspectives on relationships. Therefore, the study indicated that father involvement positively affected marriage relationships. However, a caveat is provided only when the involvement is positive.

#### **5.4. Relationship between Father Involvement and Demographic Factors.**

The third objective sought to investigate the relationship between father involvement and demographic factors among couples in Westlands Constituency, Nairobi County. The demographic factors that were used in the test are age, gender, education, marital status, number of years married and father figure. On the demographic factors, this study shows that most of the respondents were aged between 31 and 40 years and most of them were female but

there was gender parity in the gender distribution of the respondents. The study also showed that most of the respondents had bachelor degrees as the highest level of education that had been completed. Most of the respondents were married while most had been married for between 6 and 10 years. The father figure for most of the respondents was their biological father.

Through a Pearson Correlation test, it was established that father involvement had a statistically significant relationship with age, gender, education and marital status among couples in Westlands Constituency. For example, in terms of education, the correlation test indicated a statistically strong relationship ( $r=0.603$ ;  $p<0.05$ ) which implied that when the fathers were involved in the life and development of their children, the children performed well and were able to advance in their education. In support of this, Parker (2019) noted that the lack of father involvement led to a 71% school dropout rate. Likewise, Liess (2012) explained that in cases of absentee fathers, there was a higher rate of the children repeating a school year and being violent at school which further minimized their chances of completing their school education.

Also, in terms of marital status, this study indicated that there is a statistically strong relationship between marital status and father involvement ( $r=0.592$ ;  $p<0.05$ ). Pruett et al. (2017) highlight that when children observe their parents as an intact couple with the parent-to-parent involvement, they are also more likely to get married. Unfortunately, in instances where there is low father involvement even if the parents seem to be an intact couple, there is a likelihood that the children will experience divorce and separation cases. The children can also be highly dissatisfied in their marriages.

Moreover, this study found out that father involvement had a statistically negative relationship with the number of years married and father figure. The results showed that most of the respondents have been married for between six and ten years and the figure father was

their biological father. The findings are not in line with those of Jessee and Adamsons (2018) who found out that there was a positive relationship between the number of years an individual had been married and father involvement. To achieve this, there was a need for the father to be actively and positively in the lives of children. This promotes fathering behaviours that are positive and the children can develop positive relationships even in the future. The marital status is representative of the family structure and positive father involvement leads to individuals being married for a long period. In such families, divorce and separation are unlikely.

### **5.5. Suggested Improvement of Theory**

This study was guided by the Attachment Theory which was suggested by John Bowlby and Mary Ainsworth in 1958. The attachment theory was supported by the Theory of Psychoanalysis by Sigmund Freud (1856-1939). These two theories aided in understanding the impact of father involvement on marriage relationships. The attachment theory explains the relationship and bond that parents form with their children as they grow. The parent-child attachment revolves around aspects such as protection, provision, emotional support, and growth and development of the child (Di Folco et al., 2016).

Since attachment is a learned behaviour, the theory should be improved to include aspects of social learning where in relation to this study, a child learns about romantic and intimate relationships from their parents. Particularly, the theory should deepen the focus on father involvement in the lives of a child and how the involvement affects the child's future intimate and romantic relationships. This would help to bring to the limelight the role fathers play in social learning that can have an effect on their children's marriage relationships.

On the other hand, the theory of Psychoanalysis emphasizes the loss of a father and how it affects the development of a child. The loss of a father can be through death, separation or divorce. It is in the process of child development that the role of a father's involvement

becomes imminent and can determine the perception of the child towards relationships with other individuals. At the later stages of life, the perceptions of relationships play out with their romantic partners. Therefore, if the father involvement was low, the child can have narcissistic tendencies towards their romantic partners (Angela et al, 2017). The role of fathers is continually changing owing to aspects such as globalization and as such, there is a need make advancements and conduct more empirical studies based on the theory of psychoanalysis that will show the role of fathers in a more practical manner. This can also be linked to the impact of the involvement of fathers in marriage relationships of their children.

## **5.6. Revisiting Conceptual Framework**

In this study, the conceptual framework that was presented showed the independent variable as father involvement while the dependent variable was marriage relationship outcomes. The independent variable was operationalized through the time fathers spent with their children, cognitive involvement, emotional engagement and social participation. To measure the independent variable, the Father Involvement Scale was used.

The dependent variable of the study was operationalized through needs met, level of satisfaction and met expectations. This was measured through the relationship assessment scale. The moderating variable was the demographic factors which included age, gender, and the number of years the individuals had been married. The review of the questionnaire led to the addition of the highest level of education completed and the type of father figure present. The demographic factors helped in determining the relationship between father involvement and marriage relationship outcomes.

## **5.7. Summary**

This chapter has presented a discussion of the findings of the analysed data used in this study. This presentation is systematic and is based on the objectives of the study which include the father involvement levels, their effect on marriage relationships, and their relationship with demographic factors. The study found out that father involvement was low for the respondents as they were growing up. There was a statistically significant negative effect of father involvement on marriage relationships. The study also found out that father involvement had a statistically significant positive relationship with age, gender, level of education, and marital status. However, father involvement had a statistically significant negative relationship between the number of years married and the type of father figure that was present as an individual was growing up.

## **CHAPTER SIX**

### **SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **6.1. Introduction**

This chapter presents the summary of the findings, the conclusions drawn from the summary and recommendations based on the conclusions of the study.

#### **6.2. Summary**

The purpose of this study was to determine the impact that involvement of fathers during child development has on the outcome of marriage relationships among couples who live in Westlands Constituency, Nairobi County. The study was quantitative research that employed the descriptive cross-sectional research design to estimate the prevalence of father involvement and the result of marriage relationships among couples. A sample size of 384 respondents was randomly selected to participate in the study by answering the study's questionnaire. 309 questionnaires were completely filled and returned giving a response rate of 80.5% which was deemed to be sufficient to carry out the data analysis. The summary of findings is presented according to the objectives of the study.

The first objective of this study was to determine the level of fathers' involvement among individuals in Westlands Constituency, Nairobi County. The study found out that there was a low level of father involvement among the individuals of Westlands constituency (62.5%; n=193). The low father involvement shows that fathers are not involved in the lives of their children.

The second objective of the study was to establish the effect of involvement of fathers on marriage relationships among couples in Westlands Constituency. The study found out that father involvement had a statistically significant negative effect on the outcomes of marriage relationships. The low father involvement affected the outlook of the respondents in terms of the marriage relationship.

The third objective of this study was to investigate the relationship between father involvement and demographic factors among couples in Westlands Constituency. The study found out that father involvement has a statistically significant positive relationship with age, gender, level of education, and marital status. However, father involvement has a statistically significant negative relationship with number of years a respondent was married and father figure.

### **6.3. Conclusions**

Based on the first objective on the level of father involvement, this study concludes that there is a low father involvement among couples in Westlands Constituency. The low father involvement is attributed to a number of aspects such as low income and the need for the fathers to work to fend for their families. Also, it can be deduced that, since the respondents indicated that their fathers were sometimes involved in their lives as they were growing up, the fathers were present in the lives of the respondents but they were inactively involved.

The second objective of the study focused on the effect of father involvement and marriage relationships among couples in Westlands Constituency. The study concludes that father involvement has a statistically significant negative effect on marriage relationship outcomes of individuals. With a father involvement level that is low, there is a likelihood that the marriage relationship of an individual would be negatively affected. The individual may be unsatisfied in their marriage relationships due to lack of their fathers' guidance and support on how to relate to others.

Based on the third objective on the relationship between father involvement and demographic factors, this study concludes that father involvement has a statistically significant negative relationship with the number of years married and the type of father figure among couples in Westlands Constituency. Nevertheless, the study also concludes that father

involvement has a statistically significant positive relationship with age, gender, level of education and marital status among couples in Westlands Constituency.

#### **6.4. Recommendations**

This study makes a number of recommendations based on the conclusions made. The study recommends that organizations such as religious institutions start interventions which will help to increase father-involvement in the lives of their children. The interventions can include father-focused programs and initiatives which can provide a way in which fathers build self-efficacy in the parenting skills and also involvement. Increased father involvement can help to improve on the father-child relationship quality.

