

EFFECTS OF MARITAL CONFLICT ON ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF
STUDENTS IN PUBLIC AND PRIVATE DAY SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN KIAMBU
SUB-COUNTY, KENYA

BY

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DECLARATION

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

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

DECLARATION	ii
TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	iii
DEDICATION.....	vi
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT	vii
ABSTRACT.....	viii
LIST OF TABLES	ix
LIST OF FIGURES	x
ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS	xi
DEFINITION OF TERMS	xii
CHAPTER ONE	1
INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY	1
Introduction.....	1
Background to the Study.....	1
Statement of the Problem.....	4
Objectives of the Study	5
Broad Objective	5
Specific Objectives	5
Research Questions	5
Assumptions of the Study	6
Justification of the Study	6
Significance of the Study.....	7
Scope of the Study	8
Limitations and Delimitations.....	8
CHAPTER TWO	10
LITERATURE REVIEW	10
Introduction.....	10
Literature Review.....	10
Marital Conflicts	10
Causes of Marital Conflicts	12
Marital Conflicts and its Effects on Children Development.....	17
Relationship between Marital Conflicts and Children Education.....	20
Possible Strategies for Marital Success	22
Theoretical Review	23
Erickson's Theory	24
Behavioural Theory	25
Abraham Maslow's Theory	26
Conceptual Framework.....	27
Summary	28
CHAPTER THREE	29

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	29
Introduction	29
Research Design.....	29
Target Population.....	29
Sampling Design	30
Types of Data	30
Data Collection Methods	30
Instrument Pre-Testing.....	31
Data Analysis	32
Ethical Considerations	33
CHAPTER FOUR.....	34
RESULTS AND DISCUSSION	34
Introduction.....	34
Response Rate	34
Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents	34
Distribution of the Respondents by Gender.....	35
Parents Living with the Respondents.....	35
Attitude towards Home	36
Presence of Parents or Guardians at Home	37
Rating the Relationship between the Respondents and their Parents	38
Rating the Communication between the Respondents and Parents or Guardian.....	39
Areas of Conflict among Married Couples in Kiambu County	40
Frequency of Disagreement between Respondent's Parents	40
Respondent's experience of abuse by parents	41
Incidences of Fights between Parents	41
Effect of Fights between Parents on Communication.....	42
Causes of Conflict between Parents.....	43
Effects of Marital Conflicts on Academic Performance	46
Parental Assistance with Homework	46
Effect of Parents/Guardians Quarrelling/Fighting on School Performance	47
Perceived Effect of Marital Conflicts on Academic Performance.....	48
Possible Solutions to Marital Conflicts.....	52
Chapