

ADULT ATTACHMENT STYLES AND MARITAL CONFLICT
RESOLUTION STYLES AMONG COUPLES IN NAIROBI, KENYA

By

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DECLARATION

I declare that this thesis is my original work and has not been presented for examination in any other university or institution of higher learning.

Signature.....

Date

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MMFT/ 6341/15

The thesis has been submitted for examination with my approval as the appointed university supervisor.

Signature.....

Date.....

Dr. Ciriaka Gitonga

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DEDICATION

This research is dedicated to my beloved husband Rev. Perminus Mburu Mwangi. Your love, integrity and commitment to the ways of The Lord are a deep inspiration. You are what I now know as “a secure base” for me as I seek to be all that God calls me to be. I still marvel at your deep-rooted security in our God that makes you a constant source of encouragement and support for me as together, we serve His purposes in our generation.

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ABSTRACT

Human beings have been shown to have styles that they employ in handling certain aspects of their relational lives. Specific categories of styles sometimes relate with each other under certain circumstances, affecting outcomes in relationships. There is a gap in research that this study sought to fill in showing how Adult Attachment Styles (AAS) and also certain demographic characteristics relate with the Marital Conflict Resolution Styles (MCRS) employed by couples in Nairobi, Kenya. The specific objectives of the study were: to find out the AAS of married individuals in Nairobi County, to investigate the marital conflict resolution styles employed by couples in Nairobi County, to establish how certain demographics influence the marital conflict resolution styles of couples, and to examine how the AAS relate with MCRS among couples in Nairobi County. This study was informed by the attachment theory and Gottman's marital conflict styles theory. The study adopted the correlation research design. Six CITAM assemblies that are located in Nairobi County were purposively selected for participation. The individuals that took part were selected using simple random and snowballing sampling methods. The quantitative data for finding out the AAS and marital conflict resolution styles was collected using the standardized questionnaires. Six semi-structured interviews were additionally conducted with pastors in charge of Family Care and Enrichment from the participating assemblies. Pearson's correlation coefficient factor was used to determine the relationship between causes of conflicts, demographics and AAS, with marital conflict resolution styles. All tests of significance were computed at a significant level of 5% with the help of SPSS. The descriptive statistics used were percentages, mean and k-means non-hierarchical cluster analysis. The inferential statistics used were Chi-square test and ANOVA. The key findings of this study showed a significant association between AAS and marital conflict resolution styles. In addition, age, marital longevity, level of education, level of income and the cause of a marital conflict had significant influence on the marital conflict resolution styles of the respondents. Gender and occupation of participants showed no statistically significant influence on any of the marital conflict resolution styles in the study. These findings demonstrate that AAS and certain demographics have an influence on the marital conflict resolution styles that couples employ. Facilitators of premarital counseling classes, marriage therapists as well as pastors need to be aware of these influences while helping couples to handle conflicts constructively.

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

AAS	Adult Attachment Style
ANOVA	Analysis of Variance
CITAM	Christ is the Answer Ministries
IWM	Internal Working Model
FaCE	Family Care and Enrichment
GoK	Government of Kenya
KDHS	Kenya Development Household Survey
KNBS	Kenya National Bureau of Statistics
MCCG	Marriage Care and Counselling Groups
MCRS	Marital Conflict Resolution Styles
NACOSTI	National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation
PAC University	Pan Africa Christian University
SD	Standard Deviation
SPSS	Statistical Package for Social Sciences
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
USA	United States of America

OPERATIONAL DEFINITION OF TERMS

Couples: These are heterosexual individuals who have officially committed to live together as husband and wife in a monogamous marriage

Key Informants: The six pastors interviewed for this study who are in charge of Family Care and Enrichment in the assemblies where this study was conducted. They are further given the codes 001, 002, 003, 004, 005 and 006

Respondents: In this study, these were either married individuals who responded on behalf of the ‘couple’ they belonged to, or members of a couple who responded together

Stable marriage: Refers to the self-indication of respondents in answer to the question of how they would describe their marriage

Unstable marriage: Refers to the self-indication of respondents as an answer to the question of how they would describe their marriage

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

Introduction

This chapter provides the introduction and background to the study that examined the relationship between AAS and marital conflict resolution styles among couples. The problem statement and the purpose of the study are explained. The objectives of the study and the research questions are outlined. The justification and significance of the study are also clarified. In addition, the assumptions of the study, its scope, limitations and delimitations are outlined.

Background of the Study

Marriages that are disintegrating are on the increase globally as evidenced by reports of high rates of divorce. A half of all marriages are said to end in divorce (Claxton et al., 2012). Forty to fifty percent of American couples are said to divorce annually. Iran, a conservative Middle Eastern country has recorded a 3% annual rate of divorce (Davoodvandi et al., 2018). Japan and Korea reported divorce rates approaching 40% of couples (Lee et al., 2013). In Africa, Accra in Ghana recorded 40% of registered marriages breaking within a period of 14 months in 2011. Estimates from Kenya suggest that 6% of young married couples aged between 20-24 years have divorced or separated within the third year of being married. For couples aged over 40 years, the divorce rate was 11% (Mwangi, 2018).

Marital conflict that is not resolved was cited as being responsible for the disintegration of families in Nigeria (Asante et al., 2014). Olaniyi (2015) asserts the significance of constructive marital conflict resolution, explaining that the trend of marital disintegration in Africa has being occasioned by among other factors, changes in the social structures where marital conflicts are not addressed and resolved. Onyango et al. (2013) observed an increase of destructive marital conflicts with negative impact at physical, social

and psychological levels in Kenya. A study in Nigeria confirmed devastation observed on family systems (Asante et al., 2014).

Conflict has been shown as a normal, predictable and even inevitable experience in intimate relations with chances of interpersonal conflict actually observed to increase with intimacy (Srivasta & Tiwari, 2014). The presence of conflict is not the problem. Conflict is inherent in every close relationship (Delatorre & Wagner, 2019). The significant issue that determines whether a marriage will last or disintegrate is not the absence of conflict. Rather, it is whether a specific couple has the ability to handle and resolve their conflicts constructively. It is when marital conflict takes a chronic nature that families start getting harmed (Lucas-Thompson & George, 2017).

Research has shown that individuals and couples have patterns that they use in dealing with their conflicts (Delatorre & Wagner, 2019; Holman & Jarvis, 2003; Hysi, 2015). According to Gottman (1994), these patterns or styles of marital conflict resolution fall under the categories of either constructive (regulated) or destructive (not regulated). The use of constructive marital conflict resolution styles has been linked to positive outcomes in marital relationships. Destructive styles have been shown to have damaging effects in marital relationships (Li et al., 2017).

There is need to understand what informs the use by married couples of either constructive or destructive marital conflict resolution styles. This study sought to understand the role that AAS play in marital conflict resolution styles among couples. Research suggests that AAS impact many key relationship behaviors due to their role in carving the nature of emotional engagement with others (Johnson & Zuccharini, 2010). Earlier studies have shown that a person's behaviour in close relationships is shaped by their models of attachment. A case in point is Tasso et al. (2012) who cited the significance of attachment styles in understanding adult romantic relationships. In support of this view, Taylor (2014) highlighted

the need for an assessment of attachment styles in understanding how couples function in marriage. This suggestion agrees with Castellano et al. (2013) who asserted the need to factor each partner's attachment style if one is to understand couples. Thus, this study specifically sought to find out the AAS, marital conflict resolution styles of couples, causes of marital conflicts, and selected demographics of couples and how these variants relate.

Problem Statement

Studies on marital conflicts have shown that individuals have styles that they employ when handling conflicts (Delatorre &Wagner, 2019; Dijksra et al., 2016; Gottman, 1994; Gottman & Silver, 1999; Holman & Jarvis, 2003; Hysi, 2015). The role played by personality traits in triggering and responding to have been researched (Abbasi, 2017; Claxton et al., 2012; Doustkam et al. 2021; Taggart et al., 2019). Such studies have been helpful in explaining how different individuals handle conflict generally. However, the specific relationship between Adult Attachment Styles and marital conflict resolution styles, specifically in a Kenyan context, needs more research. There is need for more studies to explain the role AAS play in patterns that individuals employ in the marital conflict context. Simply put, this study aimed at finding out why, faced with the same kind of challenge, some couples are able to constructively work through their differences to emerge stronger while others get destructive while trying to work out their differences. The study specifically aimed at finding out whether an explanation for the patterns used to resolve marital conflicts, whether constructive or destructive, can be found in AAS, causes of conflict and demographic details among couples.

While most of the earlier work in this area such as cited above has been done in other countries, the sample for this study was drawn from an urban population in Nairobi County, Kenya, adding to literature on AAS, marital conflict resolutions styles, causes of conflict and demographics and how these variables play out in marital conflicts in Kenya.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between AAS and marital conflict resolution styles among couples in Nairobi County. To fulfill this, the researcher was further guided by the following specific objectives; Finding out the AAS among couples in Nairobi County; establishing the marital conflict resolution styles among couple in Nairobi County and finally, investigating how demographic characteristics and causes of conflict influence marital conflict resolution styles among couples in Nairobi County.

Objectives of the Study

The objectives in this study were:

1. To find out the adult attachment styles among couples in Nairobi County.
2. To establish the marital conflict resolution styles among couples in Nairobi County.
3. To investigate how demographics characteristics and causes of conflicts influence marital conflict resolution styles among couples in Nairobi County.
4. To determine the relationship between AAS and marital conflict resolution styles among couples in Nairobi County.

Research Questions

The study was guided by the following research questions:

1. What are the adult attachment styles of couples in Nairobi County?
2. What are the marital conflict resolution styles among couples in Nairobi County?
3. Which demographic characteristics influence marital conflict resolution styles among couples in Nairobi County?

4. What is the relationship between the AAS and marital conflict resolution styles among couples in Nairobi County?

Justification of the Study

The stability of the family unit both in Africa and in Europe has been observed as threatened, with 45 % of the family institution said to be in a struggle for survival (Mbwirire, 2017). Statistics in Kenya indicate that 39 percent of all ever married women and nine percent of men aged 15-49 experience physical or sexual violence from their spouse (KNBS, 2014). The Kenya Population Situation Analysis of 2014 emphasized that the family, as the basic means for key decision-making, economic production and socialization, is in need of strengthening and protection (KNBS, 2014). In his 2021 New Year speech to the nation of Kenya, President Uhuru Kenyatta emphasized the need for a deep look into the heart of the family (Kenyatta, 2021). The president was speaking in the backdrop of media reports of destructive conflicts in families, made more visible by the onset of COVID-19.

Based on findings theorized by Gottman (1999) that the marital conflict resolution styles, rather than the conflict itself, are the critical divider between marriages that thrive and those that disintegrate, this study sought to find out some of the factors that inform the marital conflict resolution styles employed by couples in Nairobi County. The research specifically sought to find out the role that AAS, causes of conflicts and certain demographic characteristics of married individuals play in the marital conflict resolution styles they employ. Finding these underlying relationships is important when it comes to addressing the real underlying issues that make marital conflicts to become destructive. The research will therefore be helpful in stabilizing and strengthening couples from a more foundational and therefore permanent level.

Significance of the Study

Church leaders and counsellors have been noted as having trust from people seeking marital conflict resolution (Umubyeyi et al., 2020). Musyoki (2020) affirms the significant role the clergy play in matters where disputes need to be settled. The findings in this study will be useful in giving pastors and other church leaders and counsellors a theoretical understanding as they work with couples. Specifically, this study will help them to investigate the role played by AAS and selected demographic factors in influencing patterns that couples employ as they deal with conflicts. Findings of this study will also help to further inform the strategic vision of marriage enrichment in CITAM where the population sample was drawn. Findings will contribute towards effectiveness in the way premarital classes and post marital programs are designed. The recommendations drawn from the analysis of the research data will also be availed to the ministry towards informing strategies of building stronger marriages that deal with conflict constructively. This is important in view of research showing that the church has a significant role to play when it comes to marital conflict resolution (Mbwirire, 2017).

Government institutions in Kenya will also be enlightened by the results of this study in the area of marital conflicts amongst citizens. In the Kenya Vision 2030, a lot is documented on spousal violence with the focus going mainly towards the protection and empowering of women (GoK, 2007). There are no recommendations on how marriages can be strengthened. Similarly, while the Kenya population analysis of 2014 calls for efforts towards delaying the age of first marriage, the document does not address the situation of marital conflicts in the country (UNFPA, 2013). There is therefore need to develop a framework of understanding marital conflicts holistically, as well as the necessary and relevant interventions and mechanisms required to help the marriage institution in Kenya.

Understanding how AAS relates with marital conflict resolution styles is one such key to mitigating marital melt down.

Practicing marriage and family therapists will benefit from the findings of this research in identifying how the AAS of couples may be playing in informing the conflict resolution styles they employ. Judicial systems and local authorities where conflicting couples seek intervention when conflicts turn destructive will benefit from the findings by understanding how attachment issues may be playing out in the conflicts. Finally, participants in the study will become more self-aware both as individuals and couples in terms of their AAS and how that influences their marital experiences. This awareness will be helpful in identifying necessary change towards developing constructive styles of marital conflict resolution. The society will be strengthened as couples get effective help in constructively handling their conflicts, resulting in more stable families.

Assumptions of the Study

The researcher made the assumption that individuals who participated in the study had different experiences in significant relationships that have shaped in them the categories of secure, preoccupied, avoidant dismissing and avoidant fearful AAS. It was also assumed that different categories of marital conflict resolution styles termed as avoiding, validating, volatile, and hostile would emerge from the population selected. The researcher further assumed that the informants interviewed would cooperate, be honest in their responses and that participants would grasp the meaning of each question in the instruments.

Scope

The study involved married individuals who are members in selected CITAM assemblies within Nairobi County, regardless of their age, duration of marriage, and other demographic characteristics. This was helpful in getting as much variety in demographic data as possible. The pastors who were involved as key informants for the study were those who

headed the FaCE ministries in the selected assemblies, meaning that they were direct observers of couples in their respective assemblies.

Limitation and Delimitations of the Study

This study focused on couples drawn from CITAM in Nairobi County. This had the limitation that the results cannot be generalized to rural and non-Christian populations. The researcher used self-reports to collect data on AAS and marital conflict resolution styles. That posed another limitation since self-reports in investigating conflict situations have been observed to get biased, with results given as more of what the respondents desire rather than the reality (Sieru & Herzberg, 2011). To mitigate this limitation, the researcher changed the format of the MCRS questionnaire arrangement by breaking the clusters down to items arranged randomly. The researcher further conducted interviews with pastors in the participating assemblies to get a more objective observation of couples and how they dealt with conflicts. The researcher also assured participants of the confidential and anonymous nature of their responses as well as the purpose of the study to make them comfortable with giving honest responses.

Chapter Summary

This chapter has given the introduction, background to the study, the problem statement, objectives and research questions, the purpose, justification, and the significance of the research. The assumptions, scope of the study, limitations and delimitations and definition of terms have also been provided.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

This chapter reviews literature on adult attachment styles, marital conflict resolution styles, causes of marital conflicts, demographics, and marital stability. The review includes an introduction to the attachment concept, the specific dimensions and categories of adult attachment styles, marital conflict resolution styles, marital causes, demographics, and some known links between adult attachment styles and marital conflict resolution styles.

Adult Attachment Styles

Human beings are born with an attachment system within them that makes them seek proximity, thus ensuring protection from attachment figures whenever threat is sensed (Hepper & Carnelley, 2012). John Bowlby developed the attachment theory by combining a number of theories including: object relations psychoanalytic theory, cognitive developmental psychology, community psychiatry, cybernetic and post-Darwinian ethology in an attempt to explain why early childhood-parent interactions are so significant in the formation of an individual's personality (Mikulincer & Shaver, 2007).

Attachment describes the strong emotional bond that individuals form with significant others (Nabi & Rizvi, 2015). Early work on attachment styles began by observing infants and their caregivers. Bowlby (1969, 1973) stated that early infant relationships with significant caregivers' results in the development of Internal Working Models (IWM) that contain information about the self, others and relationships; informing the way people henceforth interpret and understand their social relationships. According to Hepper and Carnelley (2012) IWM are thereafter the compass that guides individuals in navigating close relationships. Within an infant, the attachment behaviour system causes them to seek to know if an attachment figure will be accessible or not. Depending on whether they perceive the answer to be yes or no based on experiences with that caregiver,

the child either develops a secure attachment or an anxious, avoidant, or disorganized attachment; the last three being types of insecure attachments (Fraley, 2018).

Ainsworth was the first person to empirically study attachment, its development, and the categorization of securely attached, insecurely attached and nonattached (Keller, 2013). Ainsworth conducted a longitudinal ethnographic study; observing babies and their caregivers in their natural settings in Kampala Uganda as early as 1954/1955. In describing the three infant attachment patterns that Ainsworth observed in Uganda, Bretherton (1992) cites that the infants who were securely attached did not cry often. They were also observed as able to explore in the presence of the mother. Insecure infants on the other hand cried often and explored little. Not yet attached infants were observed to be indifferent in behavior towards the mother. (Bretherton, 1992)

There is a powerful impact both emotional and physical that attachment figures have on each other (Lebow et al., 2012). A study on neural representations of significant others demonstrated that attachment figures' mental representations can serve various significant functions including promoting recovery from upsetting memories, alleviating distress in the face of an assignment like making a public speech and even reducing the experience of pain (Laurita et al., 2019). When it comes to married adults, attachment bonds that fulfill the above functions have been observed as being possessed in a manner that actually supersedes the role of parents (Hepper & Carnelly, 2012). The findings above are important in showing the need to look at AAS when investigating marital conflict as this study has done. The question as to whether the attachment style an infant develops in relation to their experience with the primary caregiver becomes their permanent attachment style with significant others even in adulthood has had researchers taking different opinions. Fraley (2018) cites that both Bowlby and Ainsworth took the view that once an attachment style forms in infancy, it continues as the individual's attachment style throughout life, with Bowlby putting

emphasis on the line ‘from cradle to the grave’. Work by Shaver & Brennan (1992) affirmed that the attachment styles formed through those early interactions remain relatively stable even throughout adulthood. Gehart (2014) points out indirect evidence that individuals who report attachment security with their romantic partners describe warm relationships with their parents. However, Konrath et al. (2014) argue that over the time it takes for infants to grow into adults, social networks become much more complex in comparison to the close familiar relationships experienced by infants. Coy & Miller (2014) on their part posit that an individual’s experience of relationships in adulthood can influence his or her future intimate relationships, insisting that attachment styles can be formed in adulthood based on experiences in one adult relationship that consequently affect a person’s behavior in future relationships.

While observing people who seemed to possess a greater degree of differentiation, Fraley et al. (2011) concluded that someone may have a history of being rejected by parents yet develop a secure working model for a spouse who is supportive and responsive as a result of having a sense of differentiation; different relationships occur in different contexts, and the way individuals view them also vary. Subsequent research theorized that while IWM formed at infancy form a sort of template where new information about others get assimilated, individuals also have the capacity to update existing models, leading to a co-construction or then a reprocessing of the representation of the self and others based on the dynamics of a current specific relationship (Castellano et al., 2013). In support of these arguments, Taylor et al. (2015) found empirical evidence of changes in attachment styles or patterns following a range of different types of psychotherapy.

Attachment styles can be organized into generalized and specific; with generalized attachment explained as resulting from experiences with parents as an infant while specific attachment is what is developed in adulthood relationships, specifically with partners

(Castellano et al., 2013). This research looked at adult attachment styles of individuals, regardless of whether they resulted from experience with parents, or from adulthood relationships. Specifically, the study investigated how the AAS categorized as Secure, Preoccupied, Avoidant Dismissing, and Avoidant Fearful relate with the marital conflict resolution styles categorized in Gottman (1994) as Validating, Avoiding, Volatile and Hostile; an area that has needed more research in Kenya. Research by Mohammadi et al. (2016) established a link between attachment styles and certain behaviors within conflict, findings that agree with Taylor (2014) who asserted the importance of factoring attachment styles in understanding how couples react during conflict. Njoroge (2017) studied the relationship between conflict resolution styles and marital stability in Kiambu County. Hongo (2019) examined the relationship between attachment styles and marital satisfaction in a Kenyan Christian context. The current study adds insight on how adult attachment styles relate with the marital conflict resolution styles that married couples employ.

At the core of the attachment concept is the existence of a sense of security associated with the availability of an attachment figure (Laurita et al., 2019). In adulthood, that attachment figure is primarily one's spouse (Diamond et al., 2017). Four behavioral features are visible in regards to attachment figures even in adulthood: Seeking proximity so as to maintain physical nearness; separation distress when separated; seeking comfort when in distress and; utilizing the support of the attachment figure as a safe haven from which to explore the environment (Laurita et al., 2019).

The Dimensions and Categories of Adult Attachment Styles

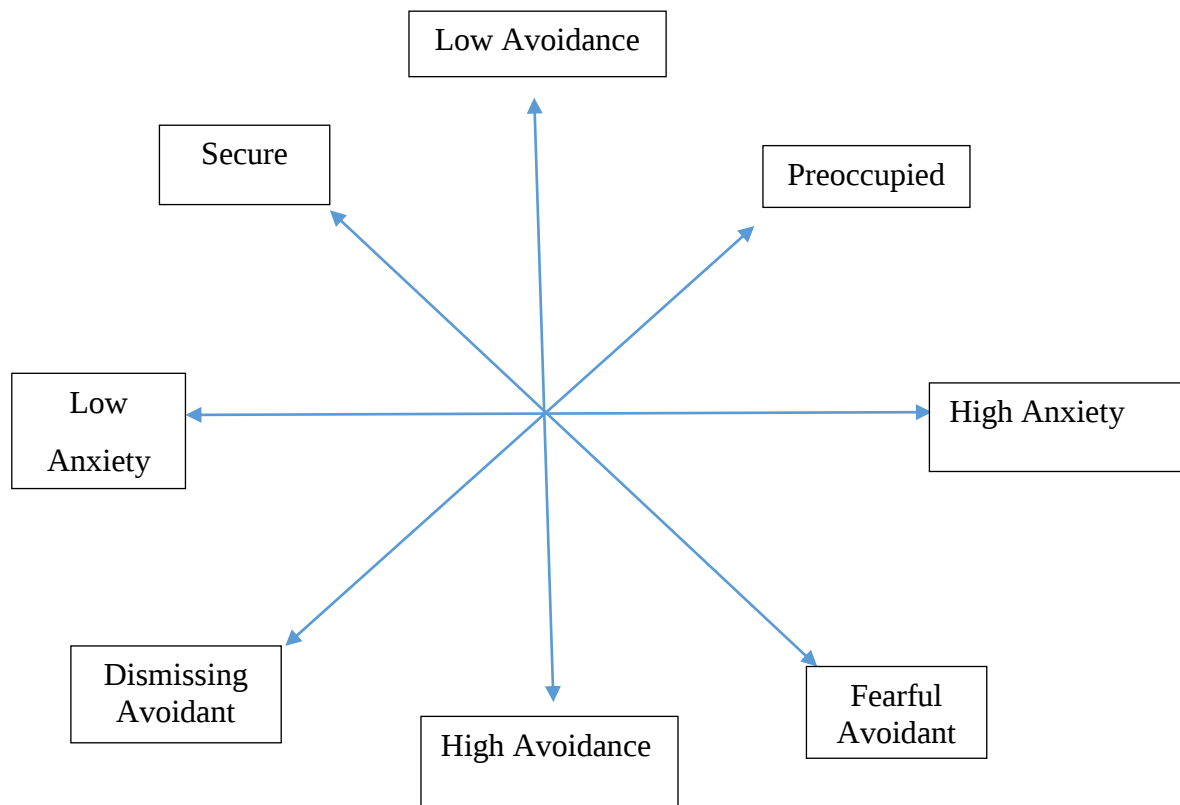
Researchers in the field of AAS have long debated the question of whether the observed variation in attachment is continuous or categorical; a question that is termed as that of dimensions versus types (Fraley et al., 2015). Read et al. (2018) agree with an argument posited by Fraley et al. (2015) that the dimensional approach to AAS is a better one,

explaining that people's variation in AAS is more in degrees along the dimensions of anxiety and avoidance, rather than in distinct types. Pollard et al. (2014) posit that two dimensions underlie AAS, viewed in terms of affective behavior of either anxiety or avoidance; and the cognitive representation people have of self and other. According to Shaver & Mikulincer (2017), adult attachment styles are conceptualized depending on two dimensions of either attachment anxiety or attachment avoidance. Individuals with attachment anxiety are observed as having anxiety about being rejected or abandoned, coupled with doubt of their self-worth since they have a negative model of self (Read et al., 2018). Those with attachment avoidance evade intimacy and interdependence with others (Schachner et al., 2008). They have a negative model of others. Those with a secure AAS score low on both avoidance and anxiety; with a positive model of others and of self (Hepper & Carnelley 2012).

This study used the four categories: Secure, Preoccupied, Avoidant Dismissing, and Avoidant Fearful as observed by Bartholomew and Horowitz (1991). Fraley (2018) illustrates the AAS in terms of anxiety and avoidance levels in relation to others including the AAS categories in Figure 2.1.

Figure 2.1

AAS: Anxiety and Avoidance Dimensions (Fraley, 2018)



In Figure 2.1, there are four distinct AAS categories that capture the differences in individual AAS. These are Secure, Preoccupied, Fearful Avoidant and Dismissing Avoidant (Fraley et al., 2015). These four categories are further described based on the positive or negative models of self and others. Self-model refers to how individuals regard themselves while models of others refers to how they regard others around them (Pollard et al., 2014). Also described is how the AAS categories vary based on levels of anxiety and avoidance (Nabi & Rizvi, 2015).

Secure Attachment Style

This is where the individual has a positive model or a sense of worthiness towards both self and others. They score low on measures of avoidance and anxiety in relationships. They are comfortable being close to others, depending on them and allowing others to depend on them (Hepper & Carnelley, 2012). The secure AAS is attributed to a consistently responsive and available caregiver or attachment figure (Chong, 2014). Individuals with the secure attachment style have been observed as having social competencies that make them have healthy relationships in adulthood (Read et al., 2018).

Preoccupied AAS

Individuals with the preoccupied AAS, also referred to as ambivalent, have a negative model of self and also of the other (Sierau & Herzberg, 2012). They score high on anxiety but low on avoidance (Read et al. 2018). The preoccupied adult attachment style causes the individual's attachment system to be hyper activated due to anxiety, happening because the caregiver was inconsistent, sometimes available and sometimes not available. Read et al. (2018) noted that individuals with this AAS have a fear of being rejected. They may be observed to have clinging and coercive behaviour. The person with this style of attachment longs to be intimate with others but has a feeling that others do not want to reciprocate. This person worries that other people do not value them. In citing their low scores on avoidance and high scores on anxiety, Schaefer (2017) calls them conflicting views, affecting relationships in a negative way.

Dismissing Avoidant AAS

The avoidant dismissing individuals have a positive model of self but a negative model of others. They score high on measures of avoidance but low on anxiety (Schachner et al., 2008). This attachment style was observed in infants whose caregivers were consistently not available, causing the infant to deactivate their attachment system (Shaver & Mikulincer,

2017). Since the model avoidant dismissing individuals of self is positive but the model of other is negative, they report high self-esteem but low trust for others (Schaefer, 2017). Individuals with this style are uncomfortable without close emotional relationships, preferring independence and self-sufficiency. The individual therefore prefers no interdependency between self and other, protecting self against disappointments by avoiding closeness. This style has been explained as referring to people who genuinely prefer their independence and freedom over closeness to others, therefore showing less investment in their relationships (Dijkstra et al. 2016; Sierau & Herzberg, 2011).

Fearful Avoidant Adult Attachment Style

A person with this attachment style has a negative model of self and others. Avoidant fearful have a negative model of self but a positive model of the other. They score high on both anxiety and avoidance. Like the avoidant dismissing, they had caregivers who were not available, the difference being that unlike the avoidant dismissing, the avoidant fearful still longs for closeness but avoids it due to their fear of rejection (Butzer & Campbell, 2008; Dijkstra et al., 2016). Teixeira et al. (2019) posit that avoidantly attached individuals are more vulnerable to sexual promiscuity. The person with this style finds it hard to trust and worries that getting close to people will mean ultimately getting hurt. These people avoid being dependent on others (Read et al., 2018). Table 2.1 further illustrates the four AAS in terms of models of self and others; and in terms of the dimensions of anxiety, and avoidance.

Table 2.1

Illustration of AAS: Models of Self and Other; Dimensions of Avoidance and Anxiety

	Other	Self	Avoidance score	Anxiety score	Results
Secure	Positive model They can be depended on It is easy to get close	Positive Model Others can get close and depend on me	Low	Low anxiety	Competent relationships
Dismissing Avoidant	Positive self	Negative others	High Prefers self-sufficiency	Low anxiety	No Interdependence
Preoccupied	Negative model of self of self	Positive model of other	Low Longs for intimacy	High anxiety	Worries that others will not reciprocate their longing for intimacy
Fearful Avoidant	Negative model Uncomfortable with closeness	Negative model of others.	High Worries of getting hurt	High anxiety	Hard to trust Shut down

This research investigated the dimensions and categories or prototypes of Secure, Fearful Avoidant, Dismissing Avoidant, and Preoccupied AAS among couples in Nairobi County.

Marital Conflict Resolution Styles (MCRS)

The way couples resolve their conflicts have been noted as a key indicator of the success or failure of marital relationships, with people who resolve their conflicts constructively observed as having lasting relationships (Havaasi et al., 2018). Every family has a pattern or style that it utilizes to fulfill its goals, including the rules, agreements, and assumptions (Yarhouse & Sells, 2008). When it comes to resolving marital conflicts, Holman & Jarvis (2003) assert that couples also have patterns or styles. These patterns in behavior during conflict or disagreements are also affirmed in Delatorre & Wagner (2019) who refer to them as: steadily constructive, more constructive, unpredictable, more destructive, and steadily destructive.

Gottman's theory on patterns or styles that couples employ in marital conflict resolution uses the labels: volatile, avoidant, validating, and hostile (Rackham et al., 2017). Three of the four: avoidant, validating, and volatile described as functional. The hostile conflict style is labeled dysfunctional (Busby & Holman, 2009). The three functional styles pass what is referred to as the 5:1 ratio of positive communication versus negative communication. The dysfunctional hostile conflict style has an opposite ratio where there are 5 negative communications to 1 positive communication. This negative to positive communication ratio of 5:1 is what causes marital destruction by opening the door to what Gottman refers to as the four horsemen of the apocalypse (Criticism, defensiveness, contempt and stonewalling) (Gottman & Driver, 2005; Gottman & Tabares, 2017).

The Avoiding MCRS

This is the style where couples, faced with conflict, agree to disagree (Rackham et al., 2017). They prefer to minimize conflict or avoid it altogether, hoping to find it later having resolved itself (Srivastava & Tiwari, 2014). Gottman (1994) argues that conflict avoiding couples use their time, not resolving conflict; but rather reaffirming their shared values and philosophy, accentuating the positive and accepting to live with the rest. Gottman (1994) admits that such couples may still end up feeling good with one another and live a calm, pleasant life though with an unresolved issue. However, their level of companionship and sharing in the marriage is low, each preferring autonomy in the use of space, risking feeling lonely in the long run.

Avoidant couples score low on both efforts and strategies to resolve conflict because they accept their differences (Delatorre & Wagner, 2019). They avoid all conversations that would otherwise make them aware of what their partners would desire to see change, choosing only infrequent calm discussions. People who use avoidance as their conflict style

might actually keep their relationship peaceful by staying distant and aloof around the difficult parts (Rackham et al., 2017).

Validating MCRS

In addressing conflict, validating couples are observed as finding it important to understand, appreciate and validate each other's points of view (Busby & Holman, 2009). The Busby & Holman (2009) study proved that the validating style was specifically associated with better relationships in comparison with both volatile and avoidant styles, disagreeing with Gottman's earlier assumption that equated all three conflict styles as functional. Gottman & Driver (2005) refer to this kind of collaborative style of marital conflict as characterized by self-disclosure and positive affect.

Validating individuals are able to let the other know that their feelings and views are valued, even in the heat of a conflict. Gottman (1994) provides a pattern that validators generally follow in an argument: Validation, persuasion and compromise. They first listen to each other's side of the story and then follow up with persuasion so that the other can see why they feel right in their position. They then seek what may be termed as a win-win situation. They also seem good friends who value "we"-ness of the marriage over their personal goals, therefore having the philosophy that what is mine is ours. While active in conflict, validating couples authenticate the partner's feelings and opinions (Delatorre & Wagner, 2019). Gottman (1994) also describes the validating couple as being high on communication, display of affection, shared time and interests though they tend to stick to traditional division of roles in a general sense.

Volatile MCRS

In comparison to avoidant couples, couples who use the volatile MCRS are described as having more passion and energy for debates and arguments (Busby & Holman, 2009). They are characterized by high levels of engagement during discussions, fighting on a grand

scale and then making up on an even grander scale. As high as their negative feelings run, so do their positive ones such as laughter and affection thereafter (Gottman, 1994). During conflict, they do not listen to each other as they fight, rather going straight for the prize of winning the argument, rather than seeking to understand the other. They are said to censor little, if any, of their thoughts since they believe in absolute honesty. Their levels of positivity and negativity are equally high (Delatorre & Wagner, 2019). Gottman (1994) insists that from research, he found out that volatile couples can have otherwise warm and loving marriage in spite of what he terms as their volcanic eruptions.

Hostile MCRS

Couples who use the hostile MCRS are described as either engaging, or disengaging/detached in their behavior during conflict. Their destructive interactions involve criticism, stonewalling, contempt, and domineering (Gottman & Tabares, 2017). In the engaged category of hostile conflict style, the hostility is actively displayed in attacks that are referred to as turning-against patterns, aimed to communicate danger and instill fear in a spouse so that they do not proceed in raising an issue (Gottman & Driver, 2005).

Gottman & Driver (2005) further deduced that a couple might start using this style as a cycle triggered by a wife's attack-defend mode that then gets a husband on attack-defend. Couples who are hostile-engaged are observed as always arguing; using name-calling, sarcasm, and putting each other down. Hostile engagement has been said to be associated with violence and high rates of divorce (Delatorre & Wagner, 2019). According to Holman and Jarvis (2003), couples who are hostile-detached neither listen to each other, nor look at each other. Nartey (2014) notes that members in such a couple feel that the relationship is not a safe place for them and to communicate that fact, they withdraw. The couple is therefore silently embroiled in deep conflict characterized by sadness, contempt and stonewalling

(Gottman & Driver, 2005). Deylami et al. (2015) associated lack of communication with emotional dissolution and ultimate divorce.

There has been research in Kenya on marital conflict that mainly focused on specific causes of conflict such as finances, roles, interference by in-laws, infidelity, and parenting among others (Oladipo et al., 2013). The area of marital conflict styles in relation to AAS has needed to be studied further. Specifically there has been a need to find out if the styles as postulated by Gottman; Validating, Hostile, Avoidant, and Volatile can also be identified amongst couples in Kenya. This study undertook to meet this need.

Demographics Characteristics and MCRS

Recent research in Kenya has shown that over 60% of marital separation or dissolution happens within six years of marriage (Masua, 2016). This shows that marriage duration is a significant factor in studying marital conflict. In another study, spousal violence was found to have a relation with levels of education where husbands with only primary school education were reported to resort to violence towards their wives during conflict more often than their more educated counterparts (KDHS, 2014). Masua (2016) found educational levels of couples to be linked with marital instability with women's risk of separation increasing when their education levels were low. Ndung'u (2017) found evidence of the impact of duration of marriage, age and other demographics on levels of marital satisfaction, concluding in her study that longer durations of marriage and higher education levels led to infidelity.

Gender has also been found to play a significant role in whether a marriage lasts or not, with husbands aged 35-39 at marriage shown to stay longer in marriage (Masua, 2016). Gender, level of education and income were also noted as significant in determining marital stability or satisfaction (Ayub & Iqbal, 2012). This study investigated the moderating role that the demographics of age, gender, duration of marriage, level of education, frequency of

conflicts and the income levels of the respondents play in the relationship between AAS and marital conflict resolution styles.

Causes of Marital Conflict and MCRS

Marital conflict has been defined as manifest opposition between spouses that then works to further create difficulties and lack of agreement amongst them (Delatorre & Wagner 2019). Hysi (2015) explains conflict as every time an action by one individual prevents or interferes with the actions of another. Marital conflict has also been defined as anything involving difference in opinion; regardless of whether the difference is positive or negative (Scheeren et al., 2014). Such differences in opinions, desires, habits and values are a part of daily experience in a marital set up (Tolorunleke, 2014). Hysi (2015) further states that the closer a relationship is, the more the conflicts that will be experienced. Themes and causes of marital conflicts differ from couple to couple.

A number of studies in Kenya have shown a variety of causes of marital conflicts. Oladipo et al. (2013) identified finances, roles, interference by in-laws, infidelity, and parenting among others. Njoroge (2017) categorized types of marital conflict as consisting of issues to do with children, disturbing events, spillovers of non-marital stress, finances, spiritual disagreements, and how power is shared. Onyango et al. (2013) found what they termed as categories of marital conflict; putting them into four dimensions namely domestic family life, socio-cultural/economic practices, personal attributes, and structural factors. Sexual fulfillment, financial and social needs were also noted as high causes of marital conflicts (Tolorunleke, 2014). In an observation of couples in midlife and dealing with empty nests, frequent conflicts were found on chores, habits, and communication (Papp, 2017). This study investigated the causes of marital conflicts among couples in Nairobi, Kenya, and how these causes further associated with the MCRS of the couples.

Adult Attachment Styles and Marital Conflict Resolution Styles

The way married couples deal with their conflicts cannot be understood independently from their adult attachment styles (Kantarci & Sendil, 2012). This is further affirmed by Nabi and Rizvi (2015) who observed that the IWM of self and others that form AAS is what helps to organize responses to individuals' social environments, hence having profound implications on their emotional experiences. People with avoidant AAS were said to be more easily lured into sexual promiscuity and having lower commitments to relationships while those with an anxious AAS were cited as being immature and highly dependent (Teixeira et al., 2019). This observation may begin to show the moderating effect that causes of conflict might have on the relationship between AAS and marital conflict resolution styles.

In observing what they term as attachment configurations, Castellano et al. (2013) affirm the key role that AAS play in the strategies that couples employ while trying to find solutions to their conflicts. Scheeren et al. (2014) posit that attachment styles together with conflict management are significant variables in understanding how marriages run. Refahi (2016) goes further in asserting attachment styles of couples as a key factor in forming, continuing and destroying marital relationships, thus pointing to a relationship between AAS and unresolved marital conflict.

Occasions of frustration, failure, and differences in individuals will be there throughout a couple's lifespan. However, the way those frustrations and differences are handled, and how they impact the relationship has been shown to be influenced by each individual's sense of attachment security in the specific relationship (Johnson & Zuccharini, 2010). This affirms findings by Heene et al. (2005) on the association between attachment and communication during conflict. A research by Scriber et al. (2016) also showed

attachment anxiety as highly associated with contempt; a characteristic of a hostile marital conflict resolution style.

Secure Adult Attachment Style and MCRS

Emphasis has been made that securely attached people score low on avoidance and anxiety, enabling them to have a tendency of keeping stable relationships with high investment, trust, and friendship (Shachner et al., 2008). In another research, securely attached individuals were found to be much more likely to have more positive feelings towards their partner after a conflict, as opposed to more anxiously attached individuals in similar circumstances who were observed to feel more negative towards their partners after a conflict (Rholes et al., 2014). Scheeren et al. (2014) observe that people who feel comfortable getting close to others, as characterized by securely attached individuals, actually perceive less conflicts in their relationships than those insecurely attached.

Positive communication is highly significant in promoting agreement, cohesion and harmony in marital relationships (Nartey, 2014). Such positive strategies in communicating with spouses are key in constructive conflict resolution and have been identified in people who score high on security attachment (Scheeren et al., 2014). This agrees with Kantarci & Sendil (2012) who affirm that people possessing a secure attachment style tend to possess more positive communication styles; portraying more constructive behavior in solving problems during a conflict than those with insecure attachment styles.

People with a secure attachment style were also observed to see themselves as attractive. Those who were anxiously attached saw themselves as less attractive (Kantarci & Sendil, 2012). This finding helps to explain a subtle relationship between AAS and self-esteem in individuals, affecting how they approach their marital conflicts. Nabi & Rizvi (2015) posited that there is also a significant correlation between adult attachment style, positive emotions and life satisfaction. Securely attached individuals, observed as able to

express positive emotions, were shown to be more satisfied with their lives, jobs, and also more fulfilled in their interpersonal relationships. Delvecchio et al. (2016) further noted securely attached people as able to resolve painful memories without having to fall back on destructive defensiveness. Secure AAS has also been associated with win-win conflict styles that are integrating and compromising; looking for what is mutually beneficial (Kantarci & Sendil, 2012).

Insecure Adult Attachment Styles and MCRS

The three AAS: Preoccupied, Avoidant Fearful, and Avoidant Dismissing are all termed as insecure. Avoidant AAS been directly linked with a reduction in marital compliance, therefore increasing marital conflict (Refahi, 2016). Bartholomew & Horowitz (1991) observed that dismissing attachment styled adult individuals scored high in hostility and coldness while they scored low on emotional expressiveness, warmth and intimacy. Fearful avoidant styled individuals were low on self-confidence, assertiveness, self-disclosure, intimacy, reliance on others and use of others as a secure base. Pollard et al. (2014) also found an interesting link between attachment and religiosity, with high scores of attachment avoidance shown as linking with a lack of a positive and secure relationship with God. This finding is significant because it can explain why avoidant attachment styled people have also been observed as more likely to engage in casual sex and even one night stands than any other attachment styled people (Butzer & Campbell, 2008).

Avoidant AAS had less positive therapy outcomes because of difficulties in therapeutic alliance, which may indicate negative conflict outcome even when therapy is sought (Elchert & Gaasden, 2016). In their study investigating AAS and sexual satisfaction and relationship satisfaction among married couples, Butzer & Campbell (2008) found that people with avoidant AAS reported lower levels of sexual satisfaction while also reporting higher on uncommitted sex partners since they can use sex simply to impress. Sierau &

Herzberg (2012) conclude that people with high avoidance generally invest less in romantic relationships.

Preoccupied AAS holders are described as having a negative representation of themselves that makes them anxious of being rejected or abandoned while intensely desiring their partners' reassurance and closeness (Sierau & Herzberg, 2012). Preoccupied individuals, also termed as ambivalent have been posited as having more negative interactions than any other AAS (Refahi, 2016). Individuals with preoccupied AAS; due to their high anxiety scores, have been seen as causing hyper vigilance toward threat and rejection (Schriber et al., 2016).

In one study, preoccupied attachment styled people specifically reported higher distress and hostility towards partners while trying to discuss a problematic issue between them. Kantarci & Sendil (2012) noted that people who have negative active and negative passive conflict management styles scored higher on insecure adult attachment styles. The anxious ambivalent attached person has been observed as prone to getting very critical of self when confronted with distress in their relationship (Heene et al., 2005). Pollard et al. (2014) referred to individuals with high attachment anxiety as manifesting clinging behavior while also exaggerating their fear focused on an exaggerated threat of abandonment. Butzer & Campbell (2008) found that due to their high scores on anxiety, preoccupied individuals tend to use sex to measure the quality of their relationship and to foster their assurance that they will not be rejected while also experiencing difficulties in enjoying sex because other issues may often preoccupy their minds. While avoidance promotes unavailability, anxiety which preoccupied AAS score highly, promotes invasiveness (Pollard et al., 2014). Invasiveness may then explain findings in Refahi (2014) showing preoccupied individuals depriving their spouses of freedom and independence, hence promoting conflict. In terms of their relationship with God, Pollard et al. (2014) reported those with attachment anxiety

similar to what preoccupied attached individuals have; inconsistencies in how they related with God. This study adds to research in Kenya on adult attachment styles in relation to marital conflict resolution styles.

Marital Stability

Previous research has identified the relationship between attachment styles and marital satisfaction (Diamond et al., 2017; Mohammadi et al., 2016). Hongo (2019) examined the relationship between attachment styles and marital satisfaction in a Kenyan Christian context, a study that found a negative relationship between AAS and marital satisfaction. Marriages in Kenya have been referred to as fairly stable, with reference to low levels of divorce and separation (UNFPA, 2013). The analysis cited however noted that the low numbers recorded could also be explained by the fact that majority of Kenyans marry under customary law that stigmatizes divorce and makes the process very burdensome. This observation puts a question mark on the levels of marital stability in the country. Njoroge (2017) sought to establish the relationship between conflict resolution styles and marital stability in Kiambu County and did not find a statistically significant difference between marital stability or instability based on regulated marital conflict resolution styles

Attachment styles and conflict resolution styles or approaches were among outstanding factors associated with either the stability or instability of marriages by Karimi et al. (2019). Holman & Jarvis (2003) agree with this assertion in their finding that there is a difference in marital quality even among couples that Gottman (1994) called regulated based on their use of either Avoidance, Volatile or Validating styles of marital conflict resolution. Further to the AAS and marital conflict resolution styles of respondents, this study sought to find out how the respondents described their marriages, given either stable or unstable. The study also looked at marital stability in relation to AAS, demographics and MCRS of the respondents.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework offers direction for the study; where the basis is on an available concept or principle in the study area or related to the study area. It represents the assumptions of the study (Grant & Osanloo, 2014). This research received direction from two theories which are: attachment theory and Gottman's theory of marital conflict styles.

Attachment Theory

Attachment theory posits that human beings develop working models or scripts about close relationships in response to early experiences with the person that is their primary caregiver (Bowlby, 1969). Those children whose caregivers are consistently available and responsive develop a secure attachment style. Children whose caretakers lack responsiveness or show inconsistency develop insecure attachment styles (Dijkstra et al., 2016). While Freud saw attached infants as needy, clingy and dependent; Bowlby saw them as competent, curious and fully engaged with the environment (Waters et al. 2002). Bowlby (1984) further referred to a concept that he called the secure base, explaining that when parents become a secure base for their children, such children develop confidence to do two significant things. First, they are able to launch into a free exploration of their environment and secondly, they are able to see their parents as a safe haven to who they can return in times of distress. If a child experiences that secure base, they develop a secure attachment behavioral system that matures into an individual's capacity to form close and enduring affection bonds in future (Burke et al., 2015).

In adulthood romantic relationship, three questions have been posited in determining whether the attachment is secure or insecure: "Can I count on you to be there for me?" "When I call, will you come?" "Are you within reach?" When those questions are consistently answered with a positive answer, a spouse is said to develop a secure attachment in depending on the partner (Johnson & Greenman, 2006). When these questions

are not answered positively and consistently, individuals develop insecure attachment styles. The questions also reflect on what Sierau and Herzberg (2012) refer to as two dimensions that form assumptions about self and others in attachment styles namely avoidance and anxiety; with avoidance showing a negative representation of others and anxiety showing a negative representation of self. Nabi and Rizvi (2015) refer to four AAS namely secure, preoccupied, fearful avoidant and dismissive avoidance, based on how individuals perceive self and the other. In addition, research has consistently shown that people's attachment styles have an influence on their expectations and strategies in later relationship with those secure in their attachments showing better strategies for dealing with stressful events while insecurely attached couples had lower use of cooperative strategies (Castellanno et al., 2013).

Gottman's Theory of Marital Conflict Resolution Styles

Gottman (1994) theorizes that the way couples deal with conflict fits into one of two models, either regulated or unregulated. His observation is that a lasting marriage results from a couple's ability to resolve the conflicts that are inevitable in any relationship. In the regulated or functional model, Gottman (1994) highlighted three styles of marital conflict resolution: validating, volatile and avoiding. These three styles, while very different in their approaches to conflict, are still termed as constructive.

Validating couples are high on communication and a sense of friendship, validating each other's feelings and opinions as they address their conflicts (Delatorre & Wagner, 2019). According to Gottman(1994), validating couples follow a pattern in conflict that involves validation of each other's view while seeking a win-win solution.

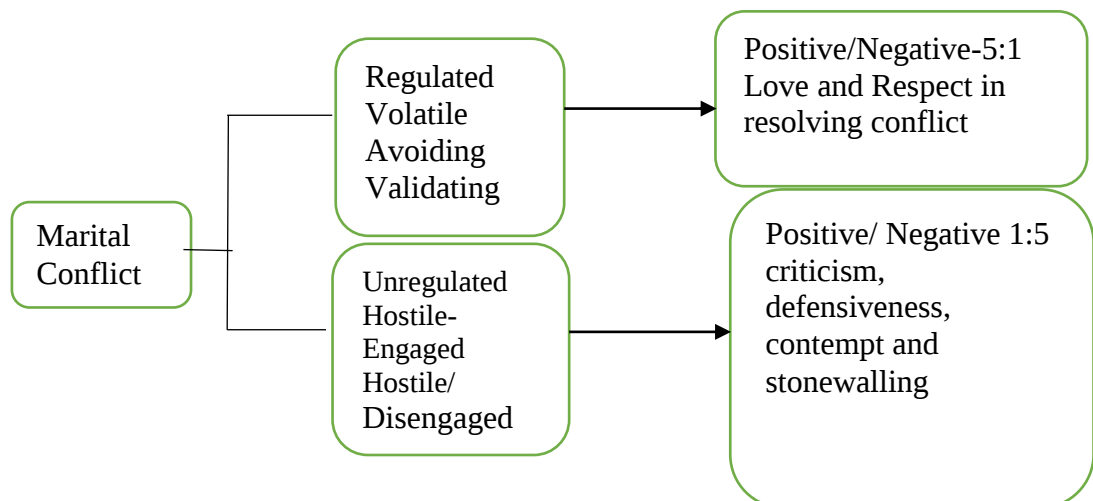
Volatile couples are what Gottman (1994) describes as fighting on a grand scale in what he terms as their volcanic eruptions, and then making up on an even grander scale. The Avoidant couples on the other hand minimize conflict or even avoid it altogether, propelled

by a philosophy of affirming their shared values and using time energy on what is positive; living with the rest and trusting that some things will just resolve themselves. According to Gottman, though such couples may still enjoy a calm and pleasant marriage.

The hostile model, further divided into hostile/ engaged and hostile/disengaged is the destructive style. Hostility is either displayed in active attacks aimed at instilling fear in a spouse according to Gottman and Driver (2005), or through a refusal to communicate due to what Nartey (2014) observes as a feeling of being unsafe. Gottman and Silver (1999), theorize that the ratio of five positive affects to one negative is magical in determining whether a relationship that will last or not. One positive to two negatives is usually accompanied by what they term as the Four Horsemen of The Apocalypse namely criticism, defensiveness, contempt and stonewalling. Figure 2.2 further illustrates Gottman's MCRS theory.

Figure 2.2

MCRS

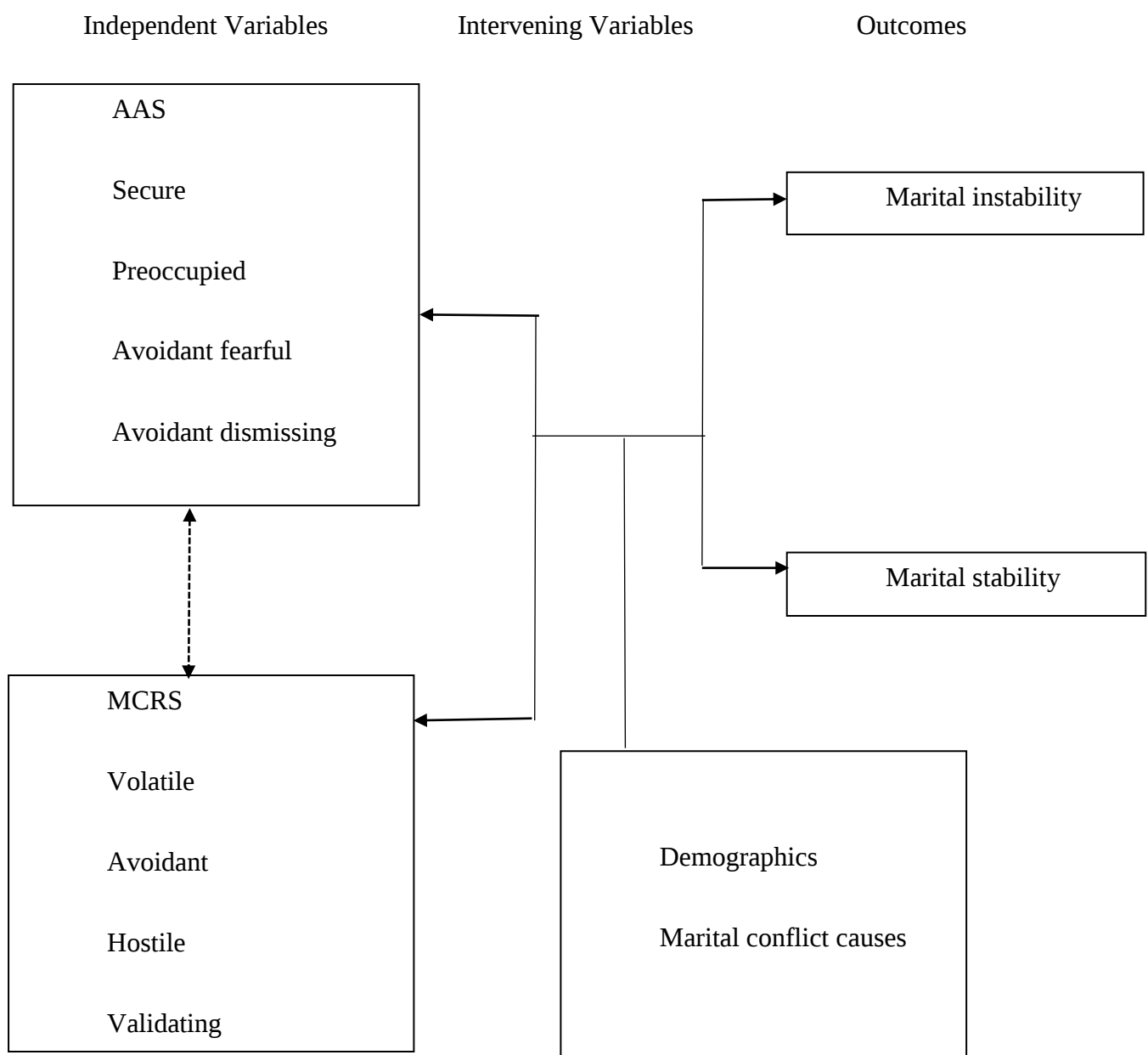


Conceptual Framework

Conceptual framework is important in organizing and focusing a study by specifying key variables and showing how they relate and influence the phenomenon under research (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2016).

Figure 2.3

Conceptual Framework



In the conceptual framework shown in Figure 2.3, the AAS (Secure, Avoidant Dismissing, Preoccupied and Avoidant Fearful) and the MCRS (Validating, Avoidance, Hostile and Volatile) are the independent variables. Based on their AAS, couples respond to conflict in their marriages in styles of either Hostile, Avoidant, Volatile or Validating. The cause or theme of conflict and the demographic factors: age, duration of marriage, gender of individuals, occupation, and income status are the intervening variables in the relationship between AAS and marital conflict styles. The overall outcome is either a stable or unstable marriage.

This study sought to contribute in filling the gap in explaining how AAS and marital conflict resolution styles relate, the influence of causes of marital conflicts and selected demographics, and how all that determined stability or instability of marriages in Nairobi County, Kenya.

Chapter Summary

This chapter has analyzed literature on what different scholars have researched concerning adult attachment styles, demographics and causes of marital conflicts. The chapter further looked at literature on the relationship between AAS, MCRS, and marital stability. The theoretical and conceptual frameworks of the study have also been explained.

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study employed correlation research design. Anastas (2012) observes that correlation research design involves identifying relationships between phenomena with theory; usually through the use of self-reports and structured interviews. The design was helpful in identifying the relationship between demographics, AAS, marital conflict resolution styles, and whether marriages were self-reported as either stable or unstable among the respondents. This was done through the use of self-reports in the form of questionnaires, and interviews with participating pastors.

Study Locale

CITAM is divided into four regions namely Northern, Southern, Western and International. The study locale was CITAM Northern and Southern Regions assemblies located within Nairobi County. Table 3.1 portrays the regional distribution of CITAM assemblies.

Table 3.1

The Regional Distribution of CITAM Assemblies

	NORTHERN REGION	SOUTHERN REGION	WESTERN REGION	INTERNA TIONAL
1.	Valley Road	Athi River	Kisumu	USA
2.	Woodley	Buruburu	Eldoret	Romania
3.	Thika Road	Embakasi	Kapsabet	
4.	Clay City	Ngong	Nakuru	
5.	Thika Town	Rongai	Naivasha	
6.	Kiambu Road	Karen	Kisii	
7.	Thika Town	Kitengela		
8	Parklands	Kangundo Rd		
9.	Meru	Mombasa		
10.	Nyeri			

The Accessible Population

The target population of this study was married couples in Nairobi County. The accessible population was drawn from the CITAM Northern and Southern regions. The Northern region comprises of 10 assemblies, three (3) of which are located outside Nairobi County while seven (7) are within Nairobi County. The Southern region has nine (9) assemblies, seven (7) of which are within Nairobi County. Below is a tabular representation of the CITAM Northern and Southern Region assemblies located in Nairobi County that were selected for participation, the number of married couples in each assembly and the sample size that was targeted for this study from each assembly.

Table 3.2

Married Members in CITAM Northern Region, Nairobi County

	ASSEMBLIES REGION	AND	MARRIED MEMBERS	SAMPLE
1.	CITAM valley Road Northern Region		2,500	125 respondents
2.	CITAM Woodley Northern Region		1,000	50 respondents
3.	CITAM Parklands Northern Region		200	20 respondents
4.	CITAM Thika Road Northern Region		1,000	50 respondents
5.	CITAM Buru Buru Southern Region		1,000	50 respondents
6.	CITAM Karen Southern Region		1,000	50 respondents
Total				345 respondents

Sample Size

While a sample size should be such that the researcher can draw inferences from the whole population, Opuko et al. (2016) argue that estimates of sample size also need to be

considerate of other issues such as characteristics of the population and nature of the research questions. Since each targeted assembly had a different size and characteristics of membership, 5% of couples from 5 assemblies were targeted for this study while 10 % was targeted from CITAM Parklands which had a relatively low number of married individuals. In total, a total of 385 married individuals were targeted as shown in Table 3.2.

Sampling Method

The researcher used purposive sampling method to choose the CITAM regions of Northern and Southern. Purposive sampling was also used to select the six (6) CITAM Assemblies located within the Nairobi Metropolis that participated. The researcher took into consideration certain unique demographical characteristics of each of the assemblies as listed below so as to have representation that can be generalized to other CITAM assemblies.

CITAM Buru Buru is located in Nairobi's Eastlands area. It has a high population of young families starting off in careers. It has the highest number of Sunday school children in comparison to all other CITAM assemblies, showing that the couples there are relatively young in age and also in duration of marriage. CITAM Valley Road is the oldest CITAM assembly, has the highest number of members and reports the highest income through member's giving. Its location within the Nairobi's Central District also makes it unique in that most members travel to church from other places in Nairobi, making the membership composition very diverse.

CITAM Woodley has an interesting demography due to its proximity to the high end residential areas such as Lavington and Kileleshwa on one hand and the sprawling Kibra slums on the other hand. CITAM Karen has membership drawn mainly from the high end Karen and Lang'ata area. CITAM Parklands is a unique assembly in that it was started as a reach out to the Asian community in Parklands. In comparison to other assemblies, CITAM Parklands has a small membership that is more by design due to its mission. Most members

are from the high-end neighborhood. CITAM Thika Road is located in an area with a number of institutions of learning. The area is attractive for young students who find accommodation in Kasarani, Roysambu and Zimmerman estates. Its access to Nairobi Central Business District through the Thika superhighway means that those who own homes around it are on the higher end of the social economic strata.

The study sample comprised of married individuals who were selected through simple random, where the researcher employed the help of the pastors in charge of the Family Care and Enrichment (FaCE) ministries and the home based bible study groups known as Safari Groups, in the selected assemblies. The researcher met with each of the pastors and Safari group leaders to explain to them the study procedure and seek advice on how best to reach the couples. Participants were recruited online through Marriage Care and Counselling Groups (MCCG) and the Safari Groups. Snowballing was further employed as participants were encouraged to pass the link on to their married friends within their circles who were also members of the assemblies but for some reason not in the MCCG or Safari groups. Snowballing, according to Mugenda & Mugenda (2003) is when initial subjects with the desired characteristics are purposefully identified. Those subjects then name others that they know have the required characteristics. A total of 266 respondents filled the questionnaires using an online link posted in their specific groups.

Data Collection

The researcher used questionnaires distributed to respondents, and semi-structured interviews with six pastors who were in charge of FaCE ministries in the participating assemblies. Multiple sources of data have been shown as useful in offering a more comprehensive view of a given study, especially the combination of personal interviews and questionnaires in understanding behavior (Opuko et al., 2016).

Demographical Data Collection

For the collection of demographic and biographic data, the researcher created a section in the questionnaire where respondents would select the groups they belonged to in terms of gender, age, duration of marriage, occupation, level of education and level of income.

Marital stability, Causes of conflict and Frequency of conflict Data

As part of the questionnaire, the researcher included some questions that were not demographic in nature. To find out the marital stability of respondents, they were asked to indicate how they would describe their marriages, given either stable or unstable. To establish causes of conflict, there was a multi response item where the respondents were to indicate, given a number of known causes of marital conflict, what they mainly identified with in their marriages. The given items for selection were: Infidelity, Communication, In-laws, Children, Use of social media, Finances, Roles and 'Others'. Respondents could indicate more than one cause where applicable. To find out the frequency of significant marital conflicts among respondents, a multiple choice question was asked with answers ranging from Never, Daily, Weekly, Monthly, Quarterly, Twice a year and Annually.

Marital Conflict Resolution Questionnaire

The marital conflict questionnaire used in this study was modified from a tool developed by Holman & Jarvis (2003). In the original tool, four short scenarios were created as descriptions of the types of conflicts that Gottman (1994) observed: Validating, Volatile, Avoiding and Hostile. Respondents in Holman & Jarvis (2003) were to choose the cluster of statements or scenarios that best described how they handled their conflicts in terms of how often each scenario fit them on a scale of never, rarely, sometimes, often and very often. The current research modified the format of the tool by breaking down each cluster into specific questions, thus forming a 12-item questionnaire while keeping verbatim to the statements in the original clusters. The researcher then arranged the 12 questions randomly so that there

was no pattern to show where each belonged. There was no indication in the introduction to the questionnaire of the name of the styles being scored. This was done to limit biased reporting by the respondents where, for example, a respondent may go for what sounds better at a glance rather than what may sound negative e.g. hostile. Each item in the randomly arranged list belonged to one of the four clusters that correspond to specific conflict styles as shown in Table 3.3. The respondents were then required to self-score on a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from Very characteristic, Characteristic, Neutral, Uncharacteristic and Very uncharacteristic.

Table 3.3

MCRS Clusters and corresponding items in Questionnaire

MCRS	No.	No.	No.
Avoidant	3	6	12
Volatile	1	5	9
Hostile	2	7	11
Validating	4	8	10

To get the scores for each marital conflict resolution style, the researcher employed the method used in Holman & Jarvis (2003). It is the k-means nonhierarchical cluster analysis in SPSS. This cluster method is recommended where there is need for grouping large samples of respondents. Holman & Jarvis (2003) affirmed that the tool gave what they termed as intriguingly similar results as those from Gottman's empirical work.

Adult Attachment Style Questionnaire

The researcher adopted a standard questionnaire by Collins & Read (1996) called the Revised Adult Attachment Scale (RAAS). This scale has 18 items. Respondents used a 5-point Likert scale to indicate how they generally feel in relationship with their marriage partner, thus placing themselves on the three attachment dimensions of Close, Depend and Anxiety. Each subscale had six items as shown:

ANXIETY: 3, 4, 9,10,11,15

DEPEND: 2, 5,7,14, **16**, **18**

CLOSE: 1, 6,**8**, 12, 13, and 17

The scores for each dimension were calculated for respondents by averaging the participants' self-scores on each item in the scale. The bolded, underlined items were reverse scored before computing the specific dimension's mean score because they approached the issue being scored from a negative direction while the rest approached from a positive direction. For example in the CLOSE dimension, item 6 is a positive statement that reads 'I am comfortable depending on others'. Item 8, which is bolded, approaches the same dimension of CLOSE with the negative statement, 'I find that people are never there when you need them. Item 8 therefore needs to be reverse scored, as well as items 2,7,16 and 18. That done, the averages for each item in the scales were used to get the respondents' adult attachment styles in the categories used for this study (i.e., Secure, Preoccupied, Fearful Avoidant and Dismissing Avoidant). The method recommended in Collins (2008) and exemplified in Collins and Feeney (2004) was used. The dimensions of close and depend were averaged then reverse scored in order to get an overall index of Avoidance. The attachment anxiety dimension was used as the anxiety index. The predicted means for each of the four attachment styles was then obtained by computing the predicted value of the dependent variable at one standard deviation (SD) below the mean on Anxiety and one SD below the mean on Avoidance.

Semi-structured Interviews

Interviews have been hailed as helpful to researchers needing to gain a deeper understanding and more detailed information on the subject under study (Showkat & Parveen, 2017). The researcher conducted semi-structured interviews with the Pastors in charge of the FaCE ministry in all the six assemblies selected for the study. The role of the

interviews with these pastors was to enrich the data by getting objective answers to questions on the areas under study based on their observations of couples within the assemblies.

In semi-structured interviews, though the interviewer has a general framework of questions, the interviewer has some flexibility to ask follow up questions in response to the answers received (Bryman, 2016). The number of individuals interviewed was six, which is also the number of assemblies selected. The interview schedule is found in Appendix III.

Instrument Pretesting

Though the two questionnaires used in this study have been used and found to be valid before, the researcher did a pretesting of both the AAS and marital conflict Resolution style questionnaires. The major reason for this was to ensure that respondents would understand what was required of them and that the language was clear enough to a Kenyan respondent. The researcher also wanted to confirm that the categories of AAS and MCRS used in this study would indeed be found from analyzing the scores. Six couples who are members of various Pentecostal churches within Nairobi County were purposively selected for the pretesting. They were given the questionnaires and requested to fill answers for all the questions. The researcher then scored, analyzed and discussed the resulting AAS and MCRS with the respondents, explaining what they indicated about the way they felt in their marriages in terms of attachment and conflict behaviours. The respondents in the pilot indicated that they identified with the styles arrived at.

Reliability and Validity of Research Tools

The researcher adopted standardized inventories to determine both the AAS and the MCRS of the respondents. This means that the tools have already been proven as reliable and valid for different types of population and no changes were needed. The questionnaire for collecting biographical data, and the interview schedule used for the semi-structured interviews were also forwarded to the supervisor, one other expert in the field of family

therapy and a research scientist for review and scrutiny to ensure the validity of the data collection instrument.

Data Analysis

The data collected from the questionnaires was analyzed using descriptive statistics. The descriptive statistics used were percentages, mean and k-means nonhierarchical cluster analysis. The inferential statistics used were Chi-Square test and ANOVA. All tests of significance were computed at a significant level of 5% with the help of SPSS version 23.0. The qualitative data obtained from the interviews was analyzed using content analysis. This entailed analyzing transcripts of the recordings while identifying, coding, organizing, and summarizing content themes related to the research objectives.

Ethical Considerations

Approval to carry out the research was sought and received in the form of a letter of research authorization and ethics clearance from the research approval committee of the PAC University. The certificate was then sent as part of an application to the Government of Kenya through NACOSTI. NACOSTI thereafter granted the researcher a license to conduct the research. Approval for conducting the research in CITAM assemblies was further sought, and obtained, in writing from the Deputy Bishop. Senior Pastors of the specific assemblies were also requested in writing to allow the researcher to reach out to the Deputy Pastors who, in every CITAM Assembly, are also in charge of the FaCE ministries. This was done so as to access couples through Safari groups and MCCG groups. In five assemblies, the Senior Pastors responded on email granting permission while the remaining Senior Pastor responded to the researcher on phone.

Voluntary participation in the study was requested through MCCG group leaders by the FaCE pastors of the assemblies and through a consent form at the introduction that accompanied the questionnaire link. Participants were requested not to indicate their names

so as not to compromise confidentiality. The introduction also had the direct telephone number of the researcher in case any respondent needed clarification.

Chapter Summary

This chapter has indicated the research angle that was applied, the study locale, sampling and research design. The chapter has also discussed the data collection instruments used, and shown how the data was analyzed.

CHAPTER FOUR: RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Introduction

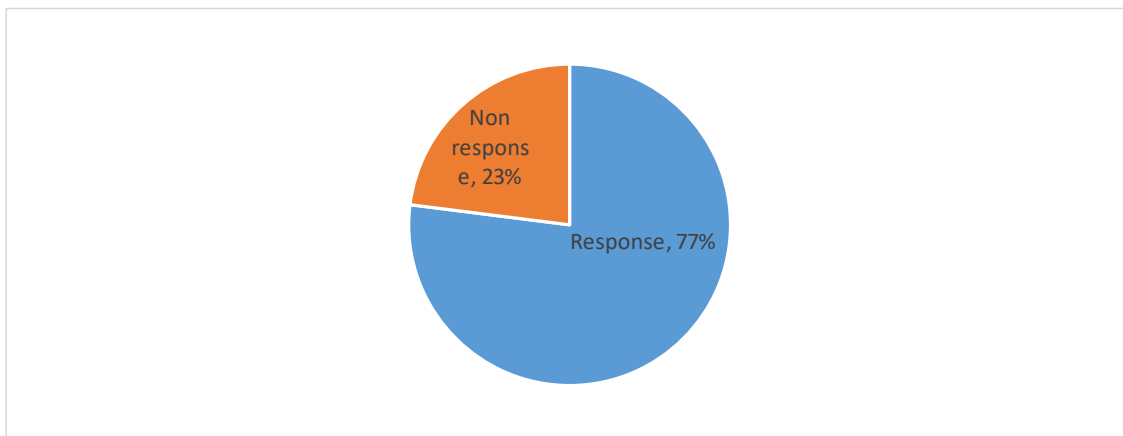
This chapter presents the findings of the study from the analysis of the data collected. The format for presentation includes: Response rate, demographic information, findings and discussion of each research objective, a discussion on outcomes and lastly, the chapter summary. The descriptive statistics used were percentages, mean and k-means nonhierarchical cluster analysis. The inferential statistics used were Chi-Square test and ANOVA.

Response Rate

The target population for this study was 345 individuals. Out of these, 266 participated in the study, giving a response rate of 77% as indicated in Figure 4.1. This response rate was sufficient for the study in keeping with the assertion by Fincham (2008) that a minimum of 60% response rate should be the goal for a researcher.

Figure 4. 1

Response Rate (n=266)



Demographic Information

This section presents the demographic data of the respondents that include: Gender, age, duration in marriage, occupation, level of income and level of education.

Gender

Female respondents were 57.9% while male respondents were 42.1% as shown in table 4.1. The results also imply that there were more females participate than males.

Table 4.1

Gender

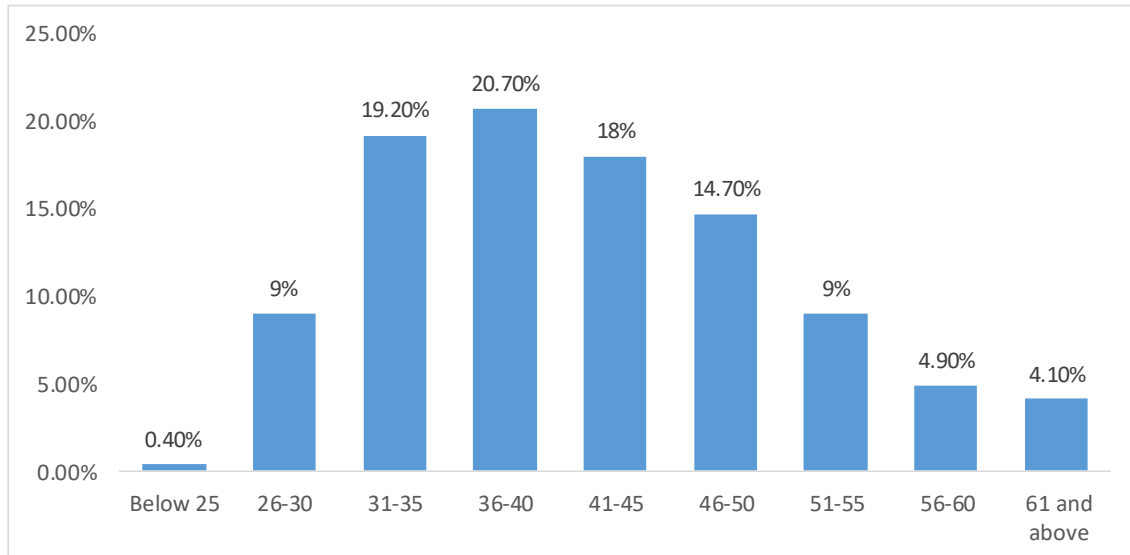
	Frequency	Percent
Male	112	42.1
Female	154	57.9
Total	266	100.0

Age of Respondents

Respondents were asked to indicate their age categories by ticking in spaces provided. The results are presented in Figure 4.2. The results shows that 20.7% of respondents were aged between 36-40 years, 19.2% were 31-35 years of age and 18% were aged between 41-45 years. Those between the ages of 46-50 years accounted for 14.7% while 26-30 year olds were 9%. Respondents aged 51-55 years were also 9%, 56-60 4.9%, 61years and above were 4.1 % and 0.4% were below the age of 25 years. The findings indicate that majority of respondents were aged between 31-50 years.

Figure 4.2

Age of Respondents

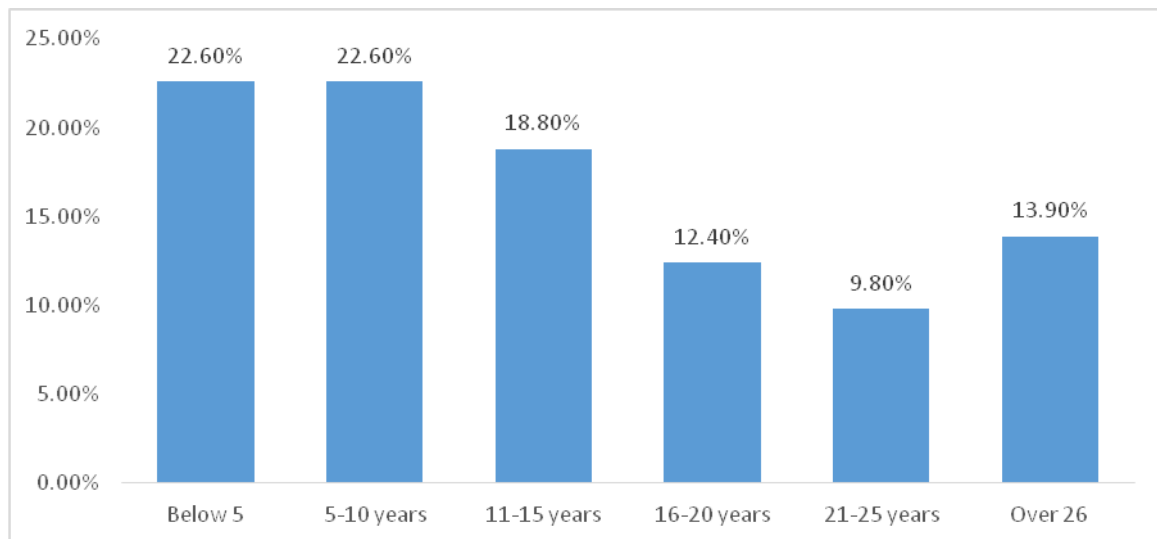


Duration in Marriage

The results are presented in Figure 4.3 showing that 22.6 % of the respondents had been in marriage for less than five (5) years with a similar percentage of 22.6 % being those who had been in marriage for 5-10 years. Those who were in marriage for 11-15 years stood at 18.8% and those married for 16-20 years accounted for 12.4% of the respondents. This shows that majority of the respondents were at the early phase of marriage.

Figure 4. 3

Duration in Marriage



Occupation

Participants were asked to indicate whether they were employed, unemployed, self-employed or unemployed. The results are presented in Table 4.2 where majority of the respondents at 62.8% indicated they were employed, 28% were self-employed and 8.6 % were unemployed.

Table 4.2

Occupation of Respondents

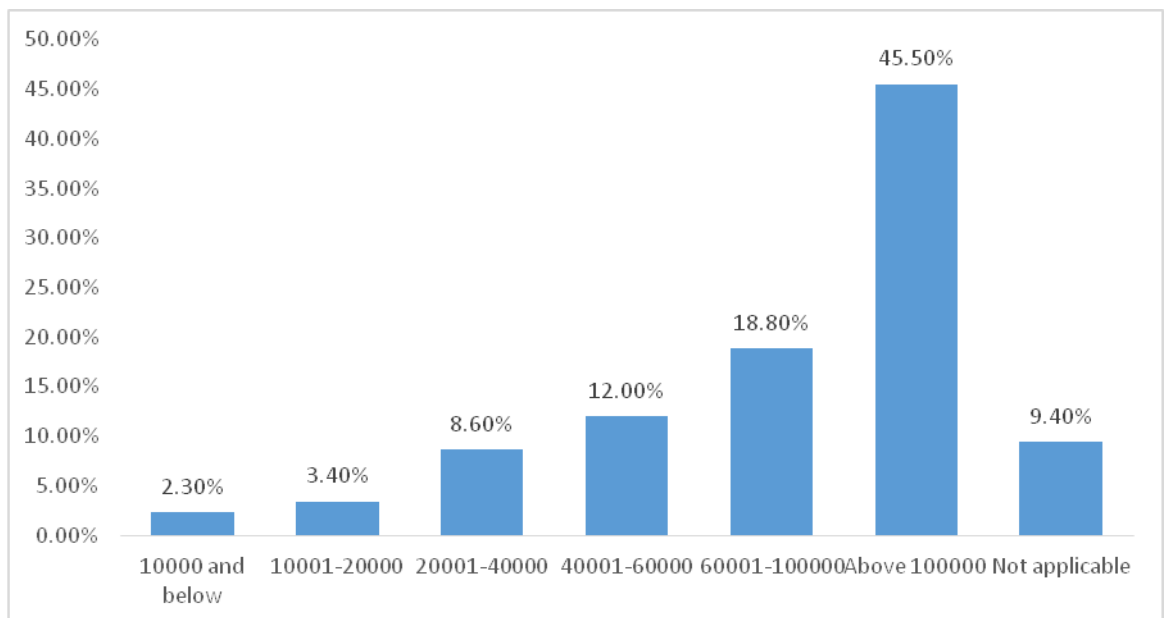
	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Unemployed	23	8.6	8.6	8.6
Self-employed	76	28.6	28.6	37.2
Employed	167	62.8	62.8	100.0
Total	266	100.0	100.0	

Level of Income

The results in Figure 4.4 reveal that the highest category of respondents were earning above Kenya Shillings 100,000; showing financial stability in their families. The least income category of below Kenya Shillings 10,000 represented only 2.3% of the respondents. The results show that more than half of the respondents were earning Kenya Shillings 60,000 and above monthly.

Figure 4.4

Level of Income

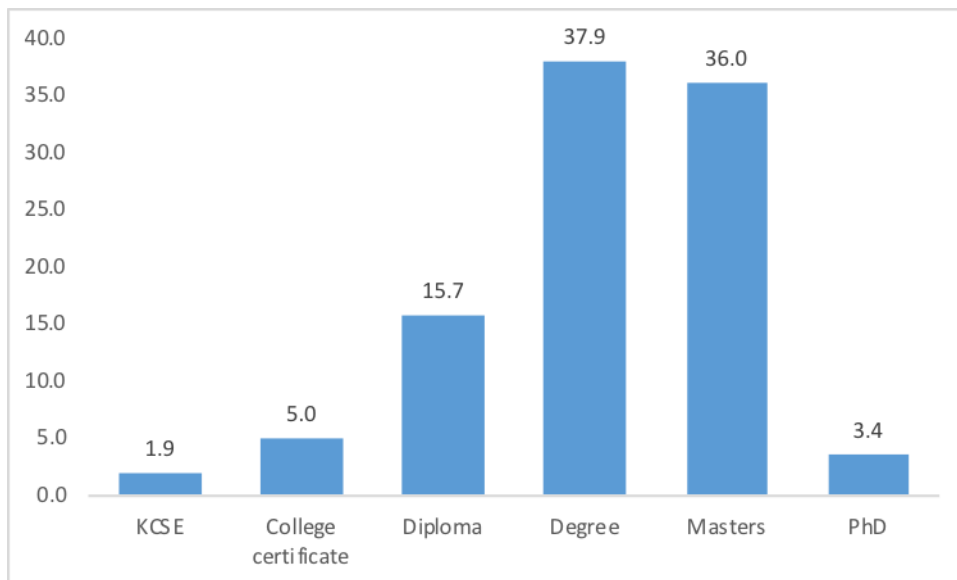


Level of Education

Figure 4.5 shows the levels of education as indicated by the respondents. The highest category are degree holders accounting for 37.9 %, followed by Masters holders at 36 %. 15.7% of the respondents indicated that they held a Diploma while those who were PhD Holders accounted for 3.4%. Only 5% of the respondents said they held a college certificate while 1.9 percent did not have at least a college certificate. This implies that majority of the respondents were university graduates.

Figure 4.5

Level of education

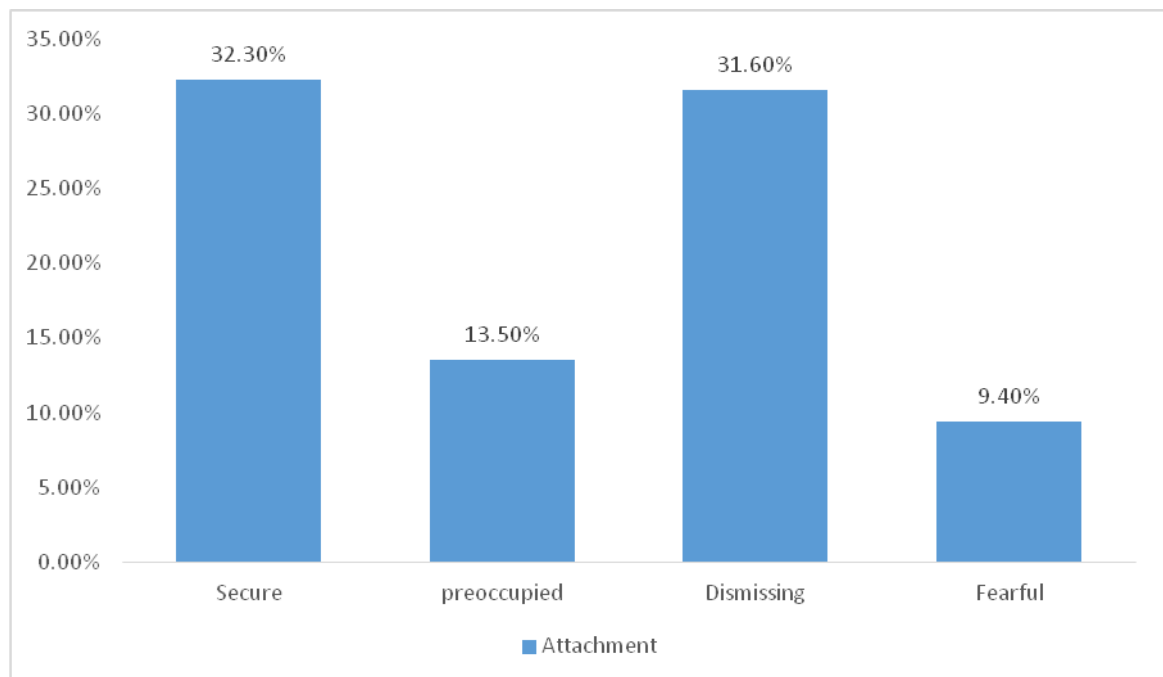


Adult Attachment Styles

The first objective of this study was to find out the adult attachment styles of the respondents by use of a standardized questionnaire. The results are shown in Figure 4.6.