Additionally, in cases of separation, the parents should consider active co-parenting which will ensure that fathers are actively engaged in the lives of their children so that the children do not have feelings of abandonment. The parents can also consider joining parenting support groups. These groups can help in giving the parents guidance and support on how to increase the extent to which fathers are involved in their children's lives as well as reinforce confidence in the type of involvement to be given.

For couples, this study recommends counselling services which can be used to comprehensively tackle issues that a couple may have. Counselling sessions can help to address the dissatisfaction of couples in marriage as a result of the lack of father involvement in the growth and development of the individuals. The counselling sessions can also assist in uncovering the deep-rooted issues that emanate from absence of fathers or father-figures among couples.



## **6.5. Suggestions for Further Research**

This study investigated the impact of father involvement on marriage relationship outcomes. Further research can be conducted on the contextual conditions of individuals as moderating variables, another focusing on both mothers and fathers to help understand how each parent influences marriage relationship outcomes and another to determine why marriage relationship satisfaction is low in cases where biological father figures are present in the children's lives. Another area of study would be on the impact that mother's involvement has on the outcome of a child's marriage relationship and another to compare which of the two parents, a father or a mother, has the greater impact on the outcome of children marriages.

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## APPENDICES

### Appendix 1: **Informed Consent Form**

#### Informed Consent

My name is Stella Maina and I am a Master of Counseling Psychology student at the Institute of Youth Studies of Tangaza University College. I'm inviting you to participate in a research study.

The research study is on the relationship between father involvement and the outcome of marriage relationships among couples of Westlands Constituency, Nairobi. This is a quantitative research study that will use closed questionnaires for collection of data. As part of my data collection procedures, I am soliciting voluntary participation from you. This means, you may choose to participate or not. You will be asked to respond to questionnaires that will take approximately ten minutes.

All information will be kept anonymous and confidential. This means that your name will not appear anywhere. I will assign a number to your responses, and only I will have the key to indicate which number belongs to which participant, data will be treated in aggregate.

The benefit of this research is that you will be helping to determine if there is a relationship between fathers being involved and the outcome of marriage relationships. The possible risks of physical or mental harm for participating in this study is minimum. If you have any questions about participation in this study, you may contact me on the email below.

---

This study was approved by the National Commission for Science Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI). If you agree to participate in this research study after fully reading and understanding the statements above, please sign below to indicate your acceptance to participate. If you wish to have a copy of this informed consent form for your future reference, you may cut the above segment of this form or ask for a copy.

Signature of participant

Date

---

---

Name of Principal Researcher

Signature

Date

---

---

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Contact address of researcher: Tel: +254 763651138

Email: exqmanagement@gmail.com

Contact address of College: MA Programme Leader Email: iysma@tangaza.ac.ke. Tel: +254 891407. Contact of my Supervisor: lucynjiru8@gmail.com

## Appendix 2: Demographic Survey Questions

Please do not write your name or the name of your institution.

Please read the following questions and tick where appropriate.

1. Age: What is your age bracket?

20 – 30 ☐ 31 – 40 ☐ 41 – 50 ☐ 51 and above ☐

2. Gender Male ☐ Female ☐

3. What is your highest level of education?

High school ☐ Diploma ☐ Bachelor degree ☐

Master's degree ☐ Doctoral degree ☐

4. What is your marital status?

Married ☐ Separated ☐ Divorced ☐ Widowed ☐

Single ☐

5. How long have you been married?

1-5 years ☐ 6-10 years ☐ 11-15 years ☐

16-20 years ☐ 21-25 years ☐ 26 years and above ☐

6. Identify your father figure

Biological father ☐ Step father ☐ Adoptive father ☐

7. How involved was your father while growing up?

Always ☐ Sometimes ☐ Rarely ☐ Never ☐

### Appendix 3: **Father Involvement Scale (Hawkins & Palkovitz, 1999)**

Please answer the following questions and place the appropriate number on each of the items.

