

EFFECTS OF BLENDED FAMILY DYNAMICS ON THE WELLBEING OF CHILDREN IN
KENYA: CASE OF KABETE SUB-COUNTY IN KIAMBU COUNTY

by

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DECLARATION

This thesis is my original work and has not been presented for a degree or any other award in any other university

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DEDICATION

My special dedication goes to my husband, Gabriel for his support and encouragement throughout my academic journey.

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ABSTRACT

Family changes adversely impact a child's wellbeing including the psychological, social and academic wellbeing of the child. The purpose of the study was to investigate the effect of blended family dynamics on child wellbeing in Kenya using case of Kabete Sub-County in Kiambu County. The study employed descriptive design using both qualitative and quantitative research methodology and primary data to achieve its objectives. The study employed purposive sampling techniques to select a sample size of 50 secondary school age-going children from blended families focusing on 14 – 19 years age group. The governing theory underpinning the study was the Attachment Theory by Bowlby complimented by the theory of Structural Family Therapy by Minuchin. The data was collected through use of structured questionnaires. The data was analysed using descriptive analysis method in terms of frequencies, cross tabulations and graphs with the help of the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). Regarding psychological wellbeing, the study revealed that most of the respondents did not spend time with their stepparents often, and that they trusted their biological parents with secrets and not their stepparents. Within different blended family dynamics, a higher proportion of respondents with delinquent behaviours such as cheating, stealing, fighting and school absenteeism were found within stepmother families than in stepfather families or a combination of stepfather and stepmother. The results on academic wellbeing showed that a higher proportion of the respondents with fair or bad academic wellbeing were from the stepfather families than from the stepmother families. In general, the study reflects an adverse child wellbeing in both stepmother and stepfather families. There was need for biological parents to continue to play an active role in the upbringing of their children through regular visits and creating quality time. In addition, stepparents should establish friendships with the children and foster trust and respect in order to reassure them that the new environment was safe to live in. There was generally a need for the stepfathers to step in as father figures to their step-children in order to provide the guidance that they need to enhance their academic wellbeing. There was need for a future study to compare the child wellbeing in blended families with that of traditional families.

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

APA	American Psychological Association
CAWs	County Assembly Wards
GPA	Grade Point Average
MoE	Ministry of Education
NACOSTI	National Commission for Science, Technology, and Innovation
PACU	Pan Africa University
RoK	Republic of Kenya
SSA	Sub-Sahara Africa
SPSS	Statistical Package for Social Sciences
US	United States

DEFINITION OF TERMS

Academic wellbeing. This refers to the outcome of education reflecting the student's success in meeting short- or long-term goals in education (Brown, Manning, & Stykes, 2015). Several aspects as proxy variable for academic wellbeing used in the study include: self-rating on academic performance, relationship with teachers, personal motivation, teachers concern for own performance, and stepparents' academic support.

Blended family. A blended family is a family where at least one parent has children from a previous relationship that are not genetically related to the other parent (Jozsa & Balassa, 2014). The aspects used in the study as proxy variable for blended families are the blended family types: stepfather family, and stepmother family.

Child. The National Laws of Kenya define a child as any individual who has not attained the age of eighteen years (Republic of Kenya, 2010).

Child wellbeing. Several researchers including Brown, Manning, and Stykes (2015), Brown (2010), Magnuson and Berger (2009) and Mackay (2005), explain that child well-being and developmental status of the child result from the family dynamics. According to these researchers, a range of measures that determine child well-being include psychological wellbeing which include mental and emotional wellbeing; social behaviour which includes peer relations and vices which reveal themselves through criminal offending; cigarette smoking, substance abuse, early departure from home, early onset of sexual behaviour, teenage pregnancy, and academic performance, which is influenced by cognitive capacity and schooling among other factors. According to the authors, child wellbeing is contingent on family and dynamics.

Family. In Kenya, the family is the natural and fundamental unit of society and the necessary basis of social order, and shall enjoy the recognition and protection of the State (Kenya Law Reform Commission, 2017).

Peer relationships. Refers to acceptance, aggressiveness, and shyness/withdrawal and are evaluated as predictors of three later wellbeing (dropping out of school, criminality, and psychopathology (Brown, Manning, & Stykes, 2015).

Psychological well-being. Refers to self-acceptance, self concept (high or low self-esteem), depressive mood positive relations with others, autonomy, environmental mastery, purpose in life, and personal growth (Brown, Manning, & Stykes, 2015). Several aspects as proxy for psychological wellbeing used in the study include: time spent with stepparent, closeness with stepparent, source of help when in trouble, source of financial needs, buying/consumption decisions in stepparent families, child-stepparent relationships, child-sibling relations, misunderstanding in stepfamily, close confidant. *Step-sibling.* The offspring of one's stepfather or stepmother who is not the offspring of one's mother and is not the offspring of one's father (Baham, et al., 2008).

Step-parent. The part of the couple who is not the biological parent of the child (Jozsa & Balassa, 2014).

Social wellbeing. Refers to empathy, positive/negative relationships, guilt/shame, aggression, help/seeking and negativity (Brown et al., 2015). Several aspects as proxy for social wellbeing used in the study include: cheating, stealing, fighting, and school absenteeism, drugs/alcohol/sex.

Traditional family. This is the intact or nuclear family where the family has remained together for the duration of the child's life (Baham, et al., 2008).

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

Introduction

This chapter presents the concepts and definition of blended families and child wellbeing statement of the problem, purpose of the study, objectives of the study, research questions (hypotheses), justification of the study, significance of the study, assumptions, scope of the study, limitations and delimitations, definition of terms and summary.

Background to the study

Over the past two decades, the traditional family of mother, father, and shared biological children as the dominant structure of a family has been replaced by the modern family, the blended family (Cindy and Fernandez, 2014). A blended family is a family where at least one parent has children from a previous relationship that are not genetically related to the other parent (Jozsa and Balassa, 2014). Children from a blended family may live with one biological parent or they may live with each biological parent for a period of time. Visitation rights enable children in blended families often to have contact with both biological parents even if they permanently live with only one parent.

Blended families are called by several other names including stepfamilies, reconstituted families, patchwork families, non-traditional families, new families, etc. The part of the couple who is not the biological parent of the child is called stepparent who either can be stepmother or stepfather. Baham, Weimer, Braver, &Fabricius (2008) refer to the traditional family as the intact family where the family has remained together for the duration of the child's life. In an intact family, also referred popularly to as the nuclear family, the parents typically are the biological parents of the children in the household,

exceptions occurring when parents adopt children, and when one of the parents has a child from a previous relationship (Baham et al., 2008). The blended family types are referred to as families that do not follow the intact family guidelines (Jozsa&Balassa, 2014).

Charlein (2009) contends that the concept of blended family has evolved from the embracing of two contradictory cultural ideals, marriage and individualism. Marriage is formal commitment to share one's life with another placing a strong value in the institution of marriage. Individualism emphasizes personal choice and self-development. High value is placed on personal freedom, fulfilment, and growth as well as spiritual fulfilment, reflecting individualism. Religion and law have reinforced both of these behavioural poles in America (Cherlin, 2009). The roots of the American emphasis on marriage and personal freedom were in place by 1900 (Fine, 2010). Between 1900 and 1960, marriage changed from an institutional and practical arrangement to a companionate one, meaning that individuals looked to marriage not just for help in raising a family and sharing a home but also for personal growth and fulfilment. Since 1960, marriage has become more an individualized institution as increasing number of individuals made unilateral decisions to divorce or separate, and more people made decisions based on what they perceived as best for them rather than for their families as a whole (Fine, 2010).

High emphasis on personal growth can explain partially the high divorce rate in the United States (US) as it provides individuals in dissatisfying marriages with a reason to seek divorce. Rates of both marriage and divorce in the US are very high suggesting that Americans are frequently both entering and leaving relationships. If one is not achieving a personal fulfilment in one's present relationship, one's individual interests provide a

justification for leaving that relationship in search of a more satisfying alternative relationship (Fine, 2010).

The area of blended families is new ground for investigation, which is complex, and not vastly explored in the Sub-Saharan Africa. In the US the rate of family breakdown is more than 50% and about 38% of White children and 75% of Black children born to married parents experience family breakdown prior to the age of 16 years (Lazar, Guttman, & Abas, 2009). Majority of these adolescents become part of a remarried family prior to turning the age of 18 years. The effect of the latter causes a change in the family structure of these adolescents that will result in relationship issues in their life (Carranza, Kilman, & Vendemia, 2009). Blended families are rapidly becoming the most common family structure, partly due to a high divorce rate and remarriage (Carranza, et al., 2009).

In Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA), the institution of traditional family is resilient but steadily responding to global changes (Dube, 2015). For instance, the HIV/AIDS scourge has played a pivotal role in the changes in family in SSA because of adult mortality of people in their prime age. Other changes in the traditional family in SSA are characterized by increase in divorce, increase in cohabitation, and plethora of living arrangements other than marriage (Lesthaeghe, 2010). For instance in Kenya, Chacha (2015) reported of a drama in Githurai, Nairobi, where fed-up neighbours ganged up and stormed into a woman's house and warned her against mistreating her stepchildren. Details later emerged that the family was a complex and almost dysfunctional blended family. The stepmother and the stepfather had one child of their own while she brought a son into the marriage and he

brought two daughters. The mistreated stepchildren were the daughters that belonged to the man.

Family life is full of challenges and on top of all these there are extra challenges, more complex than ever imagined, for blended families (Gately, Pike & Murphy, 2006; Butler, 2012). The life in a blended family is rife with complicated schedules, squabbling stepsiblings, issues with ex-partners, and new spouses who have never been parents trying out childcare. The authors indicate that blended families can be happy and effective, but the extra challenges require extra effort and extra wisdom to make the family strong.

Formation of blended family initially was a function of the death of a spouse. This has been preceded, in recent times, by the divorce of one or both partners from previous spouses (George & Fernandez, 2014). Butler (2012) indicates that there are 1,300 new blended families formed everyday in the US, yet 60% to 70% of the blended families end in divorce. These remarriages, most often bring children from the previous relationships to the new family, either from one or both partners (Lee & Payne, 2010). In the blended family, there may be three adults fulfilling parental roles and responsibilities.

Statement of the problem

Family breakdown is an incident that can cause the family structure of different varieties to change and affect each family member differently. Family changes adversely impact a child's wellbeing including psychological wellbeing, social behaviour and academic performance (Dube, 2015). According to the author, there are several research gaps in Africa, Kenya included, that relate to blended families as a consequence of family changes. One such key gap is the effect of blended families' dynamics on child wellbeing.

Studies on blended families in Africa, Kenya included, are almost non-existent (Dube, 2015). Family breakdowns and remarriages cause changes in the family structure that result in psychological issues in the life of children (Carranza et al., 2009). These issues impact adversely on the outcome of the child.

Purpose of the study

The purpose of the study was to establish the effect of blended family dynamics on the psychological, social and academic wellbeing of children in Kabete Sub-County in Kiambu County. The study was geared towards addressing the research gap on blended families in Kenya using case of Kabete Sub-County in Kiambu County. It aimed at producing a documentation of the children-related dynamics of the blended families in Kenya for reference by various stakeholders including researchers, scholars and policy makers particularly interested in family therapy.

Objectives of the study

The overall objective of the study was to investigate the effects of blended family dynamics on the child wellbeing in Kenya using case of Kabete Sub-County. The specific objectives were as follows:

1. To examine the effect of the blended family dynamics on the psychological wellbeing of children in Kabete Sub-County.
2. To determine the influence of the blended family dynamics on the social wellbeing of children in Kabete Sub-County.
3. To establish the influence of the blended family dynamics on the academic wellbeing of children in Kabete Sub-County.

Research Questions

1. What is the effect of blended family dynamics on the psychological wellbeing of children in Kabete Sub-County?
2. What is the influence of blended family dynamics on the social wellbeing of children in Kabete Sub-County?
3. What is the influence of blended family dynamics on the academic wellbeing of children in Kabete Sub-County?

Assumptions

The study was governed by the following assumptions:

1. The patterns of interaction within the family provide clues to the basic dynamics and organization of the family.
2. Suffering children are symptoms of a broken or changed family dynamics.
3. Family breakdown can change the attachment style which could alter ability of the child to form meaningful relationships.
4. The meaning, knowledge, and understanding of the parental relationship depend on the context in which it is viewed by the family members.

Justification of the study

This study attempted to establish the influence of blended families' dynamics on the child wellbeing in Kenya, taking the case of Kabete Sub-County in Kiambu County. It was expected that the study would increase understanding of the role of the family environment in shaping child wellbeing for the purpose of formulating policies and strategies for

promoting holistic development of the child in terms psychological, social, and academic wellbeing.

Significance of the study

The study would bring increased understanding of the child wellbeing including psychological wellbeing, social wellbeing as well as academic wellbeing in Kenya especially in Kabete Sub-County of Kiambu County. The study would provide important knowledge to various stakeholders in formulating marriage and family practice policies and strategies for promoting holistic development of the child from blended families in the country, at the county level as well as the national level.

Scope of the study

The study focused on the blended families in Kabete Sub-County in Kiambu County. The child wellbeing that was investigated in the study included psychological wellbeing, social wellbeing as well as academic performance.

Limitations and delimitation of the study

The limitations of the study included data accessibility given the fact that the issue of blended family is not very prevalent in Sub-Sahara Africa, Kenya included. For instance, the study faced lack of availability of a sampling frame of blended families from which desired sample could be drawn whereas developing such a sampling frame by carrying out a census of blended families within the target population was cost prohibitive. The delimitations of the study included articulating the boundaries of population of interest, sampling techniques, data collection instruments as well as data analysis procedures.

Chapter summary

This chapter has introduced the study of the effects of blended family dynamics on the child wellbeing in Kenya using case of Kabete Sub-County in Kiambu County. It has also highlighted the background and context, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, objective of the study, justification of the study, significance of the study, assumptions, scope of the study, limitations of the study as well as definitions of terms. The next chapter focuses on the literature review in terms of theory and empirical aspect. The chapter also presents the conceptual framework showing both the interrelationship of the variables to be used in the study as well as the analytical procedures to be employed.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

This chapter presents the theoretical and empirical literature review of the study as well as the conceptual framework. The theoretical review covers issues related with family types and compositions including blended families, prevalence of blended families and governing theories. The empirical review and the conceptual framework relate to the effects of blended family dynamics on the child's wellbeing, and more specifically, psychological, social and academic wellbeing.

Literature review

Family types and compositions

There are two main types of family compositions: intact families and blended families (Yau, 2016). An intact family, commonly referred to as traditional family or nuclear family is one, after marriage, husband and wife has remained together for the duration of the child's life. The parents in an intact family typically are the biological parents of the children in the household, exceptions occurring when parents adopt children, and when one of the parents has a child from a previous relationship. Initially, individuals looked to marriage as a formal commitment to sharing one's life with another as well as helping in raising a family and sharing a home (Charlein, 2009). Between 1900 and 1960, marriage in American changed from an institutional and practical arrangement to a companionate one, meaning that besides looking to marriage for helping in raising a family and sharing a home, individuals also looked to it for personal growth and fulfilment (Fine,

2010). According to the author, marriage has become more of an individual institution since 1960 as increasing number of individuals made unilateral decisions to divorce or separate. High emphasis on personal growth can partially explain the high divorce rate in the US. In a study in Western Kenya, Goldberg (2013) observed that after a family transition, children may experience increased ambiguity in expectations about behaviour, as well as disruption in their sense of security and difficulties in fitting in blended families, and they may begin to rely on peer groups for support or intimacy previously provided by caregivers.

A blended family is one referred to as a non-traditional family, stepfamily, reconstituted family, patchwork family, new family, and refers to family types that do not follow the intact family guidelines (Jozsa&Balassa, 2014). Initially, formation of a blended family depended on the death of a spouse. This has been preceded, since 1960s by divorce of one or both partners from previous spouses (George & Fernandez, 2014). More than 1,300 new blended families are formed daily in the US of whom about 70% end up in divorce (Butler, 2012). These remarriages often bring children from previous relationships to the new family either from one or both partners (Lee & Payne, 2010). The dissolution of two traditional family structures that may lead to formation of a blended family structure requires reorganization of the new family structure as a whole in terms of its definition, identity, purpose, and roles of the family members (George and Fernandez, 2014).

Dynamics of blended families

A common sociological and physiological typology of the blended family system distinguishes five situations according to the stepparent who joined the system (Cindy & Fernandez, 2014). The five situations are: ‘simple’ family with stepmother where a woman joins a man and his biological child; ‘simple’ family with a stepfather where a man joins a

woman and her biological child; ‘complex’ family where the two partners get connection and both bring their children from prior relationships, ‘complex’ family where the two partners have a common child or children besides the ‘brought’ child or children; and ‘part-time’ family where the children from the prior relationships live with the biological parent and the stepparent in certain specified times. If both members of the couple have prior children, those children are stepbrothers and stepsisters to one another. Any subsequent child born to the couple is a half-sibling of the respective members’ prior children (Cindy & Fernandez, 2014).

According to Jozsa and Balassa (2014), blended families can include various combinations of stepparents or single parents. A stepparent family occurs when one parent is the biological parent of the child or children, and the other parent is not the biological parent of the child or children. A step-father family is one in which the children are biologically related to the mother, but not the father. A step-mother family is one in which the children are biologically related to the father, but not the mother. A family may have both a step-mother and a step-father. A step-mother and step-father family is one in which both mother and father have biological children from previous relationships living together (Jozsa and Balassa, 2014). Some children are biologically related to the mother and unrelated to the father, and other children in the household are biologically related to the father and unrelated to the mother. A single-mother family is one in which the biological mother of the children is the only adult or parent living with the children, whereas a single-father family is one in which the biological father of the children is the only adult or parent living with the children (Jozsa and Balassa, 2014).

Blended families can be distinguished between simple and complex blended families (Jozsa&Balassa, 2014). A simple stepfamily is one in which there is only one stepparent and all children are the biological children of the same parent. This type of family would occur with a step-mother family or a step-father family. A complex stepfamily is one in which both parents are stepparents to at least one child. A complex stepfamily may also include the presence of a half-sibling: a child that is the result of a genetic union between both parents in the family, and would be a half-sibling to a child of the mother's or a child of the father's.

Davis (2015) uses 'intact' to refer to families in which all children are biologically related to both parents, 'stepmother' to refer to families in which at least one child was a stepchild of the mother, 'complex' to refer to families in which both parents had children from previous relationships on the household and may also include children biologically related to both parents, and 'single-mother' families to refer to families in which children live with a single mother who either was never married/cohabited, or is separated/divorced.

Blessing (2016) identifies three types of siblings and two main types of family composition. The three types of sibling are: full-siblings, step-siblings, and half-siblings. A full sibling is a sibling of the target child who shares the same biological parents. A step-sibling is a sibling of the target child who is not biologically related to the child, and has entered the family system via the child's stepparent. A half-sibling is a sibling of the target child who shares one biological parent with the child, but the sibling's other biological parent is not biologically related to the child. The half-sibling can be a result of the union

between the target child's biological parent and the target's stepparent, or could be the result of the target child's biological parent's with a prior partner (Blessing, 2016).

In the blended family structure, there may be three adults fulfilling parental roles and responsibilities. This happens because, the marriage of two individuals even though legally sanctioned, an ongoing existence of the biological, noncustodial (absent) parent complicates the dynamics of the parenting relationship (Manning, Brown, & Stykes, 2014).

The transition into step parenting role is neither immediate nor a smooth transition (Pasley, Dallhite, & Ihinger-Tallman, 2017). This process is clouded by lack of positive role models for the role of stepparent, relegating each family to re-imagine and enact this function of step parenting within the ongoing family relationship. According to Pasley, Dallhite, and Ihinger-Tallman (2017), three relevant themes pertinent to the role of stepparents include: an ambiguity regarding feelings of being stepparent; a lack of clarity of stepparent role; and concern about diminished attention to personal needs and loss of private time. The new family (blended family) presents an implicit confusion between the parental authorities of the biological parent and stepparent. Dowd (2015) identifies two principles governing parental rights: the fundamental rights owned as an "entitlement of procreating" where the biological parents are charged with the rights to support, care for, educate, discipline, custody, and control their children; and a child can only have one set of parents at any one time, where re-establishing of families is allowed through divorce, remarriage or adoption with each new family legally nullifying the previous family constellation. Marital status alone does not change parental rights and duties (Lee & Payne, 2010). The authors explain that the stepparent can exercise no more parental authority than bestowed by the

biological parent and accepted by the children and that the right to stepparent must be earned and cannot be successfully demanded.

For the stepparents who do not have biological children of their own in the blended family, their step parenting role becomes more challenging (Pasley, Dallhite, & Ihinger-Tallman, 2017). This is because the presence of children requires an ongoing attention and interaction but for the stepparent, the form of the “relational lens” that the attention and interaction of children takes, whether a pseudo parent, friend, disciplinarian or some combination thereof, remains a troubling question (Pasley et al., 2017). Further, the authors indicate that private time and concern must be sacrificed in the new parenting role, but there seems little precedence or guidance in how to be an effective parent.

The stepparent role is more difficult and less clearly defined than the parent role partly because of the negative meaning attached to the term ‘step’ as perceived by people in general (Pasley et al., 2017). The ambiguous nature of the stepparent role has been the focus of a number of empirical investigations. Early empirical studies found that stepfathers felt inadequate in their role and did not perceive mutual love or mutual respect between themselves and their stepchildren while stepmothers were reported to be more authoritarian in their parenting style than were others in first-marriage families and commonly used stern, dogmatic control without explanations of reasons for discipline and did not promote independent decision making on the part of children (Pasley et al., 2017). Similarly, stepfathers were less warm, less supportive, less controlling, and more permissive with their stepchildren than were fathers with their biological children and less consistent in their discipline. Being a stepmother is believed to be more difficult than being a stepfather,

primarily because stepmothers often are expected to assume primary responsibility for child care. Some studies have shown that stepmothers emit a greater proportion of negative behaviors toward stepchildren than stepfathers. In addition, stepmothers report higher levels of stress and greater dissatisfaction with their role than do stepfathers (Pasley et al., 2017).

In a blended family structure, the most successful parenting occurs where the stepparent focuses first on the development of a warm, friendly interaction style with the stepchild and once a foundation of mutual respect and affection is established, a stepparent who assumes a disciplinarian role is less likely to meet with resentment from the stepchild (Pasley et al., 2017). Parenting behaviors that include high levels of warmth, support, and control are associated with positive child wellbeing in first-marriage families. This pattern of parenting behaviors, known as authoritative parenting, does not have the same positive wellbeing in a blended family structure. The predominant parenting in blended families is characterized by more disengagement. Over time, stepfathers showed much lower levels of warmth, control, and monitoring and higher levels of conflict than did fathers in traditional families (Pasley et al., 2017).

In America, the data describing the context of family diversity serve to substantiate the numbers and growth of blended families. Blessing (2016) claimed that more than half of Americans were eventually in one or more family during their lives. At more than 55% divorce rate for first marriages in the US, majority remarry and these remarriages often bring children from previous relationships (Lee & Payne, 2010; Stanton, 2015). Yau (2016) predicted that the numbers of blended families would soon bypass the numbers of nuclear families to become the most prevalent family constellation in the American society.

The portrait of the Canadian family is changing dramatically with blended families increasingly becoming the national norm, especially in Quebec (Fekete, 2012). The 2011 census on families and living arrangements in Canada counted blended families for the first time and found they represented about one in eight couple families with children. There were 464,335 blended families in 2011, accounting for 12.6% of the nearly 3.7 million couple families with children (married or common-law couples). The remaining, 3.2 million couple families or 87.4%, were considered intact families, where all children in the household are the biological or adopted offspring of both parents (Fekete, 2012). Of all the blended families identified, 271,930 were considered simple stepfamilies, in which all children are the biological or adopted children of only one married spouse or common-law partner in the couple and whose birth or adoption preceded the current relationship. The remaining 192,410 stepfamilies were considered complex (all other types of stepfamilies) and accounted for 5.2% of all couples with children, according to the Statistics Canada data (Fekete, 2012).

Children's lives are influenced by the number of parents and siblings that they live with, as well as by whether or not their parents are married (World Family Map, 2014).

According to the World Family Map, two-parent families are becoming less common in many parts of the world although they still constitute a majority of families around the globe. Children are particularly likely to live in two-parent families in Asia and the Middle East, compared with other regions of the world. Children are more likely to live with one or no parent in America, Europe, Oceania, and sub-Saharan Africa than in other regions (World Family Map, 2014).

The increase in blended families comprises one of the largest demographic trends in Australia, brought about by the rising divorce rate (AIPC Article Library, 2012). Although many people come to re-partner with children, the odds are not in favour of remarriages, as a higher proportion of second marriages fail than first marriages. About one third or 33% of registered marriages celebrated in Australia involve at least one previously divorced partner (AIPC Article Library, 2012). In SSA, Kenya included, studies on blended families are almost non-existent (Dube, 2015). In a study in Western Kenya, Goldberg (2013) observed that after a family transition, children may experience increased ambiguity in expectations about behaviour, as well as disruption in their sense of security and difficulties in fitting in blended families, and they may begin to rely on peer groups for support or intimacy previously provided by caregivers.

The changing of classical or traditional form of family has been a global social phenomena. In Hungary, half of the marriages end with divorce and majority of these adults remarry (Jozsa and Balassa, 2014). Social processes are influenced by way of life and lifestyles including consumption and buying habits of families. The blended families are as convergent as traditional families and may have to face several conflicts because of differences of the members in the family composition. The family structure can affect the buying decision making processes which in turn can cause children more problems of poverty, psychical, behavioural, learning, health and financial problems.

Jozsa and Balassa (2014) analyze the causes of social process using consumer behaviour in blended families and test the null hypothesis that the buying decision making mechanism do not differ from that in traditional families. Using snowball sampling technique, the authors selected two samples: one of 42 stepparents and the other 184

traditional parents, and conducted in-depth interviews using questionnaires. Majority of the respondents in the sample for blended families were women (105) due to the fact that women generally are the ones who manage the issues related to the family. The variables examined included the average age, educational background, marital status, number of biological children in the household, proportion of children not living in the household, average age of children not living in the household, etc. The authors examined the kind of roles played by the family members during a buying decision making process which include lower prized consumer goods, higher prized capital goods, cars, holiday, and educational expenses. The data was analyzed using cross tabulation method comparing the buying decision making processes and conflict of the blended families and traditional families. The authors found that the buying decisions and conflicts of the blended families differ from those in traditional families because of differences in the family structures.

According to Kwikwap Website Consultant (2017), most blended families in South Africa are able to work out their growing pains and live together successfully. Open communication, positive attitudes, mutual respect and plenty of love and patience all have an important place in creating a healthy blended family. The author, further asserts that the stepparents need to focus a lot on their children and their adjustment, besides focusing on building a strong marital bond. This will ultimately benefit everyone, including the children, who when they see love, respect and open communication between stepparents, will feel more secure and may even learn to model those qualities. Uncertainty and worry about family issues often comes from poor communication. Children like to know what to expect. When they feel empathy and understanding from their parents and stepparents, they are

more likely to be resilient to the normal ups and downs of adjusting to new family members and a new living situation (Kwikwap Website Consultant, 2017). Christina Beninger (2011), in a study in Namibia, explains that stepchildren frequently report discriminatory treatment within the home in terms of love and attention, access to food and material goods, and an unequal burden of household labour as compared to biological children. The author cites abuse as the greatest disadvantage of living in a stepfamily particularly the sexual abuse of a stepdaughter by a stepfather.

Effects of blended family dynamics on child wellbeing

This section focuses on the psychological, social, and academic wellbeing of the child living in different family environments.

Psychological wellbeing

Several scholars, including Magnuson & Berger (2009), Brown (2010) and Brown et al. (2015), investigated living arrangement patterns and their implication for the psychological wellbeing of the child and found that, on average, children residing outside the traditional family tend to fair less well than those in the traditional family structure.

Evenhouse and Reilly (2004) and Shui (2015) analyzed the adolescent health data using family fixed-effects estimation methods and found that stepsiblings do worse than their half-siblings who are joint children in blended families in terms of psychological wellbeing as reflected by trouble at school and school suspensions. Stepchildren also have adverse wellbeing in terms of risky behaviour such as early sexual activity and use of drugs

and alcohol. The step children also have lower relationship quality with stepparents and worse psychological wellbeing.

Ginther and Pollak (2004) and Ginther and Sundstrom (2012) studied the reasons why living in a blended family structure may have a negative effect on psychological wellbeing of the child. One possible explanation is that parents' time and stepparents' time are imperfect substitutes and that this leads to fiercer competition for the parents' time between the full and half-siblings which, in turn, creates more stress for the children. Children in blended families may also experience more stress because, as suggested by Cherlin (2009), the parental and stepparent roles lack clear definitions. Another possible explanation, borrowed from evolutionary psychology, is that parents favour their own offspring over their stepchildren (Case et al., 2001; Thomson, 2017). This explanation is consistent with the extensive recent literature on blended families (Magnuson & Berger, 2009; Sweeney, 2010; Brown et al., 2015). Thus, in a blended family in which there are joint children of the couple and half-siblings who are the biological children only of the mother, the father will favour his own offspring over his stepchildren but the mother may equalize inputs between her children. She has means to do so since she most often does the lion's share of household work and childrearing. However, if the half-siblings are the biological children of the father only, the mother will not attempt to equalize between the joint child and the stepchildren.

Scholars, including Artis (2007), Fomby&Cherlin (2007), Magnuson & Berger (2009) and Brown (2010) have investigated living arrangement patterns and their implications on the psychological wellbeing of the child. Children residing outside of

families with two biological married parents, married stepparents, and cohabiting families tend to fair less well, on average. These studies have used the approach that captures only parent–child relationships for measures of family structure and assumes implicitly that parents are the most salient feature of the family environment, channelling resources such as time and money to children, which in turn shapes their development and well-being (Brown et al., 2015).

Several researchers including Halpem-Meekin and Tech (2008), (Tillman, 2008), Manning et al. (2014), and Brown et al. (2015) show that family complexity which is evident across all family structures, is negatively related to the psychological wellbeing of the child as reflected in depressive symptoms and delinquency.

There is an increasing trend to encourage both parents to maintain contact with their children following parental separation and divorce (Rasmussen and Stratton, 2016; Kalil, Mogstad, Rege, and Votruba (2011)). Rasmussen and Stratton (2016) use information on the distance between the child and the non-residential parent in order to proxy for contact and analyze psychological wellbeing for a cohort of children from nonnuclear families in Denmark. Similar work is by Kalil et al. (2011) who use Norwegian registry data on a five year cohort of children whose parents were married at the time of their birth, but divorced before their thirteenth birthday to compare the psychological wellbeing for children whose fathers were either always proximate or always distant. Contrary to the popular belief, the authors find no evidence that children who live a greater distance from their non-residential parent experience worse wellbeing. Mbatsane (2014) investigated the association between family structure, including blended family structure, and psychological well-being of 500

school-age going children in South Africa. Psychological well-being was measured using five scales, namely: general distress, life satisfaction, global self-esteem, affect balance. The data was analyzed using the Chi-square method. The results of the study indicated that the relationship between family structure and wellbeing was not statistically significant.

Social wellbeing

Researchers including Magnuson & Berger (2009), Brown (2010), and Brown et al. (2015) investigated living arrangement patterns and their implication for the social wellbeing of the child and found that, on average, children residing outside the traditional family tend to fair less well than those in the traditional family dynamics.

Evenhouse and Reilly (2004) and Shui (2015) analyze the adolescent health data using family fixed-effects estimation methods and find that stepsiblings do worse than their half-siblings who are joint children in blended families in social behaviour as reflected trouble at school and school suspensions. Stepchildren also have adverse wellbeing in terms of risky behaviour such as early sexual activity and use of drugs and alcohol. The stepchildren also have lower relationship quality with stepparents and worse psychological wellbeing.

Tillman (2008) studied data on more than 11,000 teens and found that teenagers in families with different biological parents have more behaviour problems than other adolescents, and that these traits may not improve over time. Boys living with half or step-siblings had the most difficulty adjusting. Problems may arise because teens feel they have to compete for parental attention, combined with the stress of living with non-traditional

siblings. A new parent figure can increase stress in young people because their relationships tend to be more conflict-ridden, explains Tillman. The author concludes that family formation patterns that bring together children who have different sets of biological parents may not be in the best interests of the children involved.

Scholars, including Artis (2007), Fomby&Cherlin (2007), Magnuson & Berger (2009), and Brown (2010) have investigated living arrangement patterns and their implications on social wellbeing of the child and find that children residing outside of families with two biological married parents: married stepparents and cohabiting families tend to fair less well, on average.

Family complexity is evident across all family structures (Halpem-Meekin and Tech, 2008; Tillman, 2008; Manning et al., 2014). The authors show that this complexity is negatively related to the social wellbeing of the child. Rasmussen and Stratton (2016) used distance between the child and the non-residential parent as proxy for contact and analyzed social wellbeing for a cohort of children from nonnuclear families in Denmark. Similar work by Kalil et al. (2011) compared the social wellbeing of children whose fathers were either always proximate or always distant using Norwegian registry data on a five year cohort of children whose parents were married at the time of their birth, but divorced before their thirteenth birthday. Contrary to the popular belief, the authors find no evidence that children who live a greater distance from their non-residential parent experience worse social wellbeing.

Academic wellbeing

Several researchers including Sundstrom (2013) and Turunen (2011; 2014), investigated the association between family dynamic and academic wellbeing for children in the US and Sweden and show negative academic wellbeing of children who did not live with both biological parents. Family structure theories can be seen to support these results. The higher risks for negative academic wellbeing for children who did not live with both biological parents were related to disruptions in the family structure. Such disruptions include the turmoil a child experiences when parents separate and or re-couple with a step-parent, weaker connections between the child and his/her non-custodial (absent) parent (usually the father), and weakened connection to resources outside the immediate family. Connections to resources outside the family include other adults and institutions in the community that the non-custodial parent may have provided access to (Mooney, Oliver, & Smith, 2009). Stepmothers in blended families had too little time for the stepchildren. A relatively high fraction of children from blended families did not get on well with their stepparents, for instance, most children say they talk to their mother, a friend, or their father, and very few turn to their stepparents when they worry about something (Martin, 2013). Having lived with half-siblings in Sweden and United States, is negatively correlated with educational wellbeing even when controlling for number of half and full-siblings (Ginther&Sundstrom, 2012). After accounting for household conflicts, children in stepfather families perform worse in school and have lower wellbeing than children living in original, two-parent families (Brown, 2010) .

Sundstrom (2013) captured the complexity of stepfamily relationships using large Swedish data set of 40,000 children born in 1964-1965 matched with 36,000 of their full and half-siblings born in 1960-1970. Childhood family and siblings dynamics were inferred from the bi-decennial censuses in 1965, 1970, 1975, and 1980 combined with the Swedish multigenerational register to trace the biological relationship, or lack thereof, between the adults in the household and the children in the sample. The children were followed into adulthood and their academics examined. The cross-section results show that growing up with half-siblings is negatively correlated with the academics. The author used sibling-difference models to take account of selection and assess the casual effect of living in a certain family and sibling dynamics in childhood.

The evidence of the wellbeing of the children serves to inform both personal decisions and government policies that affect the future of children and the nation (Mooney et al., 2009). The author emphasizes two goals centred on the well-being of children as: to help more children grow up in health married families; and when this is not possible, to help parents cooperate better in raising their children. Case, Lin and McLanahan (2001) using mother fixed-effects models found that children who lived with a step, adoptive or foster mother obtained less schooling than the biological children of that woman.

Evenhouse and Reilly (2004) and Shui (2015) analyze the adolescent health data using family fixed-effects estimation methods and find that stepsiblings do worse than their half-siblings who are joint children in blended families in academic wellbeing as reflected in Grade Point Average (GPA).

Ginther and Pollak (2004) and Ginther and Sundstrom (2012) studied the reasons why living in a blended family may have a negative effect on academic wellbeing. One possible explanation is that parents' time and stepparents' time are imperfect substitutes and that this leads to fiercer competition for the parents' time between the full and half-siblings which, in turn, creates more stress for the children. Another possible explanation, borrowed from evolutionary psychology, is that parents favour their own offspring over their stepchildren (Case et al., 2001; Thomson, 2017). Thus, in a blended family in which there are joint children of the couple and half-siblings who are the biological children only of the mother, the father will favour his own offspring over his stepchildren but the mother may equalize inputs between her children (Magnuson & Berger, 2009; Sweeney, 2010; Brown et al., 2015). This explanation is consistent with the finding of Case et al. (2001) and Thomson (2017) that children raised by step mothers have less schooling than the biological children of that woman. Tillman (2008) studied data on more than 11,000 teens and found that teenagers in families with different biological parents have lower academic grades than other adolescents. Boys living with half or step-siblings had the most difficulty adjusting. Problems may arise because teens feel they have to compete for parental attention, combined with the stress of living with non-traditional siblings. A new parent figure can increase stress in young people because their relationships tend to be more conflict-ridden, explains Tillman. The author concludes that family formation patterns that bring together children who have different sets of biological parents may not be in the best interests of the children involved.

Scholars, including Artis (2007), Fomby&Cherlin (2007), Magnuson & Berger (2009), Brown (2010), and Brown et al. (2015) have investigated living arrangement

patterns and their implications on child wellbeing. On average, children residing outside of families with two biological married parents, married stepparents, and cohabiting families fair less well in academic wellbeing.

Family complexity is evident across all family structures. Halpem-Meeke and Tech (2008), Tillman (2008), and Manning et al. (2014) show that family complexity is negatively related to the academic wellbeing of the adolescents.

There is an increasing trend to encourage both parents to maintain contact with their children following parental separation and divorce (Rasmussen and Stratton, 2016; Kalil, Mogstad, Rege, and Votruba (2011). The driving force behind this trend is the belief that such contact is in the best interest of the child. Rasmussen and Stratton (2016) use information on the distance between the child and the non-residential parent in order to proxy for contact and analyze psychological wellbeing, social wellbeing and academic wellbeing for a cohort of children from nonnuclear families in Denmark. Similar work is by Kalil et al. (2011) who use Norwegian registry data on a five year cohort of children whose parents were married at the time of their birth, but divorced before their thirteenth birthday to compare the wellbeing for children whose fathers were either always proximate or always distant. Contrary to the popular belief, the authors find no evidence that children who live a greater distance from their non-residential parent experience worse wellbeing. Rasmussen and Stratton (2016) use Instrumental Variable (IV) approach to account for reverse causality on recognizing that distance to the non-residential parent is a decision variable that may be related and hence is endogenous to child wellbeing. The results suggest that academic wellbeing is better for children who live farther away from their non-residential parent.

Theoretical framework

Governing theories

The key theory that underpinned the study is Attachment Theory by Bowlby complimented by Theory of Structural Family Therapy by Minuchin. The Attachment Theory emphasizes the importance of attachment in regard to Internal Working Model (IWM) of a person which guides him/her in inter and intrapersonal relationships throughout life while the Structural Theory places importance on the patterns of interaction within the family.

Attachment theory

Attachment theory states that a strong emotional and physical attachment to at least one primary caregiver is critical to personal development and it is one of the most studied aspects of psychology. In his work in late 1960s involving the developmental psychology of children from various backgrounds, Bowlby (1969) established the precedent that childhood development depended heavily upon a child's ability to form a strong relationship with at least one primary caregiver. As a concept in developmental psychology, attachment theory concerns the importance of attachment in regards to personal development. The theory makes the claim that the ability for an individual to form an emotional and physical attachment to another person gives a sense of stability and security necessary to take risks, branch out, and grow and develop as a personality.

The parent-child relationship provides the child with important ideas of forming relationships and learning to adjust to various experiences in life (Hines, 2007; Gray, 2011). The theory assumes that adult friendships or romantic relationships develop from parents or

examples of early caregivers (Carranza et al., 2009), suggesting that a parental separation could cause the child to have relationship issues later in life. Family breakdown can change the attachment style creating feelings of anger, resentment and confusion. In a blended family structure, adolescents and young adults face challenges of building relationships and committing to a relationship because of low trust in stepparents, low satisfaction and interpersonal skills (Fogarty, Ferrer, and McCrea, 2013). This creates the challenge of the blended family in building quality family.

Cassidy and Shaver (2008) explain that attachment theory sheds light on early development of Internal Working Model (IWM) in individuals. According to the authors, the model informs the individual of relationships and interactions with self and others from childhood to the entire lifespan. Potter and Sullivan (2011) assert that IWM facilitates future interactions of the individual with self and the world. The presence of the primary caregiver mostly the mother is paramount because the child mirrors the self with whom it attaches to (Smith and Elliot, 2011). According to Beebe and Steele (2013) the internal working model begins to develop six months after the baby is born. This confirms the observation by Smith and Elliot (2011). Positive internal working model facilitates intra and interpersonal relationships (Davies, 2011). Attachment relationships form bases on which individuals regulate their emotions (Brenning&Braet, 2013).

The attachment model explains infant behaviour towards their attachment figure, during separation and reunion times. It is believed that attachment behaviours formed in infancy will help shape the attachment relationships people have as adults. Some psychologists, such as Harris(1998) and Field(1996), disagree with this idea. Harris (1998)believes that too much emphasis on how a child "turns out" should not be placed on

the parents and also disagrees with the nurture assumption as well. Peers have a lot of influence on a child's personality, just as the child's environment does. Field (1996) also criticizes the attachment model because he believes that there are many limitations to it.

Theory of structural family therapy

Theory of structural family therapy by Minuchin (1974) focuses on the organization of the entire family to include rules, boundaries, and coalitions that characterize the family structure (Nichols, 2010). Structural theory views the family as an integrated whole and as a system. The emphasis is on patterns of interaction within the family providing clues to the basic structure and organization of the system, the family. According to Minuchin (1974), the family will change as society changes. Society develops extra familiar structures to adapt to new ways of thinking and new social and economic realities. It is these changes in society that shape the formation of the blended family and other forms of the family.

The key critique of the Structural Theory is Standish (2013), who claims that the Theory de-emphasizes emotional lives, is biased on appropriate family structure that is “western” nuclear family model and needs cross cultural considerations. While the attachment theory emphasizes the importance of strong emotional and physical attachment to personal development including children, family structural theory addresses problems in the functioning within a family. Changes in family structures can influence personal development of children in terms of psychological, social, and academic wellbeing (Brown et al., 2015).

Conceptual framework

The conceptual framework focuses on the interrelationships of various variables based on the theoretical and empirical considerations made in the literature review. Figure 2.1 illustrates the interrelationship of the dependent and independent variables to be used in the study. The independent variable is the blended family dynamics while the dependent variables are the child wellbeing in terms of the psychological wellbeing, social behaviour, and academic performance. While the attachment theory emphasizes the importance of strong emotional and physical attachment to personal development including children, family structural theory addresses problems in the functioning within a family.

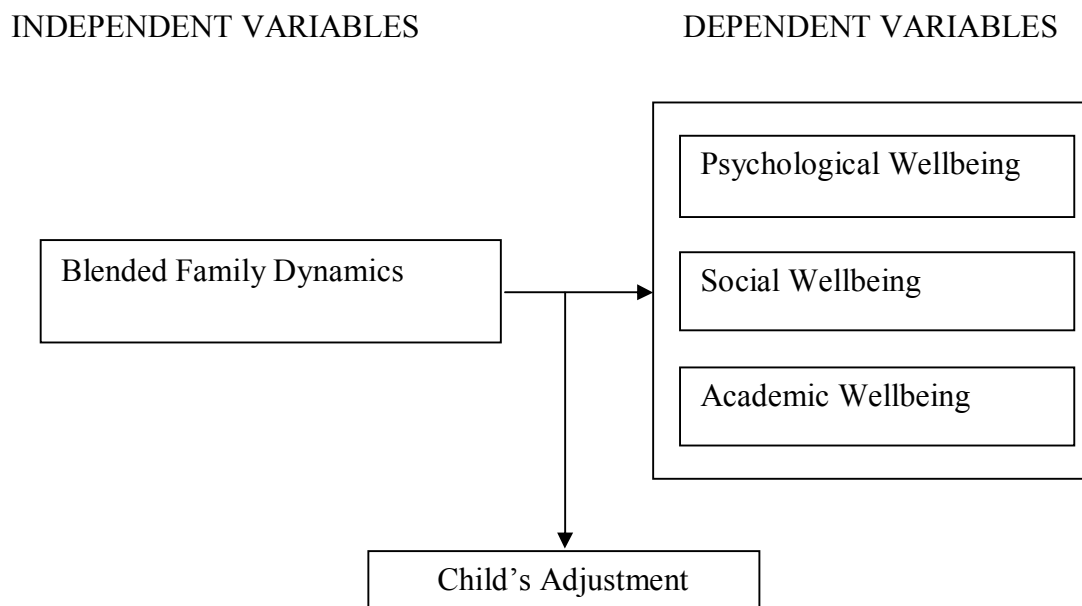


Figure 2.1 Conceptual Framework

The attachment theory emphasizes the importance of strong emotional and physical attachment to personal development including children. The attachment theory is the governing premise against which the aspects of child wellbeing in terms of psychological, social and academic wellbeing in this study are based. The family structural theory

addresses problems in the functioning within the family structure. In this study, the family structural theory is the governing premise against which the aspects of the blended family dynamics are based.

A Synthesis of research gaps

Family changes adversely impact a child's wellbeing including psychological wellbeing, social behaviour and academic performance (Dube, 2015). The author asserts that there are several research gaps in Africa including Kenya that relate to blended families as a consequence of family changes. For instance, the effect of blended families' dynamics on child wellbeing is a key research gap. Family breakdowns and remarriages cause changes in the family structure that result in psychological issues in the life of children (Carranza et al., 2009).

Chapter summary

The literature guiding the study provides insight on the blended family dynamics and child wellbeing. Various researches are cited showing the effects of blended families on the child wellbeing. Studies in Africa, and more specifically, Kenya, on the effect of blended families on the well being of the child are non-existent. The governing premise of the study was the attachment theory complimented by structural theory. While the attachment theory emphasizes the importance of strong emotional and physical attachment to personal development including children, family structural theory addresses problems in the functioning within a family. The conceptual framework reflects the effects of blended family dynamics on three aspects of child wellbeing, namely psychological wellbeing, social

wellbeing, and academic wellbeing. The next chapter presents the research methodology employed in the study.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Introduction

This chapter presents the methodology used in the study. The methodology deals with the research design of the study, target population, sample selection and data collection procedures including piloting, that is, the instrument as well as reliability and validity considerations of the instrument, pre-testing, and data analysis procedures, ethical considerations and summary.

Research design

The study employed descriptive research designs using quantitative and qualitative research methodology. The research design was cross-sectional in that the study was carried out once representing a snapshot of a one spot in time.

Profile of Kabete Sub-County

Kabete is a cosmopolitan Sub-County in Kiambu County, close to Kenya's Capital City, Nairobi. It covers an area of 60.20 square kilometres which is about 2.4 percent of the total area of Kiambu County and has a population of 140,427 people constituting about 8.7 percent of the total population in the County (RoK, 2009). Due to its proximity to the capital city, Kabete Sub-County has the highest population density in Kiambu County which is 2,534 persons per square kilometre followed by Kiambaa Sub-County which has 2,153 persons per square kilometre. The Sub-County is among the leading innovative commercial hubs in Kiambu County and constitutes five (5) County Assembly Wards (CAWs): Gitaru, Muguga, Nyathuna, Kabete, and Uthiru. Kabete Sub-County is also among the wealthiest counties in Kenya where people primarily work in the Civil Service, carry out businesses, do

farming or are in the informal sector. The larger population of the people is in retail business and service provision where they manage hotels and restaurants, new and second hand clothes, foodstuffs, hardware shops and household goods (RoK, 2013).

Kabete Sub-County has a total of 203 schools: 185 primary schools and 18 secondary schools. The secondary school age group is 14-19 years and forms about 7.4 percent or 10,391 of the total population in the Sub-County (RoK, 2013). The total number of students in public secondary schools in the Sub-County is 5,504. Appendix VII shows the Maps of Kiambu County and Kabete Sub-County respectively.

Target population

The target population was secondary school age-going children in the age-group 14-19 years from blended families in Kabete Sub-County of Kiambu County with a total of 5,504 students from public schools comprising 2,703 boys and 2,801 girls. There were 18 secondary schools in the Sub-County of which 15 were public. Of the public schools, three were Girls' schools and three were boys' and the rest are mixed schools (RoK, 2017). The teenage phase of development focuses on 12 to 19 years of age. At this age, the child who is adolescent/teenager starts biologically, cognitively, psychologically and socially experiencing changes in his/her body. Manaster (2008) calls it a period of changing from childhood to adulthood. The challenges of this phase of human development involve a lot of emotional distress to parents/adults and the children due to mood swings. Due to lack of statistics on blended family in Kenya, it was not possible to determine the proportion of the total 5,504 students that were from blended family. Table 3.1 shows the target population.

Table 3.1: Kabete Sub-County Public Secondary Schools

School	Boys	Girls	Total
Mary Leakey		796	796
Uthiru		561	561
Kirangari	432		432
KahuhoUhuru	599		599
Rungiri	417	323	740
MugugaWagatonye	191	165	356
Kanyariri	149	108	257
Nderi	75	77	152
Kanjeru Girls		252	252
Kabete High	207		207
ACK Nyathuna	118	121	239
St. Kevins	133	102	235
Gathiga Secondary	140	98	238
AckGikuni	128	105	233
Kibichiku	114	93	207
Total	2,703	2,801	5,504

Source: Republic of Kenya (2017).

Given the cosmopolitan nature of Kabete Sub-County, the issue of blended family would be expected to be prevalent. Cosmopolitan areas tend to place high emphasis on personal growth that provide individuals in dissatisfying marriages with a reason to seek divorce (Cherlin, 2009; Fine, 2010). According to (Fine, 2010), marriage become more an individualized institution and increasing number of individuals make unilateral decisions to divorce or separate, based on what they perceived as best for them rather than for their families as a whole (Fine, 2010). Of the 12 Sub-Counties in Kiambu County, Kabete Sub-County was preferred for the study from the cosmopolitan aspects as well as the logistical point of view including proximity and cost implications.

Sample selection

The study used a sample size of 50 secondary school age-going children in the age-group 14 - 19 years from blended families in Kabete Sub-County. According to RoK (2013), secondary school age-going children are in the 14 - 19 years age bracket. Table 3.2 presents the sample size.

Table 3.2: Sample Size

Selected School	Number of students selected	
	Boys	Girls
Rungiri	5	5
Kabete High	10	
Kanyariri	3	7
Kanjeru Girls		10
Kibichiku	2	8
Total	20	30

Source: Republic of Kenya (2017).

Sampling methods

The study employed both random (or probability) sampling and non-random (or non-probability) sampling techniques in sample selection. The target 15 public secondary schools were stratified into three (3) strata: girls' only secondary schools, boys' only secondary schools, and mixed secondary schools. A simple random sample of one-third of schools from each strata was drawn, namely: one school for girls, one school for boys, and three mixed schools. From each school, the study drew a target sample of 10 students from blended families using both systematic sampling and purposive sampling with the guidance of the schooling administration through Guidance and Counselling teachers.

Types of data

The study employed primary data. Primary data is original information obtained through first-hand investigation as opposed to secondary data which is information obtained from another party or published sources (Cooper and Schindler, 2009). The study collected data on family composition types, on children from blended families focusing on their well-being in relation to psychological wellbeing, social behaviour as well as academic performance. The data on academic performance was obtained directly from the student just like the information on the rest of the variables.

Data collection methods

With the help of the guidance and counselling teachers, respondents were convened in a room, inducted about the study and were able to willingly participate in the study. The researcher was the key resource person in the induction process as well as in the filling of the questionnaires.

Primary data collection tools

The study collected the primary data using structured questionnaire and availability of the researcher for ease of any desired clarification. The questionnaire was designed to capture information on personal characteristics of the respondent (Part A), blended family dynamics and psychological wellbeing (Part B), blended family dynamics and social wellbeing (Part C), and blended family dynamics and academic wellbeing (Part D). The questions in the questionnaire relating to these variables were designed using both closed and open ended questions as well the Likert Scale.

Instrument pre-testing

Pilot testing is intended to reveal errors in the design of the data collection instrument (the questionnaire) and permits refinement of the instrument before the final test (Cooper and Schindler, 2009) in an attempt to enhance the validity and reliability of the instrument. The data collection instrument was pre-tested by administering it to six secondary school age-going children in the age-group 14-19 years from blended families in a separate sub-county, Kikuyu Sub-County in Kiambu County. The outcome of the pre-test was a refined survey instrument.

Data analysis

The study employed descriptive analysis method for data analysis using tables and graphs. Measures of central tendency (averages) were employed as statistical methods whereas association of variables was reflected by cross-tabulation techniques and tested for statistical significance using the Chi-square test. The study used the Statistics Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) in the data analysis.

Ethical considerations

Integrity in research is vital (Cooper & Schindler, 2009). The study employed authority from four national institutions seeking permission from the school administration as required in the data collection procedures. These institutions are: Ministry of Interior and Coordination of National Government, County Commissioner Kiambu, National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI), Ministry of Education (MoE), and Pan Africa Christian University (PACU). The study also employed introduction letters to the respondents and consent forms. The study protected the confidentiality of

information and the anonymity of the participants by applying the professional standards of truthfulness, honesty, loyalty, respect, fairness and integrity particularly in the psychological counselling discipline that guide moral choices about behaviour and relationships with others. The study interviewed the participants without bias and accurately recorded all the necessary data.

Chapter summary

The study employed descriptive design using quantitative and qualitative research methodology. The study used primary data gathered using structured questionnaire. Purposive sampling was mainly used in sample selection. The data collection instrument was pre-tested by administering it to secondary school children from blended families using questionnaire and researcher availability for necessary clarifications. The data was analyzed using descriptive analysis methods in terms of tables, numerical measures of central tendency (averages) and graphs. The confidentiality of information and the anonymity of the participants was protected by observing the ethical considerations provided in the professional code of ethics. The next chapter addresses the data analysis and presentation of the study findings.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Introduction

This chapter analyses and discusses the study findings. The results are presented in line with the study objectives. The chapter comprises four sections. Section one presents descriptive analysis of personal characteristics of the children in Kabete Sub-County. Section two analyses the effect of blended family dynamics on the psychological wellbeing of children in Kabete Sub-County. Section three presents findings on the influence of blended family dynamics on the social wellbeing of children in Kabete Sub-County. Section four presents results on the influence of blended family dynamics on academic wellbeing of the children in Kabete Sub-County. All the questionnaires administered were successfully filled, representing 100% response rate. This means that the response rate was very high.

Descriptive Analysis of Personal Characteristics

This section analyses personal characteristics of the respondents such as gender, age, religion, education, type of family and number of siblings.

Gender

The distribution of respondents by gender is presented in Figure 4.1. The results reveal that females accounted for 60% of the respondents while male respondents were 40%. Therefore, most of the respondents were female.

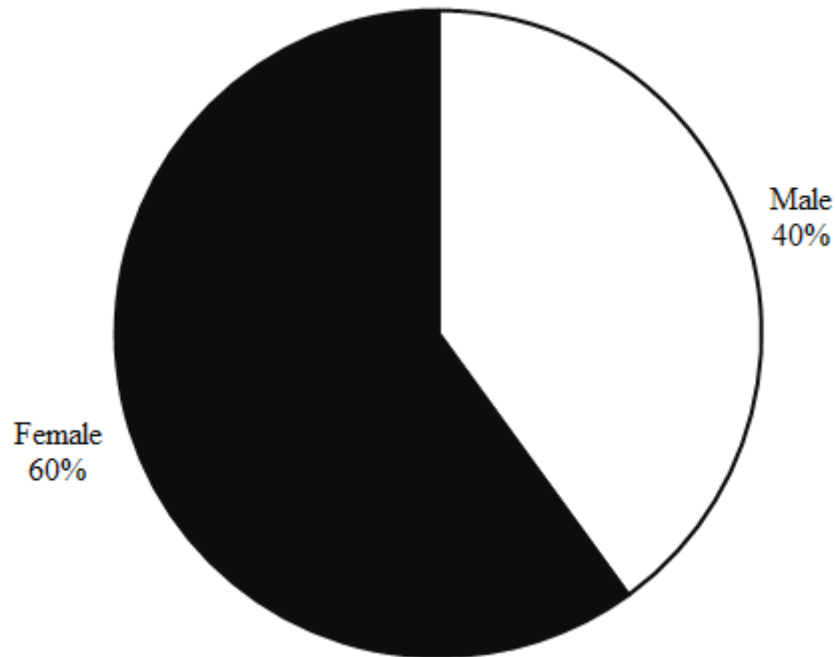


Figure 4.1 Distribution of respondents by gender

Age

In terms of age, results in figure 4.2 show that the average age of respondents was 16 years ($M=16.22$, $SD=1.217$). The findings indicated that the youngest respondent was 14 years of age while the oldest was 19 years. The findings imply that all of the respondents were teenagers, which suggests that they were at their adolescent stage of development, a stage characterized by adolescent rebellion. This could be due to the fact that most children reach adolescent stage when in secondary school.

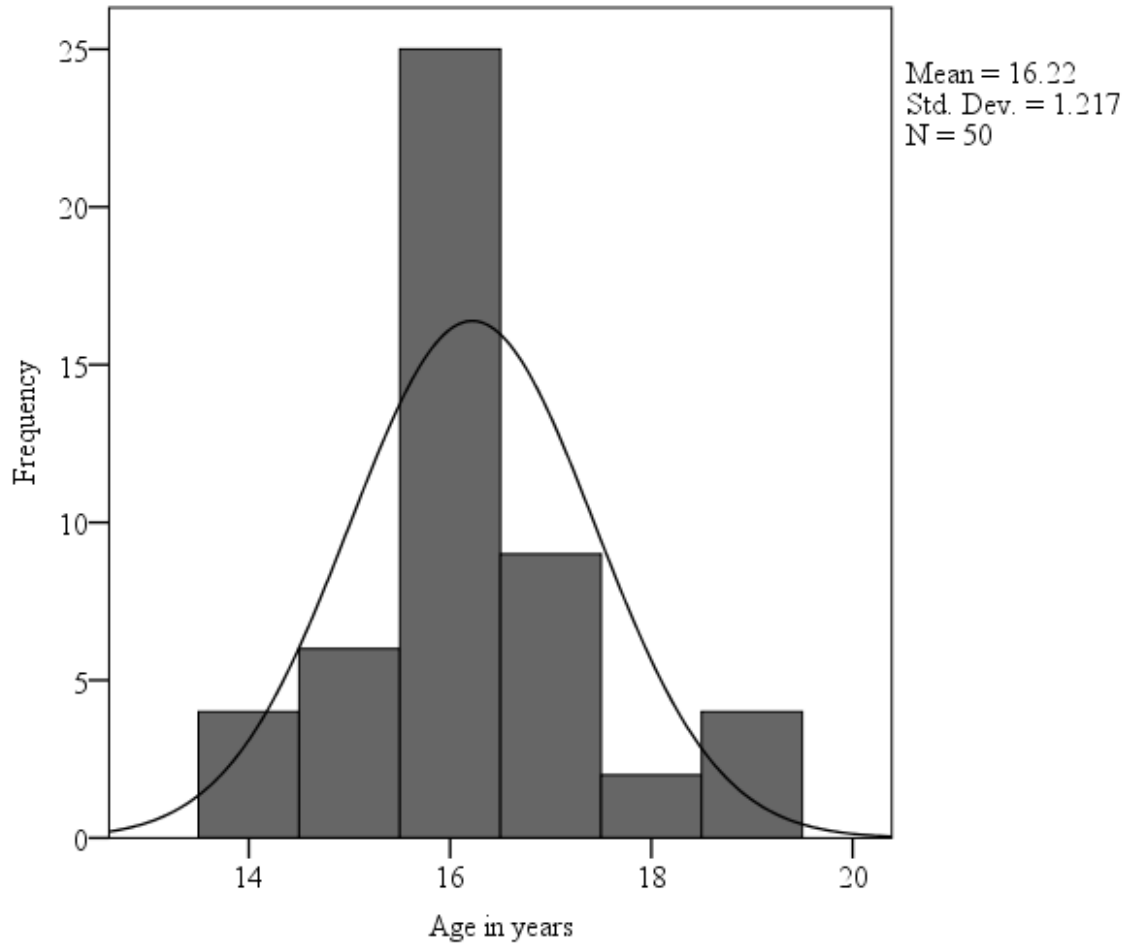


Figure 4.2 Distribution of respondents by age

Religion

Respondents were asked to indicate their religion. Table 4.1 shows that 96% of the respondents were Christians, 2% identified themselves as Muslim whereas another 2% of respondents identified with no religion. Thus, most of the respondents were Christians.

Respondents who identified with no religion did not subscribe to any religion.

Table 4.1: Religion of respondents

Form	Frequency	Percent
Christian	48	96%
Muslim	1	2%
None	1	2%
Total	50	100%

Education

Table 4.2 presents the distribution of student respondents by level of education.

Table 4.2: Level of education

Form	Frequency	Percent
Form 1	12	24%
Form 2	22	44%
Form 3	11	22%
Form 4	5	10%
Total	50	100%

Results in Table 4.2 reveal that 44% of the respondents were in Form 2, 24% were in Form 1, 22% were in Form 3 and 10% were in Form 4. The findings imply that most of the respondents were in their first or second year in high school.

Family type

The distribution of respondents by family type is presented in Figure 4.3.

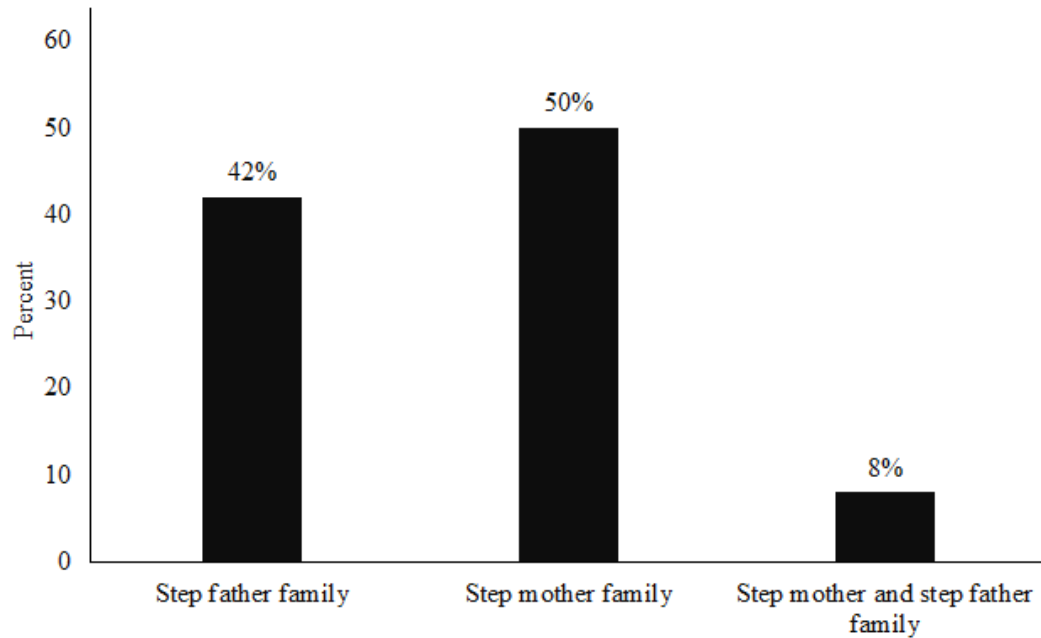


Figure 4.3 Distribution of respondents by family structure

The results reveal that 25 (50%) of the respondents hailed from step mother family, 21 (42%) were from stepfather family whereas 4 (8%) were from both stepfather family and stepmother family. The finding suggests that most of the respondents were from ‘simple’ blended family structure with either stepmother or stepfather scenario as described by Cindy and Fernandez (2014). That 4 (8%) of the respondents were from both stepfather and stepmother family may be explained by the possibility that some of the respondents could have been adopted.

Effect of Blended Family Dynamics on Psychological Wellbeing of Children in Kabete Sub-County

This section analyses the effect of blended family dynamics such as time spent with stepparents, parental closeness, as well as the help from parents when in trouble, financial support, and state of relationship with stepparent and siblings, understanding in the family and confidant in the family on the wellbeing of children in Kabete Sub-County.

Time spent with stepparent

The study sought to establish how often the children in blended families spent time with their stepparents. The findings are presented in Tables 4.3 and 4.4.

Table 4.3: Time spent with stepparent

		Never	Less often	Often	Total
Stepmother family	Frequency	6	12	11	29
	Percent	20.7%	41.4%	37.9%	100.0%
Stepfather family	Frequency	6	9	10	25
	Percent	24.0%	36.0%	40.0%	100.0%

Table 4.4: Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	.446 ^a	2	.800
Likelihood Ratio	.470	2	.791
Linear-by-Linear Association	.020	1	.886
N of Valid Cases	54		

a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .80.

The results in Table 4.3 show that of the 29 respondents from stepmother family, 11 (37.9%) of the respondents spent time with their stepmother often; 12 (41.4%) spent time with their stepmother less often and (6) 20.7% never spent time with their stepmother. The table also shows that of the 25 respondents in stepfather family, 10 (40.0%) spent time with their stepfather often; 9 (36.0%) spent time with their stepfather less often and 6 (24%) never spent time with their stepfather. Table 4.4 indicates that time spent with stepfamily did not significantly vary between respondents from step-father family and those from step-father family, $\chi^2(2) = .446, p > .05$. In general, the findings suggest that most of the respondents did not spend time with their stepparents often and that step family typology did

not influence time spent. This is consistent with the argument fronted by Mooney et al. (2009) that due to the nature of blended families, stepparents have too little time for their stepchildren.

Closeness with stepparents

Children in blended families were asked to indicate how close they were to their stepparents. The findings are presented in Table 4.5 while Table 4.6 shows the statistical significance.

Table 4.5: Closeness with stepparents

		Not close	Close	Very close	Total
Stepmother family	Frequency	10	11	8	29
	Percent	33.3%	40.0%	26.7%	100.0%
Stepfather family	Frequency	9	13	3	25
	Percent	36.0%	52.0%	12.0%	100.0%

Table 4.6: Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	.469 ^a	2	.791
Likelihood Ratio	.492	2	.782
Linear-by-Linear Association	.122	1	.727
N of Valid Cases	54		

a. 1 cells (12.5%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 1.60.

Table 4.5 shows that of the 29 children from stepmother families, 8 (26.7%) were very close to their stepmother, 11 (40%) were close to their stepmother and 10 (33.3%) were not close to their stepmother. The table also shows that of the 25 children from stepfather families, 3 (12%) were very close to their stepfather, 13 (52.0%) were close to their

stepfather and 9 (36%) were not close to their stepfather. As shown in Table 4.6, no statistically significant difference was found between respondents from step-mother family and those from step-father family in terms of their level of closeness with their step-parents $\chi^2(2) = 469, p > .05$. Therefore, most of the children maintained a close relationship with their stepparents irrespective of step-family typology.

Source of help when in trouble

Children in blended families were asked whom they went to for help when in trouble. Table 4.7 shows the results whereas Table 4.8 presents the level of significance.

Table 4.7: Source of help when in trouble

		Stepparent	Other people	Total
Stepmother family	Frequency	12	17	29
	Percent	41.4%	58.6%	100.0%
Stepfather family	Frequency	4	21	25
	Percent	16.0%	84.0%	100.0%

Table 4.8: Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	6.857 ^a	1	.009
Likelihood Ratio	8.434	1	.004
Linear-by-Linear Association	6.429	1	.045
N of Valid Cases	54		

a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 1.75.

The results in Table 4.7 shows that of the 29 children from stepmother family, 12 (41.4%) went to their stepmother when in trouble 17 (58.6%) sought help from other people other than their stepmother. The Table also shows that out of the 25 children from stepfather family, 4 (16.0%) turned to their stepfather but 21 (84.0%) turned to other people other than their stepfather for help. The finding suggests that most children in blended families in

Kabete Sub-County did not seek help from their stepparents when in trouble. However, chi-square tests in Table 4.8 reveals that there was a statistically significant difference between respondents from step-father family and those from step-mother family in terms of their source of help when in trouble, whereby a significantly higher proportion of respondents from step-father family sought help from other people rather than their parents compared to the proportion from step-mother families ($\chi^2= 6.857, p<.05$). This implies that the relationship between the children and their stepparents in the Sub-County was not secure or close to inspire confidence in the children, with the relationship within step-father family typology inspiring the least confidence on the respondents.

The distribution of the children from blended families who turned to other people other than parents is shown in Figure 4.4.

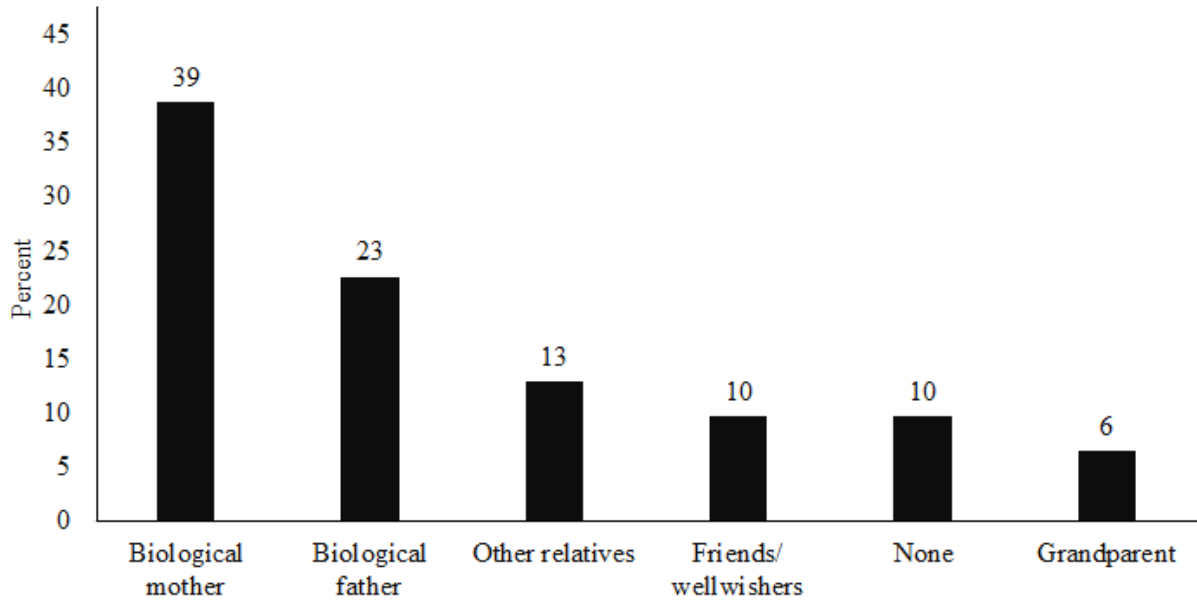


Figure 4.4 Other people the respondent turned to for help

Figure 4.4 shows that out of the 38 children who turned to other people other than stepparents for help when in trouble, 39% said they went to their biological mother, 23% went to their biological father, 13% approached other relatives, 10% turned to friends and well-wishers, another 10% did not seek help from anyone while some 6% went to their grandparents as indicated. Most of the children explained that they felt closer to their biological parents, more comfortable with them, friendlier and more understanding than their stepparents. This finding is in agreement with the observation by Martin (2013) that children from blended families talked to their mother, a friend, or their father, and very few turn to their stepparents when in trouble.

Source of help when in financial need

The children were also asked to indicate whom they went to in case of financial need. Table 4.9 displays the results and Table 4.10 presents the statistical significance of the findings.

Table 4.9: Source of help when in financial need

		Stepparent	Other people	Total
Stepmother family	Frequency	9	20	29
	Percent	31.0%	69.0%	100.0%
Stepfather family	Frequency	9	16	25
	Percent	36.0%	64.0%	100.0%

Table 4.10: Chi-Square Tests

	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	.556 ^a	1	.118
Likelihood Ratio	.884	1	.115
Linear-by-Linear Association	.247	1	.122
N of Valid Cases	54		

a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 4.50.

Table 4.9 shows that of the 29 children from stepmother family, 9 (31.0%) turned to their stepmother for financial help while 20 (69.0%) turned to other people. The table also shows that of the 25 children from stepfather family, 9 (36.0%) turned to their stepfather for financial help but 16 (64.0%) turned to other people. The Chi-square results in Table 4.10 shows that there was no statistically significant difference between respondents from stepfather family and those from step-mother family in their preferred source of help when in financial need, $\chi^2(1) = .556, p > .05$. This implies that step-family typology did not influence respondent's source of help when in financial need. Most of the children who went to neither stepparent turned instead to their biological parents, mostly mothers. This finding underscores the belief that parents should maintain contact with their children following separation and divorce as discussed by Rasmussen and Stratton (2016) because such contact is in the best interest of the child. The finding also supports attachment theory by Bowlby (1969) which claims that the ability for an individual to form an emotional and physical attachment to another person gives a sense of stability and security necessary to take risks, branch out, and grow and develop as a personality.

Buying and consumption decisions in stepfather families

The study sought to establish from the children who in the stepfamily made consumption and buying decisions and the results are shown in Table 4.11.

Table 4.11: Consumption and buying decision in stepfather family

	Frequency	Percent
Stepfather	25	100.0%
Mother	0	0.0%
Total	25	100.0%

Table 4.11 shows that all (100%) of the respondents from stepfather family said buying decision was made by their stepfather. This supports the hypothesis by Jozsa and Balassa (2014) that the buying decision-making mechanisms in stepparent family do not differ from that in traditional families where buying decision-making rested with the fathers.

Buying and consumption decisions in stepmother families

The results concerning buying and consumption decisions in stepmother families are presented in Table 4.12.

Table 4.12: Consumption and buying decision in stepmother family

	Frequency	Percent
Stepmother	16	55.0%
Father	13	45.0%
Total	29	100.0%

Table 4.12 indicates that of the 29 respondents from stepmother families, 16 (55.0%) said buying and consumption decisions were made by their stepmother. However, 13

(45.0%) said decisions were made by their father. Therefore, most of the decisions in stepmother families were made by the stepmother.

Effect of buying decision in stepfamilies on stepchildren

Respondents were asked to indicate how much buying decision in the stepfamily affected them. Table 4.13 shows the findings and Table 4.14 displays the statistical significance.

Table 4.13: Effect of buying decision in stepfamilies on stepchildren

		Very much	Much	Not at all	Total
Stepmother family	Frequency	7	9	13	29
	Percent	24.2%	31.0%	44.8%	100.0%
Stepfather family	Frequency	10	7	8	25
	Percent	40.0%	28.0%	32.0%	100.0%

Table 4.14: Chi-Square Tests

	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	.254 ^a	2	.211
Likelihood Ratio	.350	2	.209
Linear-by-Linear Association	.373	1	.241
N of Valid Cases	54		

a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 4.50.

Table 4.13 shows that of the 29 respondents from stepmother families, 9 (31.0%) were much affected and 7 (24.2%) were very much affected by the buying decision in their family while 13 (44.8%) were not affected at all. The table also shows that of the 25 respondents from stepfather families, 7 (28.0%) were much affected and 10 (40.0%) were very much affected while 32.0% were not affected at all by buying decision in their family.

As per the findings in Table 4.14, there was no statistically significant difference between respondents from step-mother families and those from step-father families with regards to the extent they were affected by buying decisions in the blended family, $\chi^2(2) = .254, p > .05$. The results suggest that most of the respondents were affected by buying decisions in their family irrespective of the blended family typology. This is in line with assertion by Jozsa and Balassa's (2014) that the family structure of blended families can affect the buying decision making processes which consequently affect stepchildren materially and emotionally.

Child-stepparent relationship

The state of relationship of the children with stepparents in Kabete Sub-County is analysed as shown in Table 4.15.

Table 4.15: Child-stepparent relationship

		Bad	Fair	Good	Total
Stepmother family	Frequency	4	21	4	29
	Percent	13.8%	72.4%	13.8%	100.0%
Stepfather family	Frequency	7	13	5	25
	Percent	28.0%	52.0%	20.0%	100.0%

Table 4.16: Chi-Square Tests

	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	2.274 ^a	2	.118
Likelihood Ratio	3.383	2	.068
Linear-by-Linear Association	1.050	1	.152
N of Valid Cases	54		

a. 2 cells (25.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 1.31.

Table 4.15 reveals that of the 29 children from stepmother families, 4 (13.8%), evaluated the relationship with their stepmother as good, 21 (72.4%) said the relationship with their stepmother was fair and 4 (13.8%) said their relationship was bad. The table also shows that of the 25 respondents from stepfather families, 5 (20.0%) said the relationship with their stepfather was good, 13 (52.0%) said their relationship was fair and 7 (28.0%) said their relationship was bad. Table 4.16 indicates that there was no statistically significant difference between respondents from step-mother family and those from step-father family with respect to the state of relationship between them and their step-parents, $\chi^2(2) = 2.275$, $p > .05$. Therefore, most of the respondents evaluated their relationship with their stepparents as fair suggesting that the respondents in Kabete Sub-County related fairly well with their new parents. The lack of significant difference means that respondents related family well with their stepparents irrespective of the blended family typology.

Child-sibling relationship

The state of relationship of the children with their siblings is analysed as shown in Figure 4.5.

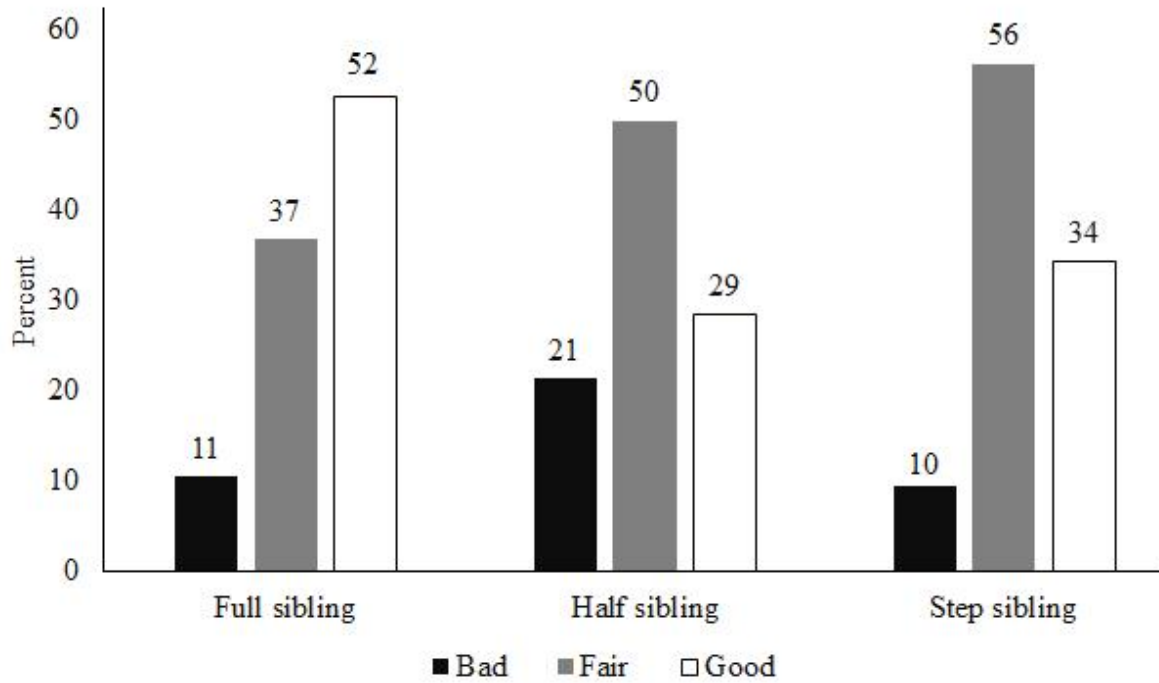


Figure 4.5 Respondent-sibling relationship

The results reveal that 26 (52%) of the children had a good relationship with full siblings, 19 (37%) had a fair relationship with their full siblings and 6 (11%) had a bad relationship. The results also reveal that 25 (50%) of the respondents had a fair relationship with their half siblings and 15 (29%) said they had a good relationship with their half siblings while 11 (21%) of the respondents had a bad relationship with their half siblings. The results further reveal that 28 (56%) of the respondents had a fair relationship with their step siblings and 17 (34%) had a good relationship while 5 (10%) had a bad relationship with their step siblings. Therefore, most of the respondents in Kabete Sub-County maintained good relationship with their full siblings and a fair relationship with their half siblings and stepsiblings.

Misunderstanding in the stepfamily

The study sought to establish the frequency of misunderstanding in the stepfamilies in Kabete Sub-County. Figure 4.6 shows the findings.

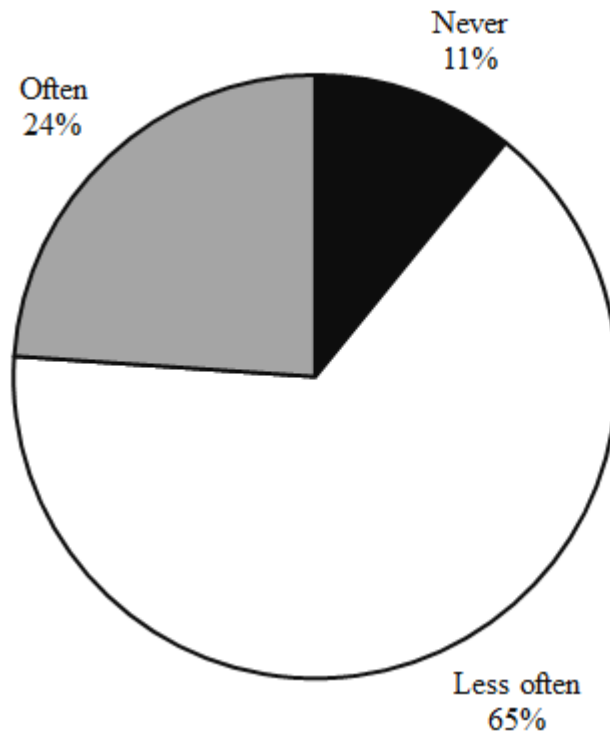


Figure 4.6 Frequency of misunderstandings in stepfamilies

The results in Figure 4.6 reveal that 33 (65%) of the respondents said misunderstandings occurred less often, 12 (24%), said misunderstandings in Kabete Sub-County occurred often while 6 (11%) said misunderstandings never occurred in their family. The finding suggests that misunderstandings occurred less often for most of the stepfamilies.

Resolving misunderstanding in the step family

Respondents were asked to indicate how misunderstandings were resolved in their families. The findings are presented in figure 4.7.

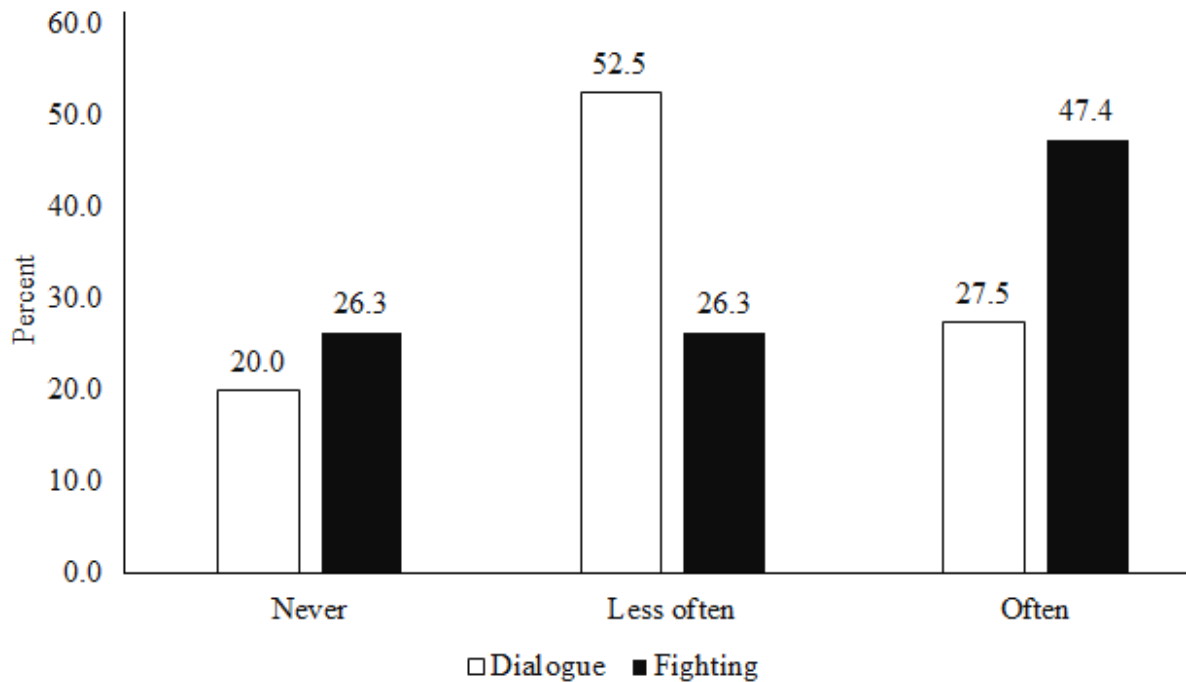


Figure 4.7 Resolving misunderstandings in stepfamilies

Figure 4.7 shows that 26 (52.5%) of the respondents said dialogue was used less often and 14 (27.5%) said dialogue was used often while 10 (20%) of the respondents said dialogue was never used. In comparison, 24 (47.4%) of the respondents said fighting was used often, 13 (26.3%) said fighting was less often and another 13 (26.3%) said fighting was never used. The results therefore suggest that fighting was used more instead of dialogue to resolve misunderstandings in the step family in Kabete Sub-County. This agrees with the observation by Gately (2012) that the life in a blended family is rife with squabbling. The finding implies that misunderstandings in blended families were unique beyond what is common in any typical family.

Respondent's close confidant in case of worry/fear

Respondents were asked to indicate their close confidants in case of worry or fear. The results are presented in Table 4.17 and Table 4.18.

Table 4.17: Close confidant in case of worry/fear

		Never	Less often	Often	Total
Stepmother family	Frequency	4	14	11	29
	Percent	13.8%	48.3%	37.9%	100.0%
Stepfather family	Frequency	15	5	5	25
	Percent	60.0%	20.0%	20.0%	100.0%

Table 4.18: Chi-Square Tests

	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	15.254 ^a	2	.000
Likelihood Ratio	16.350	2	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	1.373	1	.041
N of Valid Cases	54		

a. 1 cells (12.5%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 4.5.

Findings in Table 4.17 reveal that of the 29 respondents from stepmother family, 11 (37.9%) talked to their stepmother often, 14 (48.3%) talked to stepmother less often and 4 (13.8%) never talked to stepmother in case of worry/fear. In comparison, 5 (20.0%) of the respondents talked to their stepfather often, another 5 (20.0%) talked to their stepfather less often and 15 (60.0%) never talked to their stepfather. Results in Table 4.18 reveals that there was a statistically significant difference between respondents from step-father family and their counterparts from step-mother family in their choice of confidant when worried/fearful ($\chi^2 = 15.254, p = .000$). The results suggest that most of the respondents in Kabete Sub-County confided in their stepmothers than their stepfathers to a statistically significant degree. This means that blended family typology had an influence on respondent's choice of confidant. Most of the respondents who never talked to their stepparents cited a range of reasons including lack of trust, lack of understanding and attention and stronger bond with biological

parents. This finding is in line with the perspective of Forgarty et al. (2013) that adolescents in blended families face challenges of building relationships and committing to a relationship because of low trust in stepparents, low satisfaction and interpersonal skills.

Parent trusted with secrets

The study sought to establish which parent the respondent trusted with their secrets. The results are presented in Tables 4.19 and 4.20.

Table 4.19: Parent trusted with secrets

		Stepparent	Biological parent/relative	Total
Stepmother family	Frequency	6	23	29
	Percent	20.6%	79.4%	100.0%
Stepfather family	Frequency	1	24	25
	Percent	4.0%	96.0%	100.0%

Table 4.20: Chi-Square Tests

	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	4.286 ^a	1	.026
Likelihood Ratio	3.355	1	.038
Linear-by-Linear Association	2.653	1	.049
N of Valid Cases	54		

a. 1 cells (12.5%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 0.22.

Table 4.19 reveals that of the 29 respondents from stepmother family, 6 (20.6%) trusted their stepmother with secrets whereas 23 (79.4%) trusted their biological parent/relative. The table also shows that of the 25 respondents from stepfather family, 1 (4.0) trusted their stepfather with secrets whereas 24 (96.0%) trusted their biological parent or relative. Thus, most of the respondents trusted their biological parents or relatives with

secrets rather than their stepparent. The finding underscores the assertion by Kalil et al. (2011) that parents should maintain contact with their children even after separation because such contact is in the best interest of the child. Results in Table 4.20 reveals that there was a statistically significant difference between respondents from step-mother family and those from step-father family with respect to whom they trusted with secrets ($\chi^2= 4.289, p<.05$). This implies that a significantly higher proportion of the respondents from step-father family type confided in their biological parent/relative than respondents from step-mother family typology. It can thus be inferred that although, most of the respondents from either blended-family type trusted their secrets with their biological parents/relatives, step-fathers were less trusted compared to step-mothers.

Confidant outside family setup

Respondents were asked to indicate whom they shared their secrets with outside the family setup. The findings are presented in Figure 4.8.

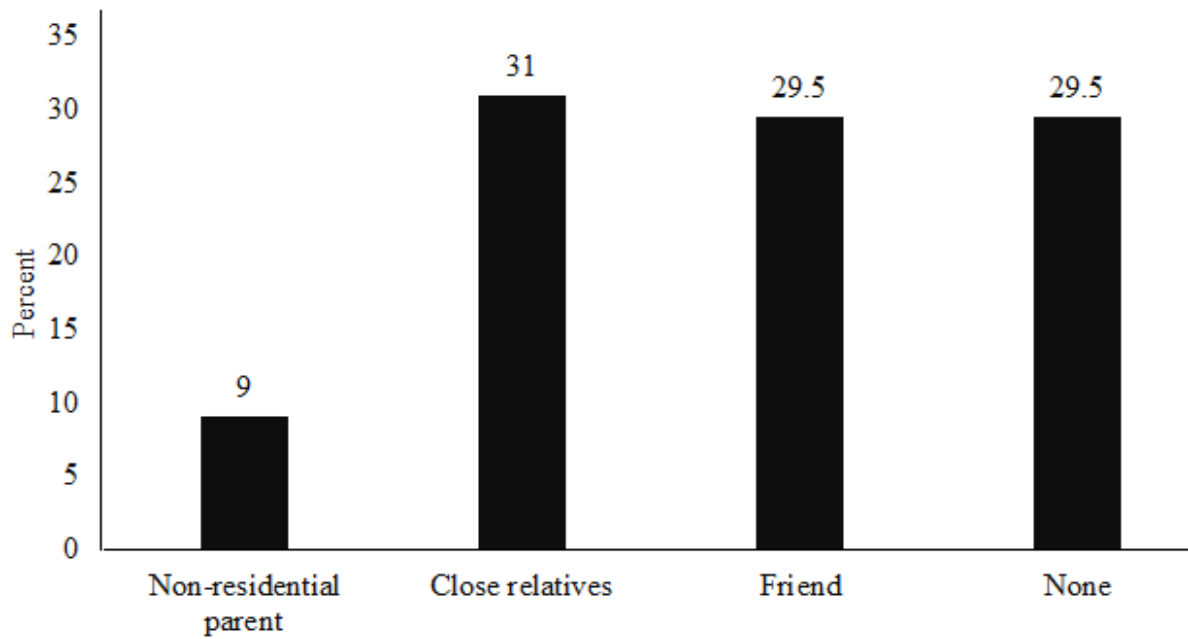


Figure 4.8 Confidant outside family setup

Figure 4.9 shows that 16 (31%) of the respondents confided in close relatives, 15 (29.5%) confided in friends, and 5 (9%) confided in non-residential parent. However, 15 (29.5%) of the respondents did not share their secrets with anyone.

In summary, the findings of the study regarding the effect of blended family dynamics on psychological wellbeing of children in Kabete Sub-County show that most respondents did not spend time with their parents, a finding consistent with Mooney et al. (2009); most maintained close relationship with stepparents although did not seek help from them; most went to biological parents when in trouble; most respondents were affected by buying decisions in stepfamilies; most of the respondents were affected by buying decisions in their family, a finding collaborated with assertion by Jozsa and Balassa's (2014) that blended family dynamics can affect the buying decision-making processes which consequently affect stepchildren materially and emotionally; most respondents experienced

good relationships with full siblings and fair with half siblings; misunderstanding was less often while fighting was often used to resolve the misunderstanding; most respondents confided more with stepmother than stepfather in case of worry/fear; trusted biological parents and relatives more with secrets.