Figure 4. 6

Adult Attachment Styles in Couples



The results in Figure 4.6 revealed four adult attachment styles among the respondents. A third of the respondents (32.3%) were securely attached, 31.6% were avoidant dismissing, 13.5% were preoccupied, and 9.4 % of the respondents were fearful avoidant. This means that a third of respondents are comfortable with closeness to others, in this case their spouses, as well as with depending and being depended upon. They do not have anxiety with closeness. They do not avoid closeness with others because they have a positive model of self, and a positive model of other.

The avoidant dismissing respondents were 31.6%, falling just around 1% short of those who were secure in their AAS. Avoidant dismissing AAS means that these respondents,

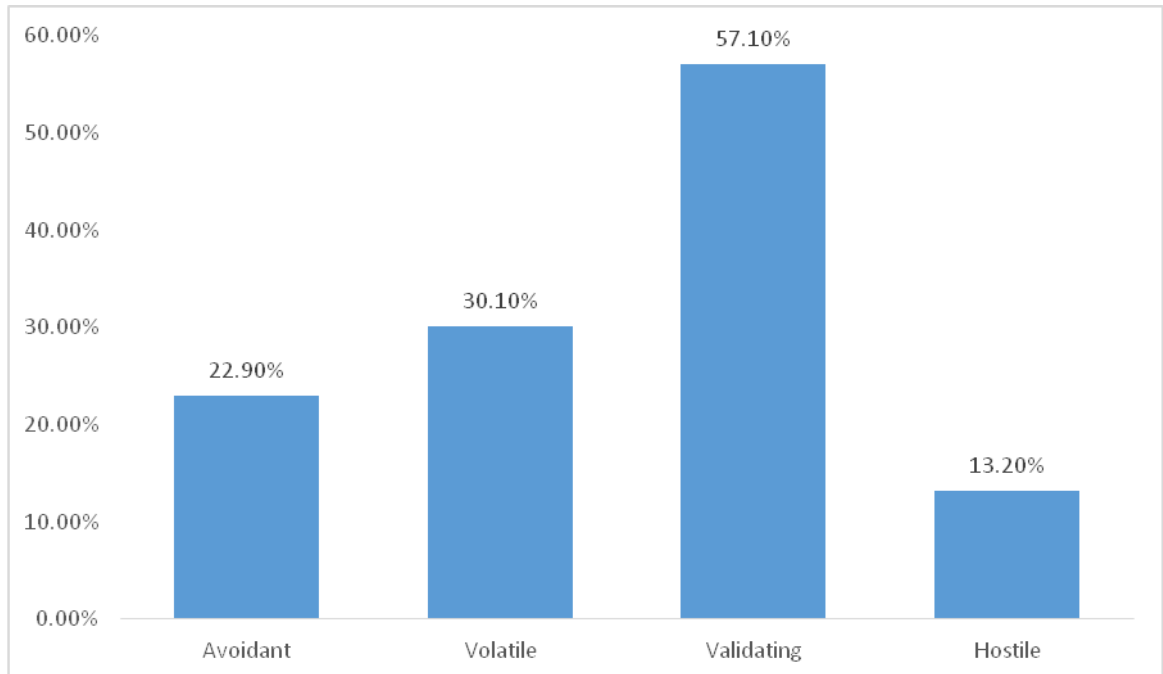
who make up close to another one third of respondents, are low on anxiety but high on avoidance. People with this AAS have been described as characterized by self-enhancement based on defensiveness, avoiding close levels of intimacy so as to find safety in their independence (Arriaga et al., 2013). The other two insecure AAS, avoidant fearful and the preoccupied, were scored by much fewer respondents in this study. The finding that the secure and the avoidant dismissing adult attachment styles were the highest in terms of number of respondents differ with the findings of Dijkstra et al. (2016) who observed that intellectually gifted individuals scored fearful avoidant as the AAS they mostly identified with.

Marital Conflict Resolution Styles among respondents

The second objective was to establish the MCRS among couples. The results are presented in Figure 4.7. The results reveal that more than a half of the respondents at 57.1% used the validating marital conflict resolution style while volatile marital conflict resolution style was used by 30.10%. Those who used avoiding marital conflict resolution style were 22.9% and the hostile MCRS was used by 13.2% of the respondents. The findings agree with the theory of classification of MCRS among couples by Gottman (1999).

Figure 4. 7

Marital Conflict Styles



Most of the respondents characteristically applied constructive MCRS while a significant 13.2 % applied the destructive hostile MCRS. Delatorre & Wagner (2019) describe constructive strategies as involving openness to dialogue and commitment to working out solutions. The validating style had the highest percentage of respondents in this study. This finding echoes another research finding showing that people who were religious in practice exhibited behaviour patterns that were more adaptive of the validating style even when they handled conflicts (Delatorre & Wagner, 2019).

The validating MCRS indicates that couples have a strong sense of ‘we-ness’ even in conflict (Havaasi et.al, 2017; Deylami et al., 2015). These couples characteristically listen to each other even in a conflict; validating one another’s point of view and trying to get a solution that is a win-win for both of them. They have a strong sense of friendship and resolve their conflicts constructively (Gottman, 1994; Gottman & Silver, 1999).

Volatile couples are described as having a lot of passion and energy for debates and arguments (Busby & Holman, 2009). While they do not sieve their words during a heated argument, they are still classified as constructive (Gottman, 1994). Delatorre & Wagner (2019) found the volatile style as more characteristic among women than among male respondents. In the same study, they also found the volatile style characterized more by respondents who resided in the metropolitan area in comparison to those who resided in non-metropolitan areas. The non-metropolitan residents indicated the avoiding style as more characteristic of them with greater frequency (Delatorre & Wagner, 2019). The current study of couples who reside in the Nairobi Metropolis echoes these findings because the volatile style is scored by many respondents. The avoidant style is much lower in percentage.

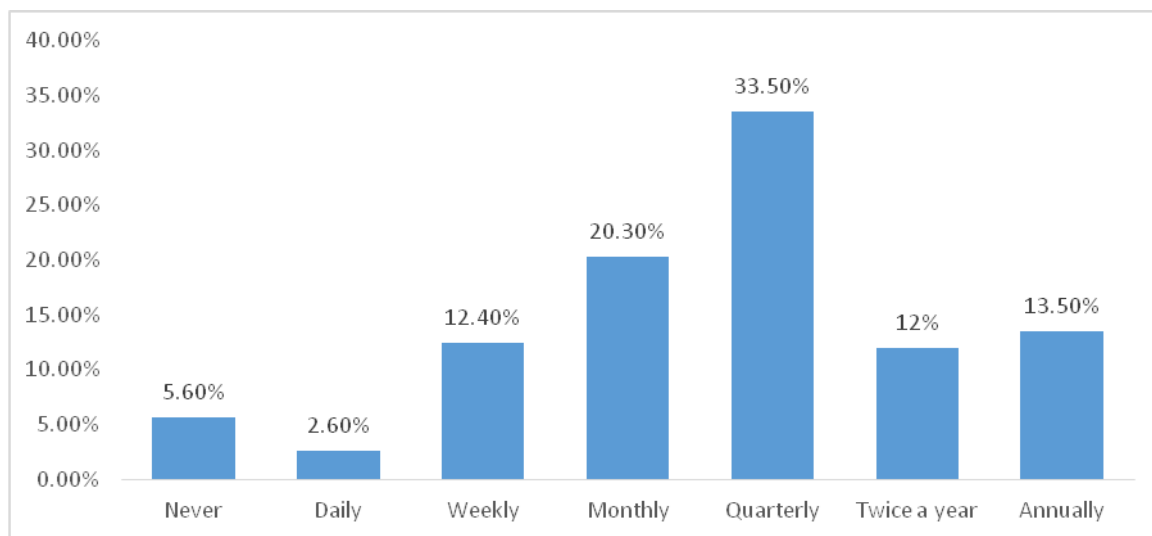
The avoiding conflict resolution style, though used by more participating couples than the hostile style, was generally scored low in this study in comparison to validating and volatile MCRS. The avoiding marital conflict resolution style is characterized by avoiding the things that couples disagree on (Gottman 1994; Hysi, 2011). Busby & Holman (2009) describe such couples as believing that time is all that is needed for problems to be resolved.

The hostile style of marital conflict resolution had the lowest score in this study at of 13.2% among the respondents of this study. This percentage, while low, is significant because it is where there is the presence of what Gottman (1994) refers to as the four horsemen of the apocalypse: criticism, defensiveness, contempt, and stonewalling. This implies that 13% of the respondents are engaged in a pattern that is known to ultimately destroy marriages to the point of meltdown or divorce.

The researcher was interested in finding out the frequency of significant marital conflicts. Respondents were asked to indicate how frequently they experienced a significant marital conflict, given periods ranging from never, once a year, twice a year, quarterly, monthly, weekly or daily. The results are presented in Figure 4.8.

Figure 4. 8

Frequency of Conflict



As presented on Figure 4.8, couples had experienced conflicts at varying intervals. The results show that most respondents, making 33.5% had a significant conflict quarterly, 20.3% monthly while 13.5% of respondents reported conflict once in a year. 12% had a significant conflict twice in a year, 5.6% indicated they never had significant conflicts, while 2.6% of the respondents reported a significant conflict on a daily basis. These findings show that couples experienced significant conflicts in marriage though at different frequencies, with most indicating quarterly. Adult attachment styles as well as MCRS may help to explain this disparity of experience in the frequency of marital conflicts. The results of frequency of conflict however, are not an indicator of the respondent's marriages being troubled, except the 2.6% who have conflict daily; which shows that they may be having what has been termed as a perpetual conflict (Gottman & Silver, 1999). A fraction at 5.6 % indicated that they never experience conflict. Ricco & Seirra (2017) state that people who score high on avoidant attachments are also observed as avoiding conflict. They also have a tendency of denying that it is there. People with a secure adult attachment style may face the presence and frequency of conflicts truthfully because they have good communication and problem-solving

skills (Tavakol et al., 2017). The finding in this study is also precursor to the use of the avoiding MCRS by some respondents where conflicts are dealt with by withdrawing rather than confronting them.

Relationship between Demographics and MCRS

Objective three of the study was to establish how the demographics of age, gender, occupation, duration of marriage, level of income, and level of education influence the avoiding, volatile, validating, and hostile MCRS use among respondents. Analysis of variance (ANOVA) test was used to determine the level of significance. The results are presented in Table 4.3.

The results reveal that respondents' levels of education had a statistically significant difference in relation to the avoiding marital conflict resolution style. $F(2, 263) = 3.894, p < 0.022$. Gender, age, duration of marriage, occupation, level of education, and level of income did not have a statistical difference on the avoiding MCRS according to the findings: Gender $F(2, 263) = 2.962, p = .053$, Age $F(2, 263) = .734, p = .481$, Duration of marriage $F(2, 263) = .906, p = .406$, Occupation $F(2, 263) = 1.248, p = .289$ Level of income $F(2, 263) = .871, p = .420$.

Table 4.3

Demographic Characteristics and Avoiding Style

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Gender	Between Groups	1.429	2	.714	2.962	.053
	Within Groups	63.414	263	.241		
	Total	64.842	265			
Age	Between Groups	5.018	2	2.509	.734	.481
	Within Groups	899.061	263	3.418		
	Total	904.079	265			
Duration in marriage	Between Groups	5.260	2	2.630	.906	.406
	Within Groups	763.777	263	2.904		
	Total	769.038	265			
Occupation	Between Groups	1.053	2	.527	1.248	.289
	Within Groups	110.992	263	.422		
	Total	112.045	265			
Level of income	Between Groups	3.393	2	1.696	.871	.420
	Within Groups	511.976	263	1.947		
	Total	515.368	265			
Level of education	Between Groups	8.783	2	4.391	3.894	.022
	Within Groups	296.605	263	1.128		
	Total	305.387	265			

To establish the statistical difference in level of education in relation to the avoiding MCERS, a post hoc test was conducted as shown in Table 4.4.

Table 4.4

Post hoc on Selected Demographic Characteristics and Avoidant MCRS

Tukey HSD							
Dependent Variable	(I) C_avoiding	(J) C_avoiding	Mean	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
			Difference (I-J)			Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Gender	Uncharacteristic	Neutral	.076	.069	.517	-.09	.24
		Characteristic	.197*	.081	.041	.01	.39
	Neutral	Uncharacteristic	-.076	.069	.517	-.24	.09
		Characteristic	.121	.078	.268	-.06	.31
	Characteristic	Uncharacteristic	-.197*	.081	.041	-.39	-.01
		Neutral	-.121	.078	.268	-.31	.06
Age	Uncharacteristic	Neutral	-.107	.259	.911	-.72	.50
		Characteristic	-.366	.305	.454	-1.08	.35
	Neutral	Uncharacteristic	.107	.259	.911	-.50	.72
		Characteristic	-.259	.294	.653	-.95	.43
	Characteristic	Uncharacteristic	.366	.305	.454	-.35	1.08
		Neutral	.259	.294	.653	-.43	.95
Duration in marriage	Uncharacteristic	Neutral	-.072	.239	.952	-.64	.49
		Characteristic	-.365	.281	.396	-1.03	.30
	Neutral	Uncharacteristic	.072	.239	.952	-.49	.64
		Characteristic	-.294	.271	.526	-.93	.35
	Characteristic	Uncharacteristic	.365	.281	.396	-.30	1.03
		Neutral	.294	.271	.526	-.35	.93
Occupation	Uncharacteristic	Neutral	.009	.091	.994	-.21	.22
		Characteristic	.154	.107	.321	-.10	.41
	Neutral	Uncharacteristic	-.009	.091	.994	-.22	.21
		Characteristic	.145	.103	.340	-.10	.39
	Characteristic	Uncharacteristic	-.154	.107	.321	-.41	.10
		Neutral	-.145	.103	.340	-.39	.10
Level of income	Uncharacteristic	Neutral	.240	.196	.438	-.22	.70

Tukey HSD						
Dependent Variable	(I) C_avoiding	(J) C_avoiding	Mean	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval
			Difference (I-J)			Lower BoundUpper Bound
Level of education	Neutral	Characteristic	.230	.230	.578	-.31 .77
		Uncharacteristic	-.240	.196	.438	-.70 .22
		Characteristic	-.011	.222	.999	-.53 .51
	Characteristic	Uncharacteristic	-.230	.230	.578	-.77 .31
		Neutral	.011	.222	.999	-.51 .53
		Characteristic	.001	.149	1.000	-.35 .35
	Uncharacteristic	Characteristic	.433*	.175	.037	.02 .85
		Neutral	-.001	.149	1.000	-.35 .35
		Characteristic	.432*	.169	.030	.03 .83
	Characteristic	Uncharacteristic	-.433*	.175	.037	-.85 -.02
		Neutral	-.432*	.169	.030	-.83 -.03

*. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

The post hoc results in Table 4.4 show that respondents who used the avoiding marital conflict resolution style (characteristically) were likely to be more highly educated (4.84 ± 1.2 education, $p=.037$) as compared to those who did not use avoiding conflict resolution style ($5.27 \pm .968$ education, $p=.030$). This shows that couples who use avoiding conflict resolution style are likely to have higher levels of education compared to those who use non avoidant conflict resolution style. This means that the educational level of the respondents had a significant influence on the avoiding marital conflict resolution style. The finding resonates with the observation by Dijkstra et al. (2016) who found out that the intellectually gifted engaged in conflict more by avoiding it than by either compromising or integrating methods; perhaps as an attempt to reduce the high stress that their generally high intensity of feelings would otherwise produce if they faced conflicts. One of the pastor interviewed

opined that gender may play a part in the use of avoiding marital conflict resolution style, asserting that “the man does not want to deal with the issue directly, I mean he would rather avoid conflict and just let things work out by themselves-they will just work out by themselves somehow- and he doesn’t know how”. This stated role of gender in avoiding marital conflict resolution style was not proved by self-reports in this study.

Demographic Characteristics and the Volatile MCRS

The ANOVA response on the demographic information of the respondents and the volatile marital conflict resolution style is presented on Table 4.5.

Table 4.5

Demographic Characteristics and Volatile Marital Conflict Resolution Style

Demographic		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Gender	Between Groups	.294	2	.147	.600	.550
	Within Groups	64.548	263	.245		
	Total	64.842	265			
Age	Between Groups	5.272	2	2.636	.771	.463
	Within Groups	898.807	263	3.418		
	Total	904.079	265			
Duration in marriage	Between Groups	3.704	2	1.852	.636	.530
	Within Groups	765.334	263	2.910		
	Total	769.038	265			
Occupation	Between Groups	1.407	2	.703	1.672	.190
	Within Groups	110.638	263	.421		
	Total	112.045	265			
Level of income	Between Groups	4.524	2	2.262	1.165	.314
	Within Groups	510.844	263	1.942		
	Total	515.368	265			
Level of education	Between Groups	6.378	2	3.189	2.805	.062

Demographic	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Within Groups	299.009	263	1.137		
Total	305.387	265			

The results in table 4.5 reveal that gender $F(2,263)=.600$, $p=.550$; age $F(2,263)=.771$, $p=.463$; duration of marriage $F(2,263)=.636$, $p=.530$; occupation $F(2,263)=1.672$, $p=.190$; Level of income $F(2,263)=1.165$, $p=.314$; and level of education $F(2,263)=2.805$, $p=.062$ had no significant statistical relationship to the use of volatile marital conflict resolution style. The findings among respondents in this study imply that the factors that cause couples to use the volatile MCRS are not the demographics of gender, age, duration of marriage, occupation, level of income or level of education. This may further imply that other factors such as the cause of a conflict and an individual's AAS in the respondents cause them to use the volatile MCRS. Only one of the pastors interviewed shared an observation of volatile couples in his congregation. He did not find a link with demographics, rather attributing the style to "almost having the same personality in how they do that and how they are aware of themselves in terms of their personality...everybody is proving a point so when they get a point of agreement, they are very passionate."

Demographic Characteristics and the Validating MCRS

The ANOVA response on the demographic information of the respondents and validating marital conflict resolution style is presented on Table 4.6.

Table 4.6

Demographic Characteristics and Validating MCRS

		Sum of	df	Mean	F	Sig.
		Squares		Square		
Gender	Between Groups	.866	2	.433	1.780	.171
	Within Groups	63.976	263	.243		
	Total	64.842	265			
Age	Between Groups	18.156	2	9.078	2.695	.069
	Within Groups	885.923	263	3.369		
	Total	904.079	265			
Duration in marriage	Between Groups	34.142	2	17.071	6.109	.003
	Within Groups	734.896	263	2.794		
	Total	769.038	265			
	Total	26.617	265			
Occupation	Between Groups	.423	2	.211	.498	.608
	Within Groups	111.622	263	.424		
	Total	112.045	265			
Level of income	Between Groups	7.626	2	3.813	1.975	.141
	Within Groups	507.742	263	1.931		
	Total	515.368	265			
Level of education	Between Groups	3.886	2	1.943	1.695	.186
	Within Groups	301.501	263	1.146		
	Total	305.387	265			

The results in Table 4.6 show that there was a statistically significant difference between the group mean of duration in marriage $F(2, 263) = 6.109, p = 0.003$ in relation to the validating MCRS. However, Gender $F(2,263)=1.780p=.171$, Age $F(2,263)=2.695p=.069$, Occupation $F(2,263)=.498p=.608$, Level of income $F(2,263)=1.975p=.141$ and Level of education $F(2,263)=1.695p=.186$ were not statistically significant in reference to validating MCRS. To understand the level of statistical difference between the group mean of duration in marriage in relation to the validating MCRS, a post hoc test was further conducted as shown in Table 4.7.

Table 4.7

Post Hoc on Demographic Characteristics and Validating Style

Dependent Variable(I)		(J)	Mean	Std.	Sig.	95% Confidence	
C_validating		C_validating	Difference	Error		Interval	
			(I-J)			Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Gender	Uncharacteristic	Neutral	.150	.094	.249	-.07	.37
		Characteristic	.149	.082	.166	-.04	.34
	Neutral	Uncharacteristic	-.150	.094	.249	-.37	.07
		Characteristic	.000	.072	1.000	-.17	.17
	Characteristic	Uncharacteristic	-.149	.082	.166	-.34	.04
		Neutral	.000	.072	1.000	-.17	.17
Age	Uncharacteristic	Neutral	.603	.349	.197	-.22	1.43
		Characteristic	.707	.306	.056	-.01	1.43
	Neutral	Uncharacteristic	-.603	.349	.197	-1.43	.22
		Characteristic	.105	.269	.920	-.53	.74
	Characteristic	Uncharacteristic	-.707	.306	.056	-1.43	.01
		Neutral	-.105	.269	.920	-.74	.53
Duration in marriage	Uncharacteristic	Neutral	1.086*	.318	.002	.34	1.84
		Characteristic	.794*	.279	.013	.14	1.45
	Neutral	Uncharacteristic	-1.086*	.318	.002	-1.84	-.34
		Characteristic	-.292	.245	.460	-.87	.29
	Characteristic	Uncharacteristic	-.794*	.279	.013	-1.45	-.14
		Neutral	.292	.245	.460	-.29	.87
Occupation	Uncharacteristic	Neutral	.054	.124	.900	-.24	.35
		Characteristic	-.040	.109	.927	-.30	.22
	Neutral	Uncharacteristic	-.054	.124	.900	-.35	.24

Dependent Variable(I)	(J)	Mean	Std.	Sig.	95% Confidence		
	C_validating	C_validating	Difference	Error	Interval		
			(I-J)		Lower Bound	Upper Bound	
Level of income	Characteristic	Characteristic	-.095	.096	.583	-.32	.13
		Uncharacteristic	.040	.109	.927	-.22	.30
		Neutral	.095	.096	.583	-.13	.32
	Uncharacteristic	Neutral	-.275	.264	.553	-.90	.35
		Characteristic	-.453	.232	.126	-1.00	.09
	Neutral	Uncharacteristic	.275	.264	.553	-.35	.90
		Characteristic	-.178	.204	.656	-.66	.30
	Characteristic	Uncharacteristic	.453	.232	.126	-.09	1.00
		Neutral	.178	.204	.656	-.30	.66
Level of education	Uncharacteristic	Neutral	-.354	.204	.194	-.83	.13
		Characteristic	-.289	.179	.240	-.71	.13
	Neutral	Uncharacteristic	.354	.204	.194	-.13	.83
		Characteristic	.065	.157	.911	-.31	.43
	Characteristic	Uncharacteristic	.289	.179	.240	-.13	.71
		Neutral	-.065	.157	.911	-.43	.31

*. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

The post hoc results in Table 4.7 showed couples who used non-validating conflict styles (uncharacteristic) had been in marriage for shorter periods (new in marriage) (3.79 ± 1.769 years, $p=.002$) compared to couples who were characteristically validating (2.99 ± 1.658 years, $p=.013$). This shows that the longer one stays in marriage, the more likely they are to use validating as their marital conflict style; an observation that was also made by three of the

informants, 001, 003 and 006 who posited that older couples in the assemblies tended to be more of friends in how they treated each other even in conflict.

The finding in this study where there was no statistically significant difference showing a relationship between gender and the use of validating style in this study, differs with Delatorre & Wagner (2019) where gender was noted to play a role in influencing the use of validating MCRS, with men classified as more of validators than women.

Demographic Characteristics and the Hostile MCRS

The ANOVA response on the demographic information of the respondents and the hostile marital conflict resolution style is presented on Table 4.8. Results reveal that Gender $F = (2, 263) = 1.952, p = .144$, Occupation $F = (2, 263) = .070, p = .932$, and Level of education $F = (2, 263) = 1.412, p = .246$ showed no statistically significant relationship with validating MCRS. There was a statistically significant difference between the group mean of Duration of Marriage $F (2, 263) = 5.373, p = .005$, Age $F (2, 263) = 3.844, p = .023$, and level of income $F (2, 263) = 5.950, p = .003$, in relation to the hostile MCRS of respondents.

Table 4.8

Demographic Characteristics and Hostile MCRS

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Gender	Between Groups	.948	2	.474	1.952	.144
	Within Groups	63.894	263	.243		
	Total	64.842	265			
Age	Between Groups	25.675	2	12.837	3.844	.023
	Within Groups	878.404	263	3.340		
	Total	904.079	265			
Duration in marriage	Between Groups	30.188	2	15.094	5.373	.005
	Within Groups	738.850	263	2.809		
	Total	769.038	265			
Occupation	Between Groups	.060	2	.030	.070	.932
	Within Groups	111.985	263	.426		
	Total	112.045	265			
Level of income	Between Groups	22.311	2	11.155	5.950	.003
	Within Groups	493.058	263	1.875		
	Total	515.368	265			
Level of education	Between Groups	3.243	2	1.622	1.412	.246
	Within Groups	302.144	263	1.149		
	Total	305.387	265			

To further understand the level of statistical difference in age, duration of marriage and level of income of respondents in relation to the hostile MCRS, a post hoc test was conducted and results are shown in Table 4.9.

Table 4.9

Post hoc on Demographic Information on Hostile Marital Conflict Style

Multiple Comparisons							
Tukey HSD							
Dependent Variable	(I) C_hostile	(J) C_hostile	Mean	Std.	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
			Difference	Error		Lower	Upper
			(I-J)			Bound	Bound
Gender	Uncharacteristic	Neutral	-.120	.077	.261	-.30	.06
		Characteristic	.079	.091	.660	-.14	.29
	Neutral	Uncharacteristic	.120	.077	.261	-.06	.30
		Characteristic	.199	.107	.151	-.05	.45
	Characteristic	Uncharacteristic	-.079	.091	.660	-.29	.14
		Neutral	-.199	.107	.151	-.45	.05
Age	Uncharacteristic	Neutral	-.231	.284	.696	-.90	.44
		Characteristic	.825*	.338	.041	.03	1.62
	Neutral	Uncharacteristic	.231	.284	.696	-.44	.90
		Characteristic	1.056*	.397	.022	.12	1.99
	Characteristic	Uncharacteristic	-.825*	.338	.041	-1.62	-.03
		Neutral	-1.056*	.397	.022	-1.99	-.12
Duration in marriage	Uncharacteristic	Neutral	-.319	.261	.441	-.93	.30
		Characteristic	.850*	.310	.018	.12	1.58
	Neutral	Uncharacteristic	.319	.261	.441	-.30	.93
		Characteristic	1.169*	.364	.004	.31	2.03
	Characteristic	Uncharacteristic	-.850*	.310	.018	-1.58	-.12
		Neutral	-1.169*	.364	.004	-2.03	-.31
	Characteristic	Characteristic	-.008	.064	.992	-.16	.14
		Uncharacteristic	.257*	.055	.000	.13	.39
	Characteristic	Neutral	.008	.064	.992	-.14	.16
		Characteristic					

Multiple Comparisons							
Tukey HSD							
Dependent Variable	(I) C_hostile	(J) C_hostile	Mean	Std.	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
			Difference	Error		Lower	Upper
			(I-J)			Bound	Bound
Occupation	Uncharacteristic	Neutral	.024	.101	.970	-.22	.26
		Characteristic	-.029	.121	.969	-.31	.26
	Neutral	Uncharacteristic	-.024	.101	.970	-.26	.22
		Characteristic	-.053	.142	.926	-.39	.28
	Characteristic	Uncharacteristic	.029	.121	.969	-.26	.31
		Neutral	.053	.142	.926	-.28	.39
Level of income	Uncharacteristic	Neutral	.315	.213	.303	-.19	.82
		Characteristic	.848*	.253	.003	.25	1.44
	Neutral	Uncharacteristic	-.315	.213	.303	-.82	.19
		Characteristic	.533	.297	.174	-.17	1.23
	Characteristic	Uncharacteristic	-.848*	.253	.003	-1.44	-.25
		Neutral	-.533	.297	.174	-1.23	.17
Level of education	Uncharacteristic	Neutral	.011	.167	.998	-.38	.40
		Characteristic	.329	.198	.223	-.14	.80
	Neutral	Uncharacteristic	-.011	.167	.998	-.40	.38
		Characteristic	.318	.233	.360	-.23	.87
	Characteristic	Uncharacteristic	-.329	.198	.223	-.80	.14
		Neutral	-.318	.233	.360	-.87	.23
*. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.							

Post hoc results in Table 4.9 show couples who used hostile (characteristic) had been in marriage for a shorter duration ($.310 \pm .018$ years, $p=.004$). This shows that the younger a marriage is, (new in marriage) the more likely it is for the couple to use hostile

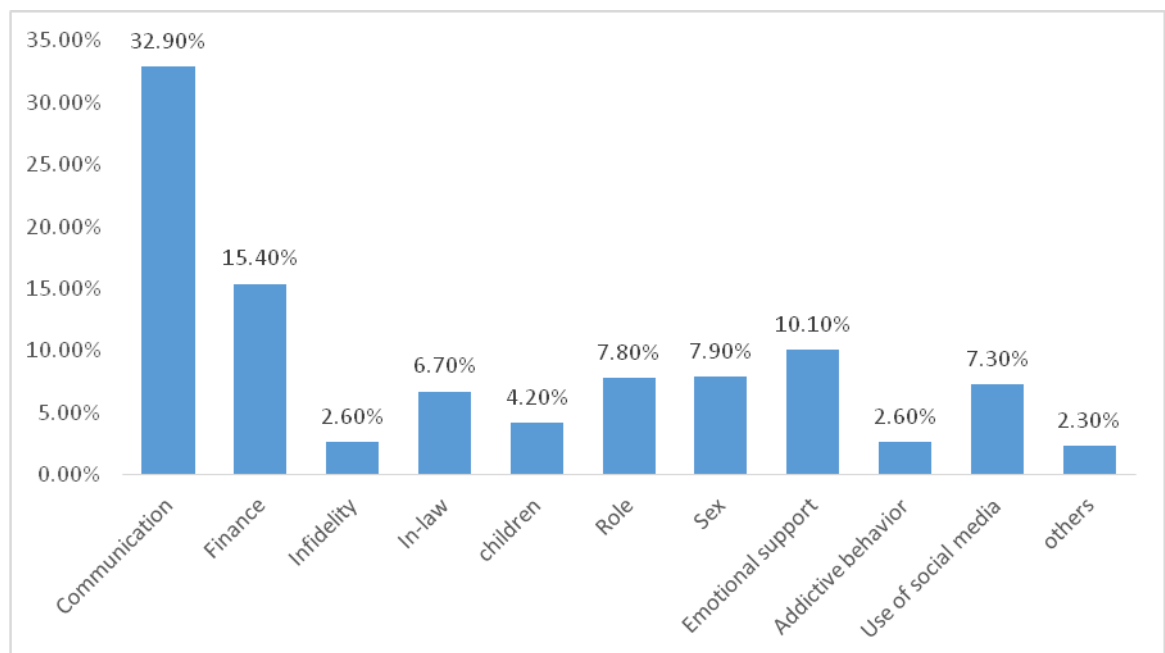
(characteristic). In addition, post hoc showed that respondents who used the hostile style of conflict (characteristic) are also young in age ($1.956 \pm .147$ years, $p=.022$). This shows that young individuals (in age) are more likely to use hostile as their marital conflict style in comparison to those who are older. Furthermore, post hoc shows that respondents who used the hostile style (characteristic) had relatively lower levels of income (5.33 ± 1.321 income, $p=.003$). This shows that couples who have low incomes are more likely to use the hostile style in conflict. From the findings, the educational level of the respondents had significant influence on the avoiding marital conflict resolution style. The duration in marriage had significant influence on both validating and hostile marital conflict resolution styles. The level of income had significant influence on the hostile marital conflict style. Gender and occupation of participants had no significant influence difference on any of the marital conflict resolution styles.

Causes of Marital Conflicts among Respondents

Objective three of this study, further to establishing the relationship between demographics of gender, age, duration of marriage, occupation, level of income and level of education, objective three of this study also included finding out the causes of respondent's causes of significant conflicts and how they influenced their MCRS. Marital conflicts caused by communication accounted 32.9% of responses while 15.4% indicated on finances. Emotional support as a cause of conflict accounted for 10.1% responses, sex 7.9%, roles 7.8%, use of media 7.3%, in-laws 6.7%, and children 4.2%. Both infidelity and addictive behaviour accounted for 2.6% of responses each and "Others" accounted for 2.3%. Figure 4.9 presents these results of causes of significant marital conflicts of respondents.

Figure 4. 9

Causes of Marital Conflict



Communication

Results in Figure 4.9 reveal that most respondents had conflicts caused by communication. This finding was supported by the observation of key informant 001 answering to the question of why couples came to him for help. “Number one, communication”. Responding to the high percentage of couples experiencing conflict in the area of communication, informant 003 argued that communication may be a symptom rather than a cause of conflict, explaining that in reality “communication lacks because couples are struggling with other things”. Attachment insecurity, for example, could be the real issue as observed by Costa and Mosman (2020) who argue that communication problems in a marital set up are actually as a result of the attachment styles of the individuals. Heene et al. (2005) also associated difficulties in communication with attachment styles of individuals. Informant 003 also posited that differences in how male and female respondents communicate may cause difficulties that are lumped as communication. “I have realized when it is a man, a man

will tell things differently from a woman. A woman will go very far deep into real issues while a man will glide.” This observation is supported by a study on differences in how men and women communicate based on either rationale or emotions (Costa & Mosman, 2020). Informant 001 further explained that couples who communicate often hardly ever need to escalate their issues to someone else since they are able to resolve them. This informant opined that communication would actually be an overarching problem from where others such as conflicts about roles sprang from, agreeing with Nartey (2014) who cited communication as a major contributor to the general marital cohesion and also MCooy et al. (2020) asserted the role of unclear communication in financial conflicts.

Finances

On finances, MCooy et al. (2020) emphasize the problematic and recurrent nature of marital conflicts around finances. Informant 005 explained that conflicts about finances may arise where one spouse, mainly the woman, gets into marriage as ‘visitors, you know, the way you run in somebody’s house as a visitor and you stay, things are done for you...’. Informant 005 specifically cited a pattern she often observed where in a marriage relationship, “her money is her money and her husband’s money is his money so the husband is to foot all the bills, he is supposed to take care of everything”

Informant 006 who described the assembly he serves as mainly catering for the high end in society due to its location, insisted that financial conflicts among members were in essence about mismanagement, further explaining that ‘When I say mismanagement, it is where priorities seem to be-there are no common priorities for the couple. Whereas one may feel this is more of a priority than the other and not necessarily lack of finances’. MCooy et al. (2020) affirm this observation in their recommendation that couples need to be taught effective financial management towards relational health. Informant 003 who pastors in an assembly located near a slum indicated that most marital conflicts she observed in that

assembly on finances were about “lack of livelihood, lack of basic means of livelihood...lack of ability to take care of the family in terms of food so couples will not agree...for me seems to be the most reason for conflict.” This agrees with Tavakol et al. (2017) who observed that couples suffering from financial scarcity have increased financial problems that also turn into marital conflicts. Informant 002 indicated seeing couples with financial problems stemming from, not from lack, but the management of finances, “...especially when the lady has more money than the man so some men feel threatened by the lady earning more money than him so the ego has been injured...and it has brought a lot of conflict.

Emotional support

Emotional support related conflicts made 10.1% of responses. Observation by Chong (2014) demonstrates that caring and supporting a partner in the contemporary busy world is facing the challenge of coming after a day has already drained one emotionally, physically and mentally may explain the high percentage of responses coming third after communication and finances. Chong (2014) also cites that intimacy includes self-disclosure to a partner and the partner’s response with understanding and validation. Emotional support is a process that needs time and mental energy which many Nairobi County based couples may be finding they do not have after being drained by a hectic day at work; a detail that may also partly explain the conflicts about sex that had 7.9% of the responses.

Demographic results of the occupation of respondents in this study shown in Table 4.2 reveal that most respondents, male and female, are either in employment or are self-employed. This may contribute to reduced time for emotional support among couples. The results of the current study on emotional support and sex as themes of marital conflict amongst some respondents may also find congruence in Johnson (2006), where avoidance attachment was associated with a lot of activities and tasks as a way of distracting from emotions.

Infidelity

Infidelity had a low response of 2.6%, diverting from other findings where it was found to be a high cause of marital conflict (Oladipo, 2013). Informant 002 who was interviewed for this study however, ranked infidelity as top of the list as a cause of conflicts among those that came seeking for his help. “Extra marital relationships, that one is actually a big one...it would actually top my list because most of those I have seen it is because of that”. This observation of infidelity as a number one cause for marital conflict was not shared by the pastors interviewed from other assemblies though they all said they see a number of couples distressed due to infidelity. Informant 005 gave an example of a woman who “walked out of her home so this woman said she got so tired of her husband’s infidelity that she left.” The inconsistency between the self-reports and the key informants’ observations on the prevalence of infidelity as a cause for marital conflict may result from a limitation where self-reports have been said to elicit answers that are what respondents think is expected, rather than the truth of their experience. Ndu’ngu (2017) also found that younger couples in marriage reported low levels of infidelity, asserting the results in the current study where most respondents were relatively young in marriage. The current study, where the highest category of duration of marriage was below 10 years agrees with Ndungu’s findings. However, the greatest explanation for the low percentage of those who said that they have conflict due to infidelity may be the role played by the religious commitment of the respondents. An emerging trend in the area of infidelity was noted by informant 004 where spouses were tracking each other using private detectives due to fears that they were being cheated on. Informant 003 gave an example where “There is another woman who has an apartment, who has children...and the wife has no idea. I have dealt with that in fact very recently, a wife has no idea that the husband has another family...”

In laws

Conflicts regarding in-laws had 6.7% of responses. In a study by Oladipo et al. (2013) which was carried out in a rural setting, interference by in-laws was ranked among the highest causes of conflicts leading to marital breakdown. The current result of 6.7% responses in a metropolitan context is still significant, added to what the key informants reported as their observation where in one case for example, a young couple finally divorced after only two years of marriage due to the interference of a wealthy father-in law who got triangulated in the couple's financial conflicts, according to informant 005. Informant 003 reported scenarios where “ a couple will come and say ,you know, my spouse or my husband seems to be listening more to his mother or to the father or to the cousin or to their uncle, auntie...”

Children

Conflicts about children were relatively low at 4.2%. This implies that only a relatively low number of respondents had conflicts in regards to general parenting. Only one of the informants, 004, referred to issues around “lack of fruit of the womb” or childlessness, as a theme of marital conflicts she had handled.

Roles

Conflicts emanating from the way roles were allocated and executed by the couple accounted for 7.8% of responses. Roles were also highlighted by the key informants interviewed as being a major cause of conflict, with informant 001 referring to specifically cross-cultural marriages where individuals then fail to communicate their respective cultures' role expectations until a conflict erupts. He also noted that “because people come from different families and then the rural and urban divide...if somebody was raised in the rural area, the responsibility of a man was clearly defined, if you come and set up where everybody is working, there could be slightly different terms and again.” The observation where issues

concerning roles arise because both spouses are working agrees with Shahabadi et al. (2019) who specifically point out to the challenges of the contemporary working woman who is required to earn a living in what is predominantly a man's world while still taking up the roles of the traditional housewife. In the interview, informant 001 further explained that "Just to give you an example...a man gladly buys chicken which they think they need to eat some road runner for soup, then all of a sudden, the chicken is not being prepared because according to the lady, it's the man to slaughter, then the woman prepares it. For the man, it is the responsibility of the woman, once you buy the chicken, to slaughter it and prepare it". These observations agree with Kibuthu (2020) who observed that cross-cultural marriages face the challenge of roles while adapting to a spouse's culture.

Sex

Sex accounted to 7.9 % of the responses which is slightly above the responses of roles as a cause of marital conflict. This implies that these couples had conflicts related to their sexual intimacy. From an adult attachment perspective, this may be explained by some earlier studies such as Butzer & Campbell (2008) who found anxiously attached individuals and those who scored high on avoidance reporting low levels of sexual satisfaction. None of the informants interviewed raised sexual intimacy, apart from infidelity, as a cause of conflict among the couples they saw.

Addictive Behaviour

Addictive behavior; which potentially would include alcoholism, drug addiction and gambling accounted for only 2.6 % of the responses in this section, showing that not many respondents felt that this was a theme in their marital conflicts. This may be explained by the predominantly Christian sample of this study. It is possible that the respondents who did indicate that they had conflicts regarding addictive behavior were married to individuals who did not share their faith convictions, hence the conflict. This can happen for example when

one member of a couple gets into the faith after marriage but the spouse does not, or where, as informant 002 noted, “You find that both of them got married, one was saved, one was not saved....”

Use of social Media

Scores for marital conflicts over the use of social media were more than those about in-laws, children or infidelity. The finding that social media usage was a frequent cause of conflicts for 7.3% of respondents in this study implies that more married individuals are using social media in a way that is interfering with their marriages. While none of one of the informants interviewed came up with the use of social media as a cause for marital conflict, 004 made reference to “spouses tracking each other...there is a device they use...every conversation, every communication...” Nakhoul et al. (2020) found a correlation between individuals who were insecure in their attachment styles, with social media addiction; explaining the behaviour as a way of getting acceptance while at the same time avoiding face to face interactions due to fear of rejection. Individuals who scored high on avoidance were said to prefer social media as a way of satisfying social needs indirectly while avoiding closeness. In the current study anchored on attachment and marital conflict theory, these observations by Nakhoul et al. (2020), showing marital conflicts over the use of social media are affirmed by the significant percentage of respondents who indicated that social media was a cause of their marital conflicts.

Others

The answer ‘others’ was indicated by only 2.3 % of responses, meaning that most respondents felt that the given suggestions captured the themes of their conflicts. From the interview with the key informants, some of the ‘others’ that came up were doctrinal conflicts where a couple could not agree on an issue of doctrine specifically, as 002 explained, where a spouse believed in “pulling down altar, contact objects and those kind of things and that is

where the challenge was, so conflict came from there, that was the biggest issue because she would wake up at midnight and start yelling and praying”. Adding to the issue of doctrinal issues as a cause of conflicts, 002 cited situations where “Both of them got married, one was saved, one was not saved, that one is a red flag because your values are not the same, that is number one. Number two, is that you find people who are not growing in their faith, the discipleship process...so they find themselves in a compromising situation.” Informant 001 also explained a cause of conflict that would fall in the “others” where a spouse ‘was calling the other person’s career as mere nothing.’

Causes of Marital Conflicts and MCRS

Table 4.10

Causes of Marital conflict and Marital Conflict Styles

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Avoiding	Between Groups	7.629	9	.848	1.137	.337
	Within Groups	190.789	256	.745		
	Total	198.418	265			
Volatile	Between Groups	18.954	9	2.106	2.008	.039
	Within Groups	268.428	256	1.049		
	Total	287.382	265			
Validating	Between Groups	20.621	9	2.291	2.256	.019
	Within Groups	259.943	256	1.015		
	Total	280.563	265			
Hostile	Between Groups	19.868	9	2.208	2.344	.015
	Within Groups	241.077	256	.942		
	Total	260.944	265			

Analysis of variance (ANOVA) was performed to establish the influence of the causes of marital conflict and the marital conflict resolution styles MCRS of respondents. The results are shown in Table 4.10, revealing a statistically significant difference between the group mean of causes of marital conflict and the marital conflict resolution styles of volatile $F(9, 256) = 2.008, p=0.039$, validating $F(9, 256) = 2.256, p=0.019$ and hostile $F(9, 256) = 2.344, p=0.015$. There is no statistically significant difference between the group mean of causes of marital conflict and the avoiding MCRS $F(9,256) = 1.137, p=.337$. The implication of this is that the cause of a marital conflict had significant influence on hostile, validating and volatile marital conflict styles among the respondents. This further implies that the causes of marital conflict between spouses influenced the respondents' use of volatile, validating and hostile marital conflict resolution styles but not for avoiding where there was no statistically significant difference. This finding indicates that individuals may change their approach to a conflict with their spouse depending on the significance of the problem at hand. This resonates with Delatorre & Wagner (2019) who found an association between the severity of the problem that a couple was navigating and their level of negative interactions as well as their marital stability and satisfaction.

Relationship between AAS and MCRS

Objective four of this study was to find out the relationship between AAS and marital conflict resolution styles of respondents. Pearson Chi-Square was applied and the results presented in tables. Table 4.11 shows the relationship between the secure AAS and the marital conflict resolution styles in this study. Table 4.12 shows the relationship between preoccupied AAS and MCRS, Table 4.13 the relationship between avoidant dismissing AAS and MCRS and Table 4.14 the relationship between avoidant fearful AAS and MCRS

Table 4.11

Chi-Square between Secure AAS and Marital Conflict Styles

		Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2- sided)
Secure				
Avoidant	Pearson Chi-Square	3.223 ^a	2	.200
Volatile	Pearson Chi-Square	.100 ^a	2	.951
Validating	Pearson Chi-Square	6.118 ^a	2	.047
Hostile	Pearson Chi-Square	11.072 ^a	2	.004

As indicated in Table 4.11 above, there was a statistically significant ($p > .05$) Chi-Square association between the secure AAS with validating marital conflict style as shown in $\chi^2 (2, N=266) = 6.118, p=.047$ and between secure AAS and hostile marital conflict style $\chi^2 (2, N=266) = 11.072, p=.004$. This implies that secure adult attachment style has a significant association ($p < .05$) with validating and hostile marital conflict resolution styles but not with the avoidant and volatile styles ($p > .05$), showing that individuals with this AAS are likely to use the validating marital conflict style, a finding that is similar to other research findings such as Shachner et al. (2008). The secure AAS is low on both attachment avoidance and anxiety and has been hailed as representing those comfortable with closeness and also interdependence, therefore hailed as high in problem solving and coping skills (Kantarci & Sendil, 2012). The findings of a statistically significant association between secure AAS with the hostile marital conflict resolution style raises a curious question. A possible explanation may be a finding by Gottman and Driver (2005) that wives whose husbands used attack-defend in conflicts also responded with the same. Since self-reports for this study were done

individually rather than by couples, it was possible for a respondent to have indicated that while they were validating, the spouse was hostile, causing them to experience the hostile marital conflict style.

Table 4.12

Chi-Square between Preoccupied and Marital Conflict Resolution Styles

		Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2- sided)
Pre-occupied				
Avoidant	Pearson Chi-Square	1.442 ^a	2	.468
Volatile	Pearson Chi-Square	2.256 ^a	2	.324
Validating	Pearson Chi-Square	9.905 ^a	2	.007
Hostile	Pearson Chi-Square	9.551 ^a	2	.008

As indicated in Table 4.12 above, preoccupied AAS had significant association with validating χ^2 (2, N=266) = 9.905, $p=.007$ and hostile χ^2 (2, N=266) = 9.551, $p=.008$. This shows that individuals with the preoccupied AAS are likely to use both validating and hostile marital conflict styles while departing from avoiding and volatile styles. These results affirm the findings of Rocco and Sierra (2017) who posit that anxiously attached individuals on one hand seek emotional intimacy with their partners, which may explain their use of validation in this study, while on the other hand they are likely to view an argument as a direct threat. This may explain the use of attacks and defensiveness as is characteristic of the hostile marital conflict style. An association between preoccupied AAS individuals and a tendency towards escalation of conflicts, as would happen in the hostile marital conflict style, was also noted by Dijkstra et al. (2016). Preoccupied individuals, also termed as ambivalent have been

posited as having more negative interpersonal interactions than any other AAS (Refahi, 2016), which this study did not confirm.

Table 4.13

Chi-Square between Dismissing and Marital Conflict Resolution Styles

		Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2- sided)
Dismissing				
Avoidant	Pearson Chi-Square	3.501 ^a	2	.174
Volatile	Pearson Chi-Square	1.956 ^a	2	.376
Validating	Pearson Chi-Square	3.482 ^a	2	.175
Hostile	Pearson Chi-Square	1.386 ^a	2	.500

There was no statistically significant ($p > .05$) Chi-Square association between avoidant dismissing adult attachment style with any of the marital conflict styles components as shown in Table 4.13 above. Hence, avoidant dismissing adult attachment styled individuals in this study tended not to have a focused association with any marital conflict styles in this study. This finding differs with Bonache et al. (2016) who linked avoidant attachment styles with higher withdrawal or avoidance of conflict. Indeed, the very description of the avoidant dismissing AAS makes it logical to expect a strong association between avoidant dismissing AAS and either the avoiding marital conflict style or the hostile conflict style due to what Schriber et al. (2016) cited as an association between attachment avoidance and contemptuous behaviour. Delatorre & Wagner (2019) reported that when they used self-reports for collecting their data, individuals who avoided conflict reported low scores on all conflict resolution styles. Perhaps the same thing happened in this study, where

avoidant dismissing respondents in this study may have actually been avoiding in their marital conflicts and therefore minimized all the conflict styles. Perhaps the assertion by Ricco & Seirra (2017) that avoidantly attached individuals do not invest in either the social support or the meeting of viewpoints of their spouses also explains the lack of what one would call a formula for conflict, but more research would be needed to fully understand this finding, especially among religious practicing respondents.

Table 4.14

Chi-Square between Avoidant Fearful and Marital Conflict Styles

		Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2- sided)
Fearful				
Avoidant	Pearson Chi-Square	1.401 ^a	2	.496
Volatile	Pearson Chi-Square	4.539 ^a	2	.103
Validating	Pearson Chi-Square	15.015 ^a	2	.001
Hostile	Pearson Chi-Square	25.809 ^a	2	.000

Table 4.14 above shows that avoidant fearful AAS had a statistically significant association with validating χ^2 (2, N=266) = 15.015, p=001 and hostile χ^2 (2, N=266) = 25.809, p=001. This shows that individuals with the avoidant fearful AAS are likely to use the validating and hostile marital conflict styles (p<.05) but not volatile and avoiding conflict styles (p>.05). Pollard et al. (2014) observe that individuals with high anxiety; such as avoidant fearfully attached individuals, tend to perceive threat to a relationship in an exaggerated manner which may explain the association between fearful avoidant AAS with hostile marital conflict style with its criticism, defensiveness, contempt and stonewalling. Attachment anxiety, which is high in individuals with avoidant fearful AAS was also found to have a high association with contempt in Schriber et al. (2016). Ricco & Seirra (2017)

posit that due to high levels of anxiety, these individuals may on occasion use conflict as a way of getting attention, which may explain the association with validating conflict style in this study.

The results of objective four show that the preoccupied and avoidant fearful adult attachment styles have a significant association with both validating and hostile marital conflict. These two AAS have the common characteristic of having high scores in anxiety and a negative model of the self; which have been shown to have an association with hostile tendencies. At the same time, individuals with attachment anxiety such as represented in the two AAS are seen as having a fear of rejection. This may explain the association of both AAS with the validating marital conflict style that sounds friendly and where individuals consciously use validation to try and get their spouses not to move away from them. Secure AAS also had a similar significant association with both validating and hostile marital conflict resolution styles as preoccupied and fearful avoidant. While it was expected that secure AAS would have a high association with the validating marital conflict style, it was not clear why there was also an association with the hostile conflict style. The avoidant dismissing adult attachment styles had no significant association ($p > .05$) with any of the marital conflict resolution styles, diverting from earlier research on this AAS that showed an association with avoidant and hostile. None of the AAS showed a statistically significant association with both volatile and avoidant marital conflict resolution styles, though the second highest number of respondents were found to use it characteristically and the third highest were found to use the avoiding style.

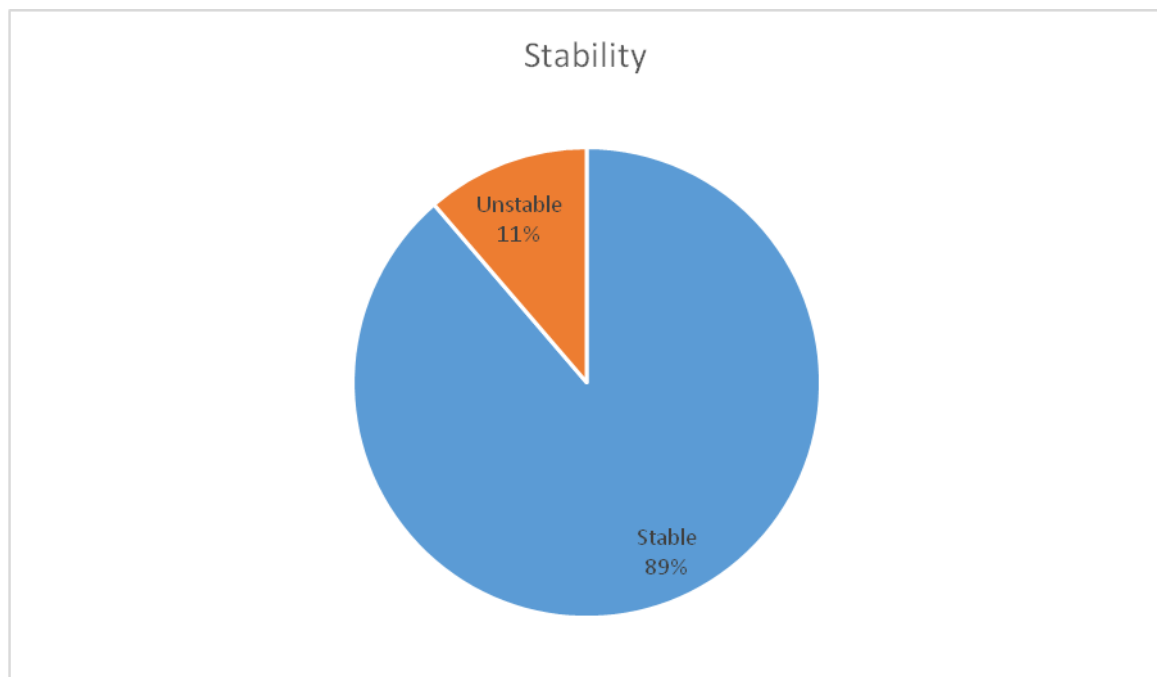
Marital Stability and MCRS

Marital Stability or instability was an outcome found in the contextual framework of this study, depending on the AAS and MCRS of respondents as well as the intervening demographic factors and the cause of their marital conflicts. To find out the marital stability

of respondents, they were asked to describe their marriage given only the choice of stable or unstable. 88.7% of the respondents indicated they were stable while 11.3% rated their marriages as unstable as shown in Figure 4.10.

Figure 4. 10

Stability in Marriage



The findings from self-reports shown in Figure 4.10 differed with the observations of the pastors interviewed. 001 placed the percentages in the assembly where he was in charge of the Family Care and Enrichment at 60% stable and 40% unstable. This was also the score given by 002 and 005. 004 placed stable at 70% with unstable being 30% and 003 put stability versus instability at 50/50. Informant 006 gave a general rating of stable for marriages in his assembly. Informants 004 indicated that the older couples “look very stable”, an observation also made by 005 who said “The older ones are stable but these young ones, these young marriages, am very scared, my goodness...”

To determine the relationship between respondents' marital conflict resolution styles and their self-report of either marital stability or instability, ANOVA was applied on marital stability and each of the MCRS Avoiding, Volatile, Validating and Hostile. Where a statistically significant difference was found, post hoc was further conducted for more details of association. Table 4.15 shows the results of ANOVA response between the avoiding MCRS and marital stability of respondents.

Table 4.15

ANOVA between Avoiding MCRS and Marital Stability

Dependent Variable		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Marital Stability	Between Groups	.101	2	.051	.501	.606
	Within Groups	26.515	263	.101		
	Total	26.617	265			

There was no statistically significant difference between the avoiding marital conflict resolution style and marital stability of respondents. $F(2,263) = .501, p = .606$. This means that for the respondents in this study, the use of the avoiding MCRS did not necessarily indicate marital stability. The ANOVA was then applied on marital stability and the volatile marital conflict resolution style. Results are presented on Table 4.16.

Table 4.16

ANOVA between Volatile MCRS and Marital stability

Dependent Variable		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Marital stability	Between Groups	1.299	2	.649	6.747	.001
	Within Groups	25.318	263	.096		
	Total	26.617	265			

Table 4.16 shows a statistically significant difference between the group mean of marital stability in relation to the volatile MCRS. $F(2,263) = 6.747, p = .001$. The post hoc results that explain this relationship further are presented in Table 4.17.

Table 4.17

Post hoc between Volatile MCRS and Marital Stability

Multiple Comparisons							
Tukey HSD							
Dependent Variable	(I) C_volatile	(J) C_volatile	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
						Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Description of marriage	Uncharacteristic	Neutral	.118*	.045	.027	.01	.23
		Characteristic	.167*	.047	.001	.06	.28
	Neutral	Uncharacteristic	-.118*	.045	.027	-.23	-.01
		Characteristic	.049	.047	.561	-.06	.16
	Characteristic	Uncharacteristic	-.167*	.047	.001	-.28	-.06
		Neutral	-.049	.047	.561	-.16	.06

The results in Table 4.17 show that couples who used non-volatile (uncharacteristic) rated their marriage as either stable or unstable ($1.20 \pm .405$ stable, $p = .027$), couples who were characteristically volatile described their marriages as stable ($1.04 \pm .191$ stable, $p = .001$). This shows that couples who use non-volatile are likely to have either stable or unstable marriages compared to those who use volatile who are likely to have stable marriages.

Table 4.18

ANOVA between Validating MCRS and Marital Stability

Dependent Variable		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Marital Stability	Between Groups	3.117	2	1.559	17.443	.000
	Within Groups	23.499	263	.089		
	Total	26.617	265			

The ANOVA response on marital stability and the validating MCRS is presented in Table 4.18. There was statistically significant difference between the group mean of description of marriage $F(2, 263) = 17.443$, $p = .0001$. To understand the level of statistical difference further, a post hoc test was conducted as shown in Table 4.19

Table 4.19

Post Hoc between Validating MCRS and Marital Stability

Dependent Variable	(I) C_validating	(J) C_validating	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
						Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Marital Stability	Uncharacteristic	Neutral	.236*	.057	.000	.10	.37
		Characteristic	.294*	.050	.000	.18	.41
	Neutral	Uncharacteristic	-.236*	.057	.000	-.37	-.10
		Characteristic	.058	.044	.378	-.04	.16
	Characteristic	Uncharacteristic	-.294*	.050	.000	-.41	-.18
		Neutral	-.058	.044	.378	-.16	.04

*. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

The post hoc showed that there was significant difference on marital stability between the non-validating couples and those that used validating MCRS. Respondents who used non-validating (uncharacteristic) rated their marriage as either unstable or stable ($1.34 \pm .479$, $p=.001$) compared to validating couples who all rated their marriages as stable ($1.05 \pm .210$, $p=.001$). This shows that couples who use validating marital conflict style are more likely to be stable. ANOVA response was used to determine whether there was a relationship between the hostile MCRS and marital stability of the respondents. The results are shown in Table 4.20.

Table 4.20

ANOVA between Hostile MCRS and Marital Stability

Dependent Variable		Sum of	df	Mean	F	Sig.
		Squares		Square		
Marital stability	Between Groups	3.782	2	1.891	21.777	.000
	Within Groups	22.835	263	.087		
	Total	26.617	265			

Results reveal that there was a statistically significant difference between the group mean of description of marriage $F(2, 263) = 21.777$, $p=.0001$. Further, to understand the level of statistical difference, post hoc test was conducted as shown in Table 4.21.

The post hoc results showed that respondents who used non-hostile conflict styles (uncharacteristic) described their marriages as stable ($1.03 \pm .66$ stable, $p=.0001$) compared to those who scored high on hostile conflict style who rated theirs as either stable or unstable ($1.29 \pm .458$ stable, $p=.0001$). This shows that those who use non-hostile styles are more likely to have stable marriages as compared to those who use hostile conflict resolution style.

Table 4.21

Post Hoc between Hostile MCRS and Marital Stability

Multiple Comparisons							
Tukey HSD							
Dependent Variable	(I) C_hostile	(J) C_hostile	Mean	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
			Difference (I-J)			Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Marital Stability	Uncharacteristic	Neutral	-.250*	.046	.000	-.36	-.14
		Characteristic	-.257*	.055	.000	-.39	-.13
	Neutral	Uncharacteristic	.250*	.046	.000	.14	.36
		Characteristic	-.008	.064	.992	-.16	.14
	Characteristic	Uncharacteristic	.257*	.055	.000	.13	.39
		Neutral	.008	.064	.992	-.14	.16

This study shows a relationship between the marital conflict resolution style that a couple employs and their experience of stability or instability in the marriage. This is evidenced by the significant association between marital stability and volatile, validation and hostile marital conflict styles in the findings.

Chapter Summary

This chapter has presented and discussed the findings of the study, based on the stated research objectives. The results show all four adult attachment styles: secure, preoccupied, avoidant dismissing, and avoidant fearful among the respondents. The findings also reveal the four marital conflict resolution styles: avoiding, validating, volatile, and hostile among the respondents. The demographics: gender, age, duration of marriage, occupation, level of education, and level of income have been presented as well as how they influence marital

conflict resolution styles. Causes of conflict and their influence on MCRS have also been discussed, and the way AAS and the marital conflict resolution styles of respondents relate. Finally, findings of the marital stability of respondents in relation to their MCRS was shown and discussed.

CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSION, IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this study was to understand the relationship between adult attachment styles and marital conflict resolution styles among couples in Nairobi County. This chapter gives a summary of the findings, their implications, conclusion, the researcher's recommendations and areas for further study.

Summary of Findings

Four research objectives guided this research: To find out the adult attachment styles of couples in Nairobi County, to establish the marital conflict styles of couples in Nairobi County, to investigate how demographic characteristics and also causes of conflict influence marital conflict styles among couples in Nairobi County, and finally to determine the relationship between the AAS and marital conflict styles among couples in Nairobi County.

All four categories of AAS: secure, preoccupied, avoidant fearful, and avoidant dismissing were identified among the respondents. The research also identified all the marital conflict resolution styles under study among the respondents. From the results, a third of the respondents had a secure AAS (32.3%). These were followed by those with avoidant dismissing AAS (31.6%), preoccupied AAS (13.5%) and lastly, avoidant fearful at 9.4%.

The four marital conflict resolution styles posited by Gottman's theory: Validating, Volatile, Avoiding, and Hostile, were identified among the respondents in different percentages. More than half of the respondents (57%), were using validating marital conflict style. These were followed by those who were using volatile marital conflict style at 30.10%. Avoiding marital conflict style was at 22.9% of respondents and the least was the hostile marital conflict style at 13.2%.

In answer to how demographic characteristics influence marital conflict styles among couples in Nairobi County, age, level of income, level of education and duration of marriage,

were shown to have and influence on the marital conflict resolution style of the respondents. Occupation and gender of respondents were not shown to have a statistically significant influence on any of the MCRS. Results also revealed a statistically significant influence of causes of conflict on MCRS among respondents.

The fourth objective of this study was to find out the relationship between respondents' AAS and their marital conflict resolution styles. There was found a statistically significant association between the secure AAS with validating marital conflict style and also hostile marital conflict style. The preoccupied AAS had a statistically significant association with validating marital conflict resolution style. There was no statistically significant ($p > .05$) Chi-Square association between avoidant dismissing AAS with any of the marital conflict styles. The avoidant fearful AAS was shown to have a statistically significant association with validating marital conflict resolution style. The findings of this study in addition showed that marital stability had a relationship with the MCRS of respondents.

Implications of the Study

The current study provides evidence that adult attachment style, coupled with certain demographic factors such as their gender, level of education, income and duration in marriage, all have a certain bearing on marital conflicts and how individual couples handle them and ultimately whether they experience their marriages as stable or unstable. While the highest percentage of respondents scored secure AAS, meaning that they were low on avoidance and anxiety in their relationships, a significant number of the respondents were found to have high avoidance and anxiety, falling into the insecure categories of AAS: preoccupied, avoidant fearful and avoidant dismissing. One of the implications of this is that marriage therapists should be aware of how the insecure internal working models might be playing out in the marriage relationships of their clients and in the therapy processes. There is

also need to help clients understand this area of their personalities, with the aim of helping them to update their model of self and other into one that is secure.

The highest percentage of respondents reported using the validating marital conflict resolution style; volatile, avoiding and hostile marital conflict resolution styles followed in that order. Couples need to be made aware of the implications of the style they engage in characteristically while sorting out their differences. Though the hostile style was used by the lowest percentage of respondents, it is important for pastors and marriage therapists to make couples aware of the presence of this style where it is evidenced so as to avoid its destructive patterns. Demographic information that play key roles on influencing marital conflict resolution styles included the duration in marriage, frequency of conflict, level of education and income of the individual according to the findings in this study, showing a need for premarital programmes to address these in order to mitigate how these issues play out in marital conflict set ups.

This study also shows that communication problems make up the highest themes or causes of conflict among couples, implying that there is a significant experience of communication difficulties plaguing marriages. There is need for marriage therapists and pastors in charge of premarital and post marital programmes to give intentional focus to this area. Other themes like finances, emotional support and even social media were reported, showing that couple conflicts take a variety of forms and causes. Premarital preparations should include a thorough look at these areas of potential conflict so that couples getting into marriage are helped in having a common understanding and foundation.

Adult Attachment styles of couples were seen to have an association with the patterns they use to handle the conflicts in their marriages. The implication is that the AAS of married individuals have an influence on the patterns they form for handling their marital conflicts. This study also found the secure AAS as well as two insecure AAS which score high on

anxiety (avoidant fearful and preoccupied), to have a statistically significant relationship with both the validating MCRS and also the hostile MCRS. The fact that both secure and insecure AAS were found to have association with validating (a highly constructive MCRS), as well as hostile (a highly destructive MCRS), implies that no matter their AAS, couples and individuals can learn and choose to use constructive means of conflict resolution.

Recommendations of the Study

From the findings of this study, marriage therapists need to take special note of the level of education, duration of marriage and the income of couples that present themselves with marital conflict. This would help in both understanding how these variables may be playing in creating the presenting problem, and most importantly as this study has revealed, in the MCRS being used by such couples. Couples also need to be cautioned based on the specifics of the general trends that they can fall into.

This research was conducted in CITAM. The results demonstrate the need for the leadership of the church and specifically pastors in charge of FaCE ministry to be aware of the causes of conflict as found in the study among their members, the marital conflict resolution styles and the other demographics that impact on how conflicts are handled. In addition, the concept of AAS and their implications in couple relationships needs to be factored in marriage enrichment programmes. That way, such programs can be arranged with focus on the problematic areas that are shown in the results of this study.

The findings of this study showed a significant number of respondents who use the hostile MCRS at 13%. This means that a significant number of CITAM couples are silently embroiled in deep conflict characterized by sadness, contempt and stonewalling (Gottman & Driver, 2005). These are factors associated with lack of communication, emotional dissolution and ultimate divorce (Deylami et al. 2015). CITAM needs to put intervention measures to help such couples. Informant 006 talked of the need for a refocus on marriage

enrichment programmes insisting the need for such programmes was at ‘every stage, whether it is newly wedded or it is a couple thinking of getting married , or a couple that has been long in marriage.”

Another recommendation based on the findings of this study is that premarital classes in churches and elsewhere should include a section where those about to get married can explore how significant figures in their past may have influenced the way they attach themselves to significant others and why. As noted in the section of implications above, identifying individuals’ AAS does not mean that their MCRS are cast on stone. Once they are helped to identify their AAS and shown how they may be influencing their relationships currently and in the future, these couples can then be taught on the use of constructive marital conflict resolution styles, particularly focusing on ways of effective communication.

From the findings from the key informants in this research, other recommendations also emerged: 001 recommended couples be helped in the area of communication. “...listen, talk to each other, get into each other’s shoes, and see why they see things that way.” He also recommended a change in structural issues that may cause conflict, emphasizing that “Majority of conflicts are structural: It starts from the way things are set up so it forms attitude, then attitude manifests in behaviour.” Informant 005 recommended that “people should go back to giving marriage the weight the Bible gives it...I think taking the Bible lightly concerning marriage is the key thing that is making this institution fall.

Suggestions for Further Research

This study was conducted within six CITAM assemblies and the sample of respondents accessed through FaCE ministries and Safari groups in those assemblies. This means that the respondents were mainly Christians engaged in smaller groups where they were growing in their faith. There is need for other research to be conducted with a more

generalized population. The research can be done in all the CITAM assemblies and extended to other churches.

The study was mainly quantitative in strategy, with some additional interviews, but not from the respondents of questionnaires. A study that includes in-depth interviews with the respondents themselves, or focus group discussions, may find clearer explanations of the association of components found in this research.

Certain relationships and significant associations found in this study need more investigation. While results confirmed a significant association between secure AAS and validating as a marital conflict resolution style, there was also found an association between the secure AAS and hostile marital conflict resolution style. Since the two marital conflict styles are on opposite ends, more research is recommended to find out that association.

The lack of any significant association between the avoidant dismissing AAS with any of the MCRS, including the avoiding conflict style could not be comprehensively explained. More research can focus on finding out more.

More research could also be done to find out more specific ways in which demographics such as age, level of education, duration of marriage and income of individuals determine the MCRS that they employ. More research is also proposed to understand the reason behind the finding that communication was at a high spike as a cause of conflict among the respondents in this study.

Conclusion

The results of this study have shown that adult attachment styles, demographics and MCRS relate in intricate ways causing either marital stability or instability among couples. The research adds to literature focusing on Kenyan couples, with the aim of giving marriage therapists and counsellors, pastors who are in charge of marriage enrichment programs as

well as government bodies interested in stabilizing the family unit, recommendations based on research.

The study observed that respondents have different AAS based on levels of anxiety and avoidance. It also confirmed that couples have patterns of dealing with conflicts, also known as marital conflict resolution styles which can either be constructive or destructive. While the overarching purpose of the study was to find out the relationship between AAS and marital conflict resolution styles which indeed was investigated, results also showed a more dynamic relationship between demographic components with MCRS. Therapists would therefore be better equipped in dealing with couples in conflict if they take time to investigate the role those demographics of age, level of education, duration of marriage and income of the spouses may be playing, as well as how each member of the couple communicates, while not ignoring the part played by AAS in the MCRS that the couples employ.

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APPENDIX I : PARTICIPATION CONSENT

My name is Lucy Wambui Mburu. I am conducting a research towards the award of a Master's Degree in Marriage and Family Therapy at Pan African Christian University. I am seeking to find out the role that Adult Attachment styles plays in marital conflict styles among marriages of selected individuals who are members of CITAM in Nairobi County.

Please do not reveal your identity so that confidentiality is not compromised. All information given here will be held in confidence and used only for purposes of the specified research as stated.

Kindly sign below to indicate that you are willing to participate.

Signature of Participant

Date

APPENDIX II : QUESTIONNAIRES

General information

Section B1

Please tick/ mark where appropriate

1. Gender: Male ☐ Female ☐

2. What age bracket do you belong to?

Below 25 ☐ 26-30 ☐ 31-35 ☐ 36-40 ☐ 41-45 ☐ 46-50 ☐ 51-55 ☐ 56-60 ☐

61 and above ☐

3. How long have you been married?

Below 5 ☐ 5-10 ☐ 11-15 ☐ 16-20 ☐ 21-25 ☐ Over 25 ☐

4. How would you generally describe your marriage? Stable ☐ Unstable ☐

5. What is your Occupation?

Unemployed ☐ Self-employed ☐ Employed ☐

6. What is your level of income?

10,000 and below ☐ 10001-20000 ☐ 20001-40000 ☐ 40001-60000 ☐

60001-100,000 ☐ Above 100,000 ☐

7. What is your level of education?

Below KSCE ☐ KSCE ☐ College Diploma ☐ Degree ☐ Post-Graduate and

above ☐

8. How often would you say that you and your spouse get into a significant conflict?

Daily ☐ Weekly ☐ Monthly ☐ Quarterly ☐ Annually ☐ Never ☐

9. What is the most frequent cause/ theme (s) of conflict with your spouse? (Note that here you can tick more than one place if applicable)

Communication ☐ Finances ☐ Infidelity ☐ In-laws ☐ Children ☐ Roles ☐ Sex ☐
 Emotional Support ☐ Addictive behaviour ☐ Use of social media ☐ Other ☐ _____

SECTION B2: ADULT ATTACHMENT STYLE

Below are 18 statements that concern the way you generally feel in romantic relationships such as with your spouse. Please read carefully, and then tick in the space provided next to each statement the level to which you agree with the statement as a description of the way you feel, on a scale of 1-5, where 1 stands for strongly disagree, and 5 stands for strongly agree.

Table B1

		Strongly Disagree(1)	Disagree(2)	Not sure (3)	Agree(4)	Strongly agree(5)
1	I find it relatively easy to get close to my spouse					
2	I do not worry about being abandoned					
3	I find it difficult to allow myself to depend on my spouse					
4	I often worry that my spouse does not really love me					
5	I find that my spouse is reluctant to get as close as I would like					
6	I am comfortable					

	depending on others					
7	I do not worry about my spouse getting too close to me					
8	I find that people are never there when you need them					
9	I am somewhat uncomfortable being close to my spouse					
10	In this relationship, I often worry that my spouse will not want to stay with me					
11	I want to merge completely with my spouse					
12	My desire to merge sometimes scares my spouse away					
13	I am comfortable having my spouse depend on me					
14	I know that my spouse will be there when I need him/her					
15	I am nervous when anyone gets too close					
16	I find it difficult to trust others completely					
17	My spouse often wants me to be emotionally closer than I feel comfortable being					

18	I am not sure that I can always depend on my spouse to be there when I need them					
----	--	--	--	--	--	--

Thank you for filling the questionnaire above that shows your Adult Attachment Style.

SECTION B 3 MARITAL CONFLICT RESOLUTION STYLES

Below are 12 questions that describe ways in which couples generally handle conflicts in marriage. On a scale of 1 to five, (where 1 stands for strongly uncharacteristic, and 5 indicates strongly characteristic), kindly indicate the level to which each statement is characteristic of how you handle conflict with your spouse in the spaces provided.

Table B2

		Strongly uncharacteristic(1)	Uncharacteristic(2)	Neutral (3)	Characteristic(4)	Strongly Characteristic(5)
1	In our relationship, conflicts may be fought on a grand scale, and that is ok, since our making up is even grander					
2	We argue often and hotly. There are a lot of insults back and forth, name calling, Put- downs and sarcasm.					
3	We don't think much is to be gained from getting openly angry with each other. In fact, a lot of talking about disagreements seems to make matters worse.					

4	When fighting, we spend a lot of time validating each other as well as trying to persuade each other, or trying to find a compromise					
5	We have volcanic arguments, but they are just a small part of a warm and loving relationship. Although we argue, we are still able to resolve our differences					
6	In our relationship, conflict is minimized. We think it is better to “agree to disagree” rather than end up in discussions that will result a deadlock.					
7	During conflict, we don’t really listen to what the other is saying, nor do we look at each other very much.					
8	In our relationship, when we are having conflict, we let each other know the other’s opinions are valued and their emotions are valid, even if we disagree with each other					
		Strongly Uncharacteristic	Uncharacteristic	Neutral	Characteristic	Strongly characteristic
9	Our passion and zest for fighting actually lead to a better relationship, with a lot of making up, laughing, and					

	affection					
1 0	Even when discussing a hot topic, we display a lot of self-control and are calm.					
1 1	One or the other of us can be quite detached and emotionally uninvolved, even though there may be brief episodes of attack and defensiveness. You can clearly see more negatives than positives in our relationship					
1 2	We feel that if you just relax about problems, they will have a way of working themselves out					

APPENDIX III: INTERVIEW GUIDE

My name is Lucy Wambui Mburu, a post graduate student doing a research towards the award of a Master's Degree in Marriage and Family Therapy at Pan African Christian University. The purpose of this research is to examine the relationship between adult attachment styles and marital conflict styles among selected couples in CITAM Valley Road.

Thank you for being willing to participate in this interview that is meant to add value to my study by getting deeper information on how your adult attachment style and marital conflict styles relate. The information given will be held in confidence and only used for this study.

1. What issue is particularly recurrent as a cause of conflict amongst couples that come to you for help?
2. Have you observed conflict patterns such as listed here amongst couples in your assembly?
 - a. We avoid issues that we know will bring misunderstanding
 - b. We confront the issues head on, expressing how we feel without mincing words
 - c. We work hard to convince each other of our point of view, and sometimes, it can feel like a competition
 - d. One of us speaks as the other listens, then the other expresses his/her view as the other takes their turn to listen. That way, we arrive at a win-win situation
3. What in your observation informs the way/ patterns of conflict couples employ, whether those patterns are constructive or destructive?
4. Have you seen spouses whose way of relating with each other seem to be informed by other significant relationships in the past?

5. What other factors would you say make couples have either destructive or constructive patterns of conflict?

APPENDIX IV: NACOSTI RESEARCH CERTIFICATE

 REPUBLIC OF KENYA	 NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY & INNOVATION
Ref No: 415121	Date of Issue: 09/March/2021
RESEARCH LICENSE	
	
This is to Certify that Ms.. LUCY Wambui MBURU of Pan Africa Christian University, has been licensed to conduct research in Nairobi on the topic: Adult Attachment Styles and Conflict Resolution Styles among selected couples in Nairobi, Kenya for the period ending : 09/March/2022.	
License No: NACOSTI/P/21/9324	
415121 Applicant Identification Number	 Director General NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY & INNOVATION
	Verification QR Code 
NOTE: This is a computer generated License. To verify the authenticity of this document, Scan the QR Code using QR scanner application.	

APPENDIX V: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION CLEARANCE



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26TH FEBRUARY, 2021

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

Dear Sir/Madam,

**RE: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION & ETHICS CLEARANCE LETTER FOR
MBURU LUCY WAMBUI REG. NO: MMFT/6341/15**

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

She is at the final stage of the programme and is preparing to collect data to enable her finalise on her Thesis. The Thesis title is ***“Adult Attachment Styles and Marital Conflict Resolution Styles among Selected Couples in Nairobi, Kenya”***.

We kindly request that you allow her obtain a research permit so as to proceed and conduct research amongst selected couples within Nairobi, Kenya.

Warm Regards,

Lilian Vikiru

PAN AFRICA CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY
REGISTRAR
P.O. Box 56875 - 00200
TEL: 0721 932050 0734 400694
NAIROBI, KENYA

Dr. Lilian Vikiru
Registrar Academic Affairs
Pan Africa Christian University
Lumumba Drive, Roysambu, off Kamiti Rd, off Thika Rd
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Email: registrar@pacuniversity.ac.ke
Web: www.pacuniversity.ac.ke

APPENDIX VI: CITAM PERMISSION TO DO RESEARCH

Permission to do research within CITAM from Deputy Bishop

From: john karita <jkarita@citam.org>
Sent: Thursday, March 25, 2021 11:56 AM
To: Wambui Mburu <wmburu@citam.org>
Subject: RE: Permission to do research within CITAM

Dear Wambui,

Your request below to carry out the research within CITAM assemblies is hereby granted.

Karita Mbagara

From: Wambui Mburu <wmburu@citam.org>
Sent: 25 March 2021 11:10
To: john karita <jkarita@citam.org>
Subject: Permission to do research within CITAM

Dear Bishop,
Greetings in Jesus' Name.

I am writing to you to request for permission to undertake research within CITAM assemblies. I am in the process of studying to acquire the Master of Arts degree in Marriage and Family Therapy at PAC University. I have the relevant university permits that have enabled me to get the NACOSTI license (attached) to conduct research for my Thesis on the topic Relationship between Adult Attachment Styles and Marital Conflict Styles among selected couples in Nairobi Kenya. My sample population is CITAM Northern and Southern regions assemblies that are located within Nairobi Metropolis.
Awaiting your favorable consideration.

In Christ's Service,
Wambui Mburu

APPENDIX VII: RESPONSES FROM SENIOR PASTORS OF SELECTED
ASSEMBLIES

Lucy Wambui Mburu
PAC University

To
Senior Pastor
CITAM Valley Rd
1st February 2021

Dear Reverend,

RE; REQUEST TO CONDUCT RESEARCH WITH COUPLES IN YOUR ASSEMBLY

Greetings in the Name of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

My name is Lucy Wambui Mburu. I am in the process of doing a study on Adult Attachment Styles and marital conflict resolution styles among couples towards the award of a Master of Arts in Marriage and Family Therapy at Pan African Christian University. Research has shown that couples employ patterns in how they handle conflicts, broadly categorized as either constructive or destructive. The purpose of this study is to find out the relationship between Adult attachment styles and the marital conflict styles that couples employ.

My target population is married couples in selected CITAM assemblies.

This letter comes to request for your permission to sample data from couples in your assembly, and to further have an in-depth interview with the Pastor in charge of FaCE ministry in order to further enrich the findings.

I look forward to your favorable response.

In Christ's Service,

Lucy Wambui Mburu

From: Jesse Mwai <jessemwai@citam.org>
Sent: Saturday, April 3, 2021 8:56 AM
To: Wambui Mburu <wmburu@citam.org>
Cc: Elly Ochieng <EOchieng@citam.org>
Subject: Re: Permission for research among couples at CITAM Buruburu

Dear Wambui,

This is approved.

I have copied Pst. Elly who is in charge of our FACE ministry to assist you accordingly.

Jesse

From: charles obara <cobara@citam.org>
Sent: Tuesday, March 30, 2021 11:01 AM
To: Wambui Mburu <wmburu@citam.org>
Cc: Ruth Otieno <rotieno@citam.org>
Subject: RE: Permission to collect data

Dear Pastor Wambui,
Your request is duly noted. The Pastor in charge of FaCE in Karen Assembly is Rev Ruth Otieno (copied). Feel free to contact her for any information you might require.
Kind regards,

Rev Charles Obara
Regional Overseer - Southern Region.
Senior Pastor,
CITAM Karen,
P.O. Box 42254-00100 NAIROBI, Kenya | +254 709 861 000 | www.citam.org |

From: Kennedy Kimiywe <KKimiywe@citam.org>
Sent: Wednesday, March 31, 2021 4:50 PM
To: Wambui Mburu <wmburu@citam.org>
Cc: grace bukachi <gbukachi@citam.org>
Subject: Re: Permission and assistance to do research at CITAM Thika Rd

Dear Wambui,

You are welcome to conduct your research here at CITAM Thika Road.

Our FACE Ministry Pastor is Rev. Grace Bukachi who is hereby copied, feel free to engage her.

Blessings,

Bsp. Kimiywe

From: Thuo Mburu <TMburu@citam.org>
Sent: Monday, March 29, 2021 5:38 PM
To: Wambui Mburu <wmburu@citam.org>
Cc: James Munyiri Mwangi <JMunyiri@citam.org>
Subject: Re: Permission to conduct research at CITAM Parklands

This is a good step forward and I will gladly facilitate the same. Please proceed and liaise with Rev. Munyiri (copied here) accordingly.

From: justus mugambi <Jmugambi@citam.org>
Sent: Monday, March 29, 2021 3:29 PM
To: Wambui Mburu <wmburu@citam.org>
Subject: Re: Permission to Conduct research

Pastor,
This is okay. You have permission to carry out the research.

Regards,
Mugambi