How involved was your father in the following aspects of your life and development?

Please place the appropriate number on the line before each of the following items.

5. Always involved
4. Often involved
3. Sometimes involved
2. Rarely involved
1. Never involved

\_\_\_\_\_ Intellectual development  
\_\_\_\_\_ Emotional development  
\_\_\_\_\_ Social development  
\_\_\_\_\_ Ethical/moral development  
\_\_\_\_\_ Spiritual development  
\_\_\_\_\_ Physical development  
\_\_\_\_\_ Career development  
\_\_\_\_\_ Developing responsibility  
\_\_\_\_\_ Developing independence  
\_\_\_\_\_ Developing competence  
\_\_\_\_\_ Leisure, fun, play  
\_\_\_\_\_ Providing income  
\_\_\_\_\_ Sharing activities/interests  
\_\_\_\_\_ Mentoring/teaching  
\_\_\_\_\_ Caregiving  
\_\_\_\_\_ Being protective  
\_\_\_\_\_ Advising  
\_\_\_\_\_ Discipline  
\_\_\_\_\_ School/homework  
\_\_\_\_\_ Companionship

What did you want your father's level of involvement to be compared with what it actually was?

Please place the appropriate number on the line before each of following items.

5. Much more involved
4. A little more involved
3. It was just right
2. A little less involved
1. Much less involved

\_\_\_\_\_ Intellectual development  
\_\_\_\_\_ Emotional development  
\_\_\_\_\_ Social development  
\_\_\_\_\_ Ethical/moral development  
\_\_\_\_\_ Spiritual development  
\_\_\_\_\_ Physical development  
\_\_\_\_\_ Career development  
\_\_\_\_\_ Developing responsibility  
\_\_\_\_\_ Developing independence  
\_\_\_\_\_ Developing competence  
\_\_\_\_\_ Leisure, fun, play  
\_\_\_\_\_ Providing income  
\_\_\_\_\_ Sharing activities/interests  
\_\_\_\_\_ Mentoring/teaching  
\_\_\_\_\_ Caregiving  
\_\_\_\_\_ Being protective  
\_\_\_\_\_ Advising  
\_\_\_\_\_ Discipline  
\_\_\_\_\_ School/homework  
\_\_\_\_\_ Companionship

#### Appendix 4: **Relationship Assessment Scale (Hendrick, 1988)**

Think about your current relationship with your husband or wife.

Please **circle** on the answer sheet the letter that best answers that item for you.

1. How well does your partner meet your needs?

A	B	C	D	E
Poorly		Average		Extremely well

2. In general, how satisfied are you with your relationship?

A	B	C	D	E
Unsatisfied		Average		Extremely satisfied

3. How good is your relationship compared to most?

A	B	C	D	E
Poor		Average		Excellent

4. How often do you wish you hadn't gotten in this relationship?

A	B	C	D	E
Never		Average		Very often

5. To what extent has your relationship met your original expectations:

A	B	C	D	E
Hardly at all		Average		Completely

6. How much do you love your partner?

A	B	C	D	E
Not much		Average		Very much

7. How many problems are there in your relationship?

A	B	C	D	E
Very few		Average		Very many

## Appendix 5: **Debrief Form**

**Title:** Impact of Fathers' Involvement on Children's' Marriage Outcome: A case of Couples  
in Westlands Constituency, Nairobi County

**Conducted by:** Stella W. Maina

**Tel:** 0722651138

**Thank you for participating in this study your participation is greatly appreciated.**

### **Purpose of the Study:**

In case you were not previously informed, the purpose of this study is to determine the impact of fathers' involvement on children's' marriage outcome among couples in Westlands Constituency, Nairobi County

The goal of this study is to establish if there is a relationship between the involvement of fathers during the developmental years of children and the outcome of marriage relationships.

**If applicable:** Some of the questions posed in this study may be personal and as such may stir emotional distress. You have the right to withdraw the consent and data you provide whenever you feel necessary. In this context, the researcher is also a counsellor and can be reached at any time through the contact number provided in this form.