Blended Family Dynamics and the Social Wellbeing of Children in Kabete Sub-County

This section analyses the influence of blended family dynamics on social wellbeing of children in Kabete Sub-County.

Blended Family Dynamics and Social wellbeing of children in Kabete Sub-County

Findings on the effect of blended family dynamics on the wellbeing of children in Kabete Sub-County are presented in Table 4.21 while Table 4.22 presents chi-square test on aggregate social wellbeing by blended family type.

Table 4.21: Blended family dynamics and social wellbeing of children in Kabete Sub-County

Wellbeing		Very often	Often	Never	Total
I cheat people when I want something from them	Frequency	5	20	25	50
	Percent	10%	40%	50%	100%
I take other people's things without permission	Frequency	3	16	31	50
	Percent	6%	32%	62%	100%
I physically fight with others	Frequency	1	17	32	50
	Percent	2%	34%	64%	100%
I absent myself from school without permission	Frequency	2	13	35	50
	Percent	4%	26%	70%	100%
When I am angry, I take alcohol, drug or engage in sex	Frequency	2	6	42	50
	Percent	4%	12%	84%	100%

Table 4.22 Chi-Square Tests

	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	.611 ^a	2	.425
Likelihood Ratio	.353	2	.436
Linear-by-Linear Association	.231	1	.447
N of Valid Cases	54		

a. 1 cells (12.5%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 3.1.

Table 4.21 show that 50% of the respondents claimed they never cheated people when they wanted something from them. However, 40% of the respondents said they cheated often and 10% said they cheated very often. Therefore, there were as many respondents who cheated as those who did not. The Table shows that 62% of the respondents claimed they never took other people's things without permission, 32% of the respondents claimed they did so often and 6% said they did so very often. Thus, most of the respondents never took other people's property without permission. The results also reveal that 64% of the respondents claimed they never physically fought with others, 34% claimed they did so often and 2% claimed they did so very often. Thus, majority of the respondents never fought with others. Similarly, 70% of the respondents claimed they never absented themselves from school without permission. However, 26% of the respondents claimed they often absented themselves from school and 4% claimed they absented themselves from school without permission very often. Table 4.13 further shows that 84% of the respondents claimed that when angry, they never took alcohol, drug or engaged in sex, 12% said they did so often and 4% said they did so very often. Chi-Square results in Table 4.22 shows that no statistically significant difference in aggregate social wellbeing was found between

respondents from step-father family and those from step-mother family type ($\chi^2= 6.11$, $p>.05$). This suggests that respondents' social wellbeing was not influenced by blended-family typology. Collectively, these results show that most of the respondents never engaged in delinquent behaviour implying that there was no significant impact of blended family dynamics on overall social behaviour in Kabete Sub-County. This disagrees with the argument by Shui (2015) that stepchildren in blended families had adverse social behaviour wellbeing such as delinquent behaviours.

Cheating behaviour

Table 4.23 compares cheating behaviour of children in Kabete Sub-County by blended family type and Table 4.24 presents the corresponding Chi square test.

Table 4.23: Cheating behaviour of children in Kabete Sub-County

Dynamics		Cheating		Total
		Never	Often/ very often	
Relationship with stepfather	Frequency	14	7	21
	Percent	56.0%	28.0%	42.0%
Relationship with stepmother	Frequency	9	16	25
	Percent	36.0%	64.0%	50.0%
Relationship with both stepmother and stepfather	Frequency	2	2	4
	Percent	8.0%	8.0%	8.0%
Total	Frequency	25	25	50
	Percent	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table 4.24: Chi square test on cheating behaviour

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	2.013 ^a	1	.156
Likelihood Ratio	2.027	1	.155
Linear-by-Linear Association	1.973	1	.160
N of Valid Cases	50		

a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 11.50.

The results in Table 4.23 reveal that most of the respondents who often cheated when they wanted something had relationship with stepmother (64%) while most of the respondents who never cheated had relationship with stepfather. However, as per the results in Table 4.24, this difference was not statistically significant, $\chi^2(1) = 2.013, p > .05$. This implies that blended family dynamics did not influence cheating behavior of the respondents in Kabete Sub-County.

Comparison of stealing behaviour

Table 4.25 compares stealing behaviour of children in Kabete Sub-County and Table 4.26 presents the corresponding Chi-square test results.

Table 4.25: Stealing behaviour of children and blended family dynamics in Kabete Sub-County

Dynamics		Stealing		Total
		Never	Often/ very often	
Relationship with stepfather	Frequency	14	7	21
	Percent	45.2%	36.8%	42.0%
Relationship with stepmother	Frequency	13	12	25
	Percent	41.9%	63.2%	50.0%
Relationship with both stepmother and stepfather	Frequency	4	0	4
	Percent	12.9%	0.0%	8.0%
Total	Frequency	31	19	50
	Percent	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table 4.26: Chi-Square test on stealing behaviour and blended family dynamics

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	1.035 ^a	1	.309
Likelihood Ratio	1.043	1	.307
Linear-by-Linear Association	1.014	1	.314
N of Valid Cases	50		

a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 8.74.

The findings in Table 4.25 shows that the higher proportion (63%) of respondents who have relationship with the stepmother often took people's things without permission compared to respondents. However, Chi-square results in Table 4.26 indicate that the difference in stealing behaviour did not vary significantly, $\chi^2(1) = 1.035, p > .05$. This means that respondents' stealing behavior was not influenced by the blended family dynamics.

Comparison of fighting behaviour

Table 4.27 compares the fighting behaviour of children in the blended family in Kabete Sub-County while Table 4.28 shows the corresponding Chi-square results.

Table 4.27: Fighting behaviour of Children in Kabete Sub-County

Dynamics		Fighting		Total
		Never	Often/ very often	
Relationship with stepfather	Frequency	13	8	21
	Percent	40.6%	44.4%	42.0%
Relationship with stepmother	Frequency	15	10	25
	Percent	46.9%	55.6%	50.0%
Relationship with both stepmother and stepfather	Frequency	4	0	4
	Percent	12.5%	0.0%	8.0%
Total	Frequency	32	18	50
	Percent	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table 4.28: Chi-Square test of fighting behaviour

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	.027 ^a	1	.869
Likelihood Ratio	.000	1	1.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	.027	1	.870
N of Valid Cases	50		

a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 8.28.

Results in Table 4.27 reveal that the proportion of respondents who physically fought with others was higher among respondents in step mother relationship (55.6%) than in stepfather relationship (44.4%). However, as per the Chi-square statistics in Table 4.28, this

difference was not statistically significant, $\chi^2(1) = 0.027, p > .05$. This means that blended family dynamics did not influence aggressive behavior.

Comparison of school absenteeism behaviour

Table 4.29 compares the school absenteeism of children in Kabete Sub-County and Table 4.30 displays the corresponding Chi-square results.

Table 4.29: School absenteeism behaviour of children in Kabete Sub-County

Dynamics		School absenteeism		Total
		Never	Often/ very often	
Relationship with stepfather	Frequency	14	7	21
	Percent	40.0%	46.7%	42.0%
Relationship with stepmother	Frequency	17	8	25
	Percent	48.6%	53.3%	50.0%
Relationship with both stepmother and stepfather	Frequency	4	0	4
	Percent	11.4%	0.0%	8.0%
Total	Frequency	35	15	50
	Percent	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table 4.30: Chi-Square test of school absenteeism

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	.004 ^a	1	.951
Likelihood Ratio	.004	1	.951
Linear-by-Linear Association	.004	1	.951
N of Valid Cases	50		

a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 6.90.

Results in Table 4.29 indicate that a higher proportion (53.3%) of respondents who often absented themselves from school was having a relationship with stepmother compared to respondents with relationship with stepfather. However, Chi-square test results presented in Table 4.30 do not reflect any difference between the two parental relationships in terms of respondents' school absenteeism. It was therefore, not statistically significant, $\chi^2(1) = 0.004, p > .05$. Therefore, blended family dynamics had no influence on school absenteeism behavior.

Comparison of involvement in drugs/sex behaviour

Table 4.31 makes comparison of children who indulge in drug/sex in Kabete Sub-County while the Chi-square results are presented in Table 4.32.

Table 4.31: Indulgence in drug/sex in Kabete Sub-County

Dynamics		Indulgence in drug/sex		Total
		Never	Often/ very often	
Relationship with stepfather	Frequency	16	5	21
	Percent	38.1%	62.5%	42.0%
Relationship with stepmother	Frequency	22	3	25
	Percent	52.4%	37.5%	50.0%
Relationship with both stepmother and stepfather	Frequency	4	0	4
	Percent	9.5%	0.0%	8.0%
Total	Frequency	42	8	50
	Percent	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table 4.32: Chi-square test of children indulgence in drug/sex

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	1.044 ^a	1	.307
Likelihood Ratio	1.045	1	.307
Linear-by-Linear Association	1.023	1	.312
N of Valid Cases	50		

a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 3.68.

Findings in Table 4.31 reveal that a higher proportion (62.5%) of the respondents who often indulged in drug/sex behaviour when angry were from stepfather family compared to the proportion in stepmother (37.5%). Table 4.32 however shows that this difference was not statistically significant, $\chi^2(1) = 1.044, p > .05$, implying that respondents' delinquent behavior was not influenced by blended family dynamics.

In summary, the findings of the study regarding the effect of blended family dynamics on social wellbeing of children in Kabete Sub-County show that, on average, the

respondents never engaged in delinquent behaviour, a finding that disagrees with Shui (2015); most respondents involved in cheating, stealing, fighting and school absentism were from stepmother families while most respondents involved in drugs, alcohol and sex were from stepfather families.

Blended Family and Academic Wellbeing of the Children in Kabete Sub-County

This section analyses the influence of blended family dynamics on academic wellbeing of children in Kabete Sub-County.

Analysis of academic wellbeing

Table 4.33 presents findings on various dimensions of academic wellbeing of children in Kabete Sub-County.

Table 4.33: Academic wellbeing of children in Kabete Sub-County

Dimensions of academic wellbeing		Good	Fair	Bad	Total
I would rate my academic wellbeing as:	Frequency	26	21	3	50
	Percent	52%	42%	6%	100%
I view my relationship with my teachers as:	Frequency	28	20	2	50
	Percent	56%	40%	4%	100%
My personal motivation to study is:	Frequency	28	20	2	50
	Percent	56%	40%	4%	100%
My teachers' concern for my performance are:	Frequency	24	23	3	50
	Percent	48%	46%	6%	100%
I view my step-parent's academic support as:	Frequency	19	22	9	50
	Percent	38%	44%	18%	100%

Results in Table 4.33 reveal that 52% of the respondents rated their academic wellbeing as good, 42% fair and 6% bad. Therefore, relatively more respondents evaluated

their academic wellbeing as good. Fifty six percent (56%) of the respondents viewed their relationship with their teacher as good, 40% rated their relationship as fair and 4% rated their relationship as bad. The Table also depicted 56% of the respondents as considering themselves to have a good personal motivation to study, 40% to have a fair personal motivation and 4% to have a bad personal motivation to study. The results reveal that 48% of the respondents considered their teachers' concern of their performance as good, 46% considered it as fair and 6% considered it as bad. Thirty eight percent (38%) of the respondents viewed their step-parent's academic support as good, 44% viewed it as fair and 18% viewed it as bad. Collectively, the results suggest that respondents made a positive evaluation of their academic wellbeing.

Comparison of Academic Wellbeing by Family Type

Table 4.34 compares the academic wellbeing of children by family type in Kabete Sub-County while Table 4.35 presents the corresponding Chi-square test results.

Table 4.34: Academic wellbeing of children in Kabete Sub-County

Dynamics		Academic wellbeing		Total
		Good	Fair/bad	
Stepfather social setting	Frequency	6	15	21
	Percent	23.1%	62.5%	42.0%
Stepmother social setting	Frequency	17	8	25
	Percent	65.4%	33.3%	50.0%
Both stepmother and stepfather social setting	Frequency	3	1	4
	Percent	11.5%	4.2%	8.0%
Total	Frequency	26	24	50
	Percent	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table 4.35: Chi-square test of academic wellbeing of children

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	7.936 ^a	1	.005
Likelihood Ratio	8.152	1	.004
Linear-by-Linear Association	7.777	1	.005
N of Valid Cases	50		

a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 11.04.

The results in Table 4.34 reveal that a higher proportion (62.5%) of respondents who evaluated their academic wellbeing as fair/bad were within stepfather families than those in stepmother families. Table 4.35 shows that the difference in academic wellbeing between children from stepmother family and stepfather family was statistically significant, $\chi^2(1) = 7.936, p < .05$. This implies that blended family dynamics influenced children's academic wellbeing, with stepfather families having negative influence on the children's academic wellbeing. This is consistent with the findings of Brown (2010) who established that children living in stepfather families perform worse in school than children living in stepmother families.

In summary, the findings of the study regarding the effect of blended family dynamics on academic wellbeing of children in Kabete Sub-County show that, on the overall, most respondents made positive evaluation of their academic wellbeing. However, stepfather families had a highly negative statistically significant influence on the academic wellbeing of children, a finding consistent with Brown (2010) that children living in stepfather families perform worse in school than children living in stepmother families.

Chapter summary

This chapter has presented, interpreted and discussed the study findings in Kabete Sub-County in relation to the effect of blended family dynamics on the wellbeing of children. Concerning the effect of blended family dynamics on psychological wellbeing of children, the chapter has shown that most of the respondents did not spend time with their stepparents often. Most of the respondents trusted their biological parents with secrets and none of the respondents confided in their stepparents. A significantly higher proportion of these were from step-father family. With respect to the effect of blended family dynamics on social wellbeing, the results revealed that higher proportion of respondents with delinquent behaviours such as cheating, stealing, fighting and school absenteeism were found within stepmother families. However, the differences were not statistically significant. In terms of influence of blended family dynamics on the academic wellbeing, there was a statistically significant difference between academic wellbeing of respondents from stepfather families and those from stepmother families. The next chapter presents the summary of the study findings as well as the implications and recommendations, the areas for further research and the conclusion.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, IMPLICATIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS, AREAS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH AND CONCLUSION

Introduction

Family breakdowns and remarriages cause changes in the family structure that result in relationship issues in the life of children. The purpose of the study was to establish the effect of blended family dynamics on the wellbeing of children in Kabete Sub-County in Kiambu County. This chapter begins by summarizing the major findings of the study. The implications of the findings are then discussed. The chapter subsequently makes relevant recommendations and highlights areas of further research. Final conclusion is made at the end of the chapter.

Summary

Concerning the findings on the effect blended family dynamics on psychological wellbeing of children, it was established that most of the respondents did not spend time with their stepparents often. Most children in blended families did not seek help from their stepparents when in trouble but went instead to their biological parents, other relatives or friends. Further, most of the respondents who went to neither stepparent turned instead to their biological parents, mostly mothers. Most of the respondents indicated that buying decisions were made by the stepfather and most of the respondents were affected by buying decisions in the family but the difference in terms of blended-family type was not significant.

With respect to the influence of blended family dynamics on the social wellbeing of the children, most of the respondents evaluated their relationship with their stepparents as fair. Most of the respondents maintained good relationship with their full siblings and a fair relationship with their half siblings and stepsiblings. The results showed that misunderstandings occurred less often for most of the stepfamilies. However, fighting was more used instead of dialogue to resolve misunderstandings in the family. Most of the respondents confided in their stepmothers than their stepfathers. However, most of the respondents trusted their biological parents with secrets and none of the respondents confided in their stepparents. Inferential analysis revealed that there was no significant impact of blended family dynamics on social wellbeing of children. However, within different blended family dynamics, a higher proportion of respondents with delinquent behaviours such as cheating, stealing, fighting and school absenteeism were found within stepmother families than in stepfather families or a combination of stepfather and stepmother. However, this difference was not statistically significant.

In terms of influence of blended family dynamics on academic wellbeing of the children in Kabete Sub-County, results showed that most of the respondents assessed various dimensions of their academic wellbeing as good. However, a higher proportion of respondents who evaluated their academic wellbeing as fair or bad were within stepfather families than stepmother families. Chi-square test showed that the difference in academic wellbeing was statistically significant.

Implications

A number of implications can be derived from the study. Firstly, there is a strong bond that persists between children in blended families and their biological parents in Kabete Sub-County that cannot be displaced by new relationships with stepparents. The implication of this strong bond is that the children in blended families struggle to adjust to new family structure and this has an adverse effect on the wellbeing of the children. This is potentially because of the perceived intrusion of hitherto excluded subsystems in the family structure thereby resulting in structural difficulties. This manifest more on some dimensions within step-father family type than within step-mother family typology.

In their parental responsibilities, it is critical for the stepparents to foster an environment of trust and confidence over the children in blended family. Stepparents must inspire confidence in the children for them to feel safe and secure in the blended family. This may call for patience on the part of the stepparents and understanding on the part of the children. Collaboration from biological parents is also necessary to fast-track the transition of the children. Both stepparents and biological parents have an important role to play in helping the children in the blended family to adjust to the new family. Most importantly, the new parent should respect established boundaries by balancing the need for mutual support with risk of over-involvement in the step-children's lives.

Further, children in blended families in Kabete Sub-County, struggle to acknowledge the new mother in their life. The implication of this struggle adversely affects the children's wellbeing. Children often have strong bond with their mothers as compared to their fathers. A lot of sensitivity on the part of the stepmothers is called for in order to help children in blended families accommodate them.

There also exists a gap of attention in parenting within the stepfather family typology which the stepfather is not able to fill. The implication of this is poor academic wellbeing of the children in blended families. The biological father of the child or a father figure whom the child relates well with can step in the gap to provide guidance and direction for children in blended families.

The blended family dynamics affect the children's social wellbeing irrespective of the blended family typology. The wellbeing of children in blended families is also influenced by other social settings outside the home. Thus, a full appreciation of the multiplicity of factors that underlie a child's psychological, social and academic wellbeing is necessary to prescribe solutions to the issues negatively impacting on the child's wellbeing.

There are also implications of blended family on academic wellbeing that call into question the role of step-fathers. Given that respondents from step-father family typology gave a relatively unfavourable evaluation of their academic performance to a statistically significant degree, there is need for interventions that target step-father family type.

Recommendations

In view of the findings and discussions, the study recommends as follows:

- i) Biological parents should continue to play an active role in the upbringing of their children through regular visitations and quality time in order to reassure the children that they have their back in case their presence and support is needed.
- ii) Stepparents should also reassure children that the new environment is safe for them to live in by establishing friendship with them, fostering trust and respecting established boundaries. A significant role in this regard can be played by the

biological parent in the blended family structure by creating a bridge through which the stepparent begins to establish connection with their stepchild.

- iii) Stepparents and biological parents should collaborate rather than compete in parenting the children. Each party should put the interest of the children first in the choices they make on behalf of the children.
- iv) Biological mothers should encourage the stepfathers to slowly step in as a father figure to their children to provide the guidance that they need in order to enhance their academic wellbeing.
- v) Stepfathers should take necessary and supportive measures to help their stepchildren improve in their academic wellbeing.
- vi) In order to mitigate the adverse effects of blended family dynamics on the social wellbeing of the child, interventions that take into consideration the unique challenges faced by members of blended families should be developed.

Areas for further research

This study highlights a few areas for further research as follows:

- i) This research was methodologically limited to children in blended families. In order to undertake a robust test of the influence of blended families on the child wellbeing, a future study should compare child outcomes in blended families with that of traditional family structures.
- ii) The current study was undertaken among adolescents. Thus, the voices of younger children were not represented in the study. Therefore, another study should be

undertaken among respondents below teenage to determine how blended family structures affect them psychologically, socially and academically.

- iii) Although the study objectives have been achieved, the study did not control a number of factors that potentially play a contributory role on child outcomes such as the school environment or personal factors such as gender. Thus, a future study can control these factors to establish the residual effect on psychosocial and academic outcomes of children.

Conclusion

Generally, the effect of blended family dynamics on the psychological wellbeing, social wellbeing and academic wellbeing of children was significant with respect to certain dimensions such as sense of trust, security and academic performance. However, adverse child wellbeing in terms of social wellbeing was registered for stepmother family while academic wellbeing was registered for stepfather family. The implications of the study have been discussed and appropriate recommendations made. A key implication is that children in blended families have a challenge adjusting to new family structure and this adversely affect their wellbeing. This is mainly due to their perceived intrusion into their life by formerly excluded subsystems in the family structure. Interventions should involve all the stakeholders who have a responsibility over the children.

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APPENDIX I: LETTER TO RESPONDENTS

Dear Students

My name is Margaret Njoroge from Pan African Christian University. I am carrying out a study on the effects of blended family structure on child outcomes or wellbeing in Kabete Sub-County. The information that you will give will be confidential and it will not be revealed to anyone. It will be used to explore and bring out deeper insight into the possible causes of the strains that young people like you experience from the family, school, and the society at large.

The information will help your parents, teachers and the society as well as the Government on the best way to guide and handle young people in future. Further, the information will be used to guide parents on best ways of relating with young people like you. Through the findings of this study, you will gain a lot of knowledge on self, and the best way to manage your life. You will also get help (through therapy) to deal with any issues you may have had as a result of having been brought up in a blended family.

For the information that you will give to remain confidential, you are advised not to write your name or school number in the questionnaire. You are free to participate or not to participate in completing this questionnaire and you will not be punished for not participating. However, your participation will give information that will be vital in shaping the lives of the young people from blended families in this country.

Sincerely,

MARGARET WANJIRU NJOROGE

MFT/0325/14

APPENDIX II: STATEMENT OF INFORMED CONSENT

I understand that participation in this study is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw from participating at any time. I also understand that if I refuse to participate or withdraw I will not be victimized by anybody. The researcher has assured me that the information given in this questionnaire will be treated as confidential and will not be revealed to anybody or be used against me by anybody. I confirm that I have been given all the information and offered the freedom to ask questions that have been answered in all the areas that I could not understand. I have been made aware that any question during the course of filling this form will be answered and fully explained to my level of understanding. I willingly agree to participate in this research.

Signature of the Respondent Date:

Signature of the Researcher Date:

APPENDIX III: QUESTIONNAIRE

Please do not write your name on this paper

Part A: *Personal Characteristics*

1. Sex: (Tick as appropriate)

Male []

Female []

2. Age in years: []

- ### 3. Religion:

- #### 4. Education:

Form one []

Form two []

Form three []

Form four []

5. Family type (Tick one as appropriate)

Step-father family []

Step-mother family []

Step-mother and step-father family []

Siblings (Indicate number)

Full-siblings []

Step-siblings []

Half-siblings []

Part B *Psychological Wellbeing*

6. In a scale of 1 to 3, where 1 = Often, 2 = Less often, 3 = Never, tick as appropriate indicating how often you spend time with your stepparents

Stepmother [1] [2] [3]

Stepfather [1] [2] [3]

Both [1] [2] [3]

7. Parental closeness: In a scale of 1 to 3, where 1 = Very close, 2 = Close, 3 = Not close, tick as appropriate indicating your closeness to your

Stepmother [1] [2] [3]

Stepfather [1] [2] [3]

8. Who do you go to for help when in trouble?

Stepfather []

Stepmother []

If none of the above, please write who else.....

Please give reasons for your answer in question 8 above

.....

9. Who do you go to in case of financial need?

Stepmother []

Stepfather []

Please give reasons for your answer in question 9 above

10. Who makes consumption and buying decisions in your family?

Stepmother []

Stepfather []

Other []

11. In a scale of 1 to 3, where 1 = very much, 2 = much, 3 = not at all, tick as appropriate indicating how this decision affects you

Very much []

Much []

Not at all []

(i) Stepparent-Child Relationship

12. In a scale of 1 to 3, where 1 = Good, 2 = Fair, 3 = Bad, tick as appropriate indicating your relationship with your

Stepmother [1] [2] [3]

Stepfather [1] [2] [3]

(ii) Sibling Relationship

13. In a scale of 1 to 3, where 1 = Good, 2 = Fair, 3 = Bad, tick as appropriate indicating your relationship with your

Full sibling [1] [2] [3]

Half sibling [1] [2] [3]

Step sibling [1] [2] [3]

14. Misunderstanding in the family: In a scale of 1 to 3, where 1 = Often, 2 = Less often, 3 = Never, tick as appropriate indicating frequency of misunderstanding

Misunderstanding frequency [1] [2] [3]

15. Resolving misunderstanding in your family: In a scale of 1 to 3, where 1 = Often, 2 = Less often, 3 = Never, tick as appropriate indicating methods of ending conflict when it occurs (Dialogue or Fighting).

Dialogue [1] [2] [3]

Fighting [1] [2] [3]

16. In case of worry/fear: In a scale of 1 to 3, where 1 = Often, 2 = Less often, 3 = Never, tick as appropriate indicating who you talk to or share with

Stepmother [1] [2] [3]

Stepfather [1] [2] [3]

Please give reasons for your answer in question 16 above

17. Who do you trust with your secrets?

Stepmother []

Stepfather []

Other(Specify)

18. Confidant Outside Family Setup: Who do you share your secrets with

Non-residential parent []

Close relative []

Friend []

None []

Part C: *Social Wellbeing*

In a scale of 1 to 3, where 1 = Very often, 2 = Often, 3 = Never, tick as appropriate indicating the following:

19. I cheat people when I want something from them [1] [2] [3]
20. I take other people's things without permission [1] [2] [3]
21. I physically fight with others [1] [2] [3]
22. I absent myself from school without permission [1] [2] [3]
23. When I am angry, I take alcohol, drug or engage in sex [1] [2] [3]

Part D: *Academic Wellbeing:*

In a scale of 1= good, 2 = fair, and 3 = bad, Please tick against the box representing your choice

		Good	Fair	Bad
21	I would rate my academic performance as:			
22	I view my relationship with my teachers as:			
23	My personal motivation to study is:			
24	My teachers' concern for my performance are:			
25	I view my step-parent's academic support as:			

APPENDIX IV: PAC UNIVERSITY INTRODUCTION LETTER

20th July, 2017



P.O. Box 56875, 00200 Nairobi, Kenya
+254 721 932050, +254 734 400694
enquiries@pacuniversity.ac.ke,
admissions@pacuniversity.ac.ke
www.pacuniversity.ac.ke

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

Dear Sir/Madam,

RE: MARGARET W. NJOROGE REG. NO. MFT/0325/14

Greetings! This is an introduction letter for the above named person a final year student in Pan Africa Christian University (PAC University), pursuing a Master of Arts in Marriage and Family Therapy.

She is at the final stage of the programme and she is preparing to collect data to enable her finalise on her thesis. The thesis title is **“Effects of Blended Family Structures on Child Outcomes in Kenya: Case of Kabete Sub-County in Kiambu County”**.

We therefore kindly request that you allow her conduct research in your organization.

Warm Regards,

Dr. Lilian Vikiro
Registrar Academics

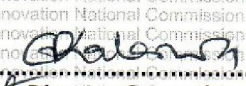
PAN AFRICA CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY
P.O. Box 56875, NAIROBI - 00200.
TEL: 0561820 / 0561945 / 2013146

20th July, 2017

Where Leaders are made

APPENDIX V: NACOSTI RESEARCH CLEARANCE PERMIT

CONDITIONS	
1. The License is valid for the proposed research, research site specified period.	 REPUBLIC OF KENYA  NACOSTI National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation RESEARCH CLEARANCE PERMIT Serial No.A 15081 CONDITIONS: see back page
2. Both the Licence and any rights thereunder are non-transferable.	
3. Upon request of the Commission, the Licensee shall submit a progress report.	
4. The Licensee shall report to the County Director of Education and County Governor in the area of research before commencement of the research.	
5. Excavation, filming and collection of specimens are subject to further permissions from relevant Government agencies.	
6. This Licence does not give authority to transfer research materials.	
7. The Licensee shall submit two (2) hard copies and upload a soft copy of their final report.	
8. The Commission reserves the right to modify the conditions of this Licence including its cancellation without prior notice.	

THIS IS TO CERTIFY THAT:	
MS. MARGARET WANJIRU NJOROGE of PAN AFRICA CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY 0-200 NAIROBI, has been permitted to, conduct research in Kiambu County on the topic: EFFECTS OF BLENDED FAMILY STRUCTURES ON CHILD OUTCOMES IN KENYA: CASE OF KABETE SUB-COUNTY IN KIAMBU COUNTY for the period ending: 24th July, 2018	Permit No: NACOSTI/P/17/97964/18474 Date Of Issue : 24th July, 2017 Fee Recieved :Ksh 1000   Director General National Commission for Science, Technology & Innovation
Applicant's Signature	

APPENDIX VI: NACOSTI RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION



NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION

Telephone: +254-20-2213471,
2241349, 3310571, 2219420
Fax: +254-20-318245, 318249
Email: dg@nacosti.go.ke
Website: www.nacosti.go.ke
When replying, please quote

9th Floor, Luthi House
Uhuru Highway
P.O. Box 30623-00100
NAIROBI-KENYA

Ref No: **NACOSTI/P/17/97964/18474**

Date **24th July, 2017**

Margaret Wanjiru Njoroge
Pan Africa Christian University
P.O. Box 56875-00200
NAIROBI.

RE: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION

Following your application for authority to carry out research on "*Effects of blended family structures on child outcomes in Kenya: Case of Kabete Sub County in Kiambu County*," I am pleased to inform you that you have been authorized to undertake research in **Kiambu County** for the period ending **24th July, 2018**.

You are advised to report to **the County Commissioner and the County Director of Education, Kiambu County** before embarking on the research project.

Kindly note that, as an applicant who has been licensed under the Science, Technology and Innovation Act, 2013 to conduct research in Kenya, you shall deposit **a copy** of the final research report to the Commission within **one year** of completion. The soft copy of the same should be submitted through the Online Research Information System.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "G. Kalerwa", is positioned above the printed name of the Director-General/CEO.

GODFREY P. KALERWA MSc., MBA, MKIM
FOR: DIRECTOR-GENERAL/CEO

Copy to:

The County Commissioner
Kiambu County.

The County Director of Education
Kiambu County.

APPENDIX VII: COUNTY RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION



MINISTRY OF EDUCATION State Department of Education

Telephone: Kiambu (office) 020-2044686
FAX NO. 020-2090948
Email: directoreducationkiambu@yahoo.com

COUNTY DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION
KIAMBU COUNTY
P. O. Box 2300
KIAMBU

When replying please quote

KBU/CDE/HR/4/VOL.II

25th July, 2017

Margaret Wanjiru Njoroge
Pan Africa Christian University
P.O. Box 56875-00200
NAIROBI

RE: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION

Reference is made to the National Commission for Science Technology and Innovation letter Ref. No NACOSTI/P/17/97964/18474 dated 24th July 2017.

The above named has been authorized to carry out research on "*effects of blended family structures on child outcomes in kenya: case of kabete sub-county Kiambu County*" for a period ending 24th July, 2018.

Please accord her the necessary assistance.

COUNTY DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION
KIAMBU COUNTY
P. O. Box 2300-00900
KIAMBU

SUSAN KIBIRA
For: COUNTY DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION
KIAMBU COUNTY

APPENDIX VIII: MAP OF KIAMBU COUNTY, SHOWING KABETE SUB-COUNTY



APPENDIX IX: MAP OF KIAMBU SUB-COUNTY