### **Confidentiality:**

In case you decide that you want the data that you have provided for this study being removed and not being used permanently, please contact the researcher in within 48 hours of participating in the survey to enable the researcher make the necessary amendments that will not affect the data analysis process.

A copy of the final report of this study can be availed through contacting the researcher. Any concerns that you have about this study or if you would like to speak to someone not directly involved in this study, please contact the head of the psychology department, Tangaza University through the school email [inquiries@tangaza.ac.ke](mailto:inquiries@tangaza.ac.ke) or through Tel: 0722204724/ 0733685059/, 0208067667.

**\*\* For your future reference, please keep a copy of this form. I would to thank you for participating in this study\*\***

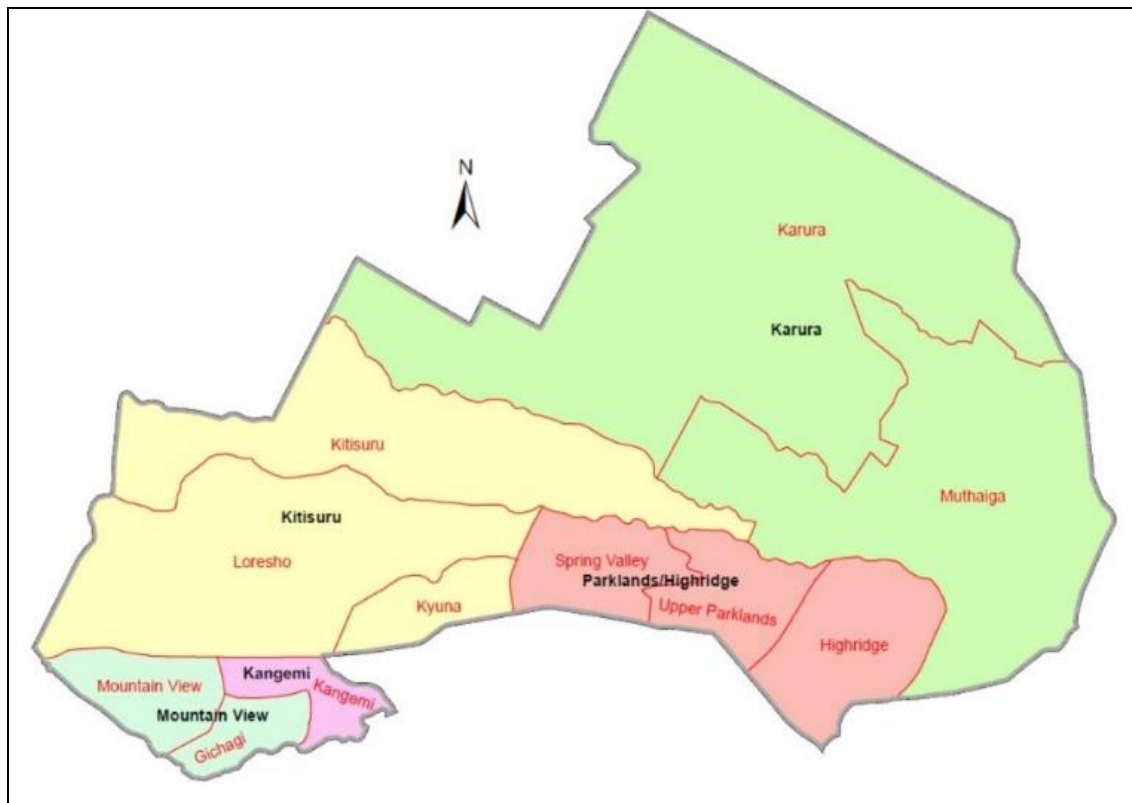
Appendix 6: Table for Determining Sample Size for a Finite Population

$N$	$S$	$N$	$S$	$N$	$S$
10	10	220	140	1200	291
15	14	230	144	1300	297
20	19	240	148	1400	302
25	24	250	152	1500	306
30	28	260	155	1600	310
35	32	270	159	1700	313
40	36	280	162	1800	317
45	40	290	165	1900	320
50	44	300	169	2000	322
55	48	320	175	2200	327
60	52	340	181	2400	331
65	56	360	186	2600	335
70	59	380	191	2800	338
75	63	400	196	3000	341
80	66	420	201	3500	346
85	70	440	205	4000	351
90	73	460	210	4500	354
95	76	480	214	5000	357
100	80	500	217	6000	361
110	86	550	226	7000	364
120	92	600	234	8000	367
130	97	650	242	9000	368
140	103	700	248	10000	370
150	108	750	254	15000	375
160	113	800	260	20000	377
170	118	850	265	30000	379
180	123	900	269	40000	380
190	127	950	274	50000	381
200	132	1000	278	75000	382
210	136	1100	285	1000000	384

Note.— $N$  is population size.  $S$  is sample size.

Source: Krejcie & Morgan, 1970






## Appendix 7: Map of Westlands Constituency



Westlands Constituency, IEBC (2012)



## Appendix 8: Research Authorization Permit

 REPUBLIC OF KENYA	 NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY & INNOVATION
Ref No: 588860	Date of Issue: 26/August/2020
<b>RESEARCH LICENSE</b>	
	
<p>This is to Certify that Ms.. Stella Wangui Maina of Tangaza University College, has been licensed to conduct research in Nairobi on the topic: Impact of fathers' involvement on children marriage outcome: A case of couples in Westlands Constituency, Nairobi County Kenya. for the period ending : 26/August/2021.</p>	
License No: NACOSTI/P/20/6363	
588860 Applicant Identification Number	 Director General NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY & INNOVATION
<i>Recommended</i> <i>M. Mutitu</i> <i>7/10/2020</i> COUNTY COMMISSIONER NAIROBI COUNTY P.O. Box 30124-00100, NAI TEL: 341666	Verification QR Code 
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## Appendix 9: Ministry of Education Authorization Permit



Republic of Kenya

### MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

#### STATE DEPARTMENT OF EARLY LEARNING AND BASIC EDUCATION

Telegrams: "SCHOOLING", Nairobi  
Telephone: Nairobi 020 2453699  
Email: [rcenairobi@gmail.com](mailto:rcenairobi@gmail.com)  
[cdenairobi@gmail.com](mailto:cdenairobi@gmail.com)

REGIONAL DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION  
NAIROBI REGION  
NYAYO HOUSE  
P.O. Box 74629 – 00200  
NAIROBI

When replying please quote

Ref: RDE/NRB/RESEARCH/1/65 vol.1

DATE: 7<sup>th</sup> October, 2020


Ms. Stella Wangui Maina  
Tangaza University College  
NAIROBI.

#### RE: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION

We are in receipt of a letter from the National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation regarding research authorization in Nairobi County on the topic: *"Impact of father's involvement on Children Marriage Outcome"*.

This office has no objection and authority is hereby granted for a period, ending on **26<sup>th</sup> August, 2021** as indicated in the request letter.

Kindly inform the Sub County Director of Education of the Sub County you intend to visit.


JAMES KIMOTHO  
FOR: REGIONAL DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION  
NAIROBI.

Copy to: Director General/CEO  
National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation  
NAIROBI.



## Appendix 10: Plagiarism Report

1/13/2021

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<p>Turnitin Originality Report</p> <p>Processed on: 13-Jan-2021 10:53 EAT</p> <p>ID: 1486765494</p> <p>Word Count: 16446</p> <p>Submitted: 1</p> <p>Impact of Fathers' Involvement on Children's Marriage Outcome Among Couples in Westlands Constituency, Nairobi County-Kenya By Stella</p>		<p><b>TANGAZA UNIVERSITY COLLEGE,</b> Catholic University of Eastern Africa, Chief Librarian P. O. Box 15055, 00509 - Nairobi.</p> <p>13/01/2019</p>	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>Similarity Index</td> <td>Similarity by Source</td> </tr> <tr> <td>11%</td> <td> Internet Sources: 10%  Publications: 4%  Student Papers: 3% </td> </tr> </table>	Similarity Index	Similarity by Source	11%	Internet Sources: 10% Publications: 4% Student Papers: 3%
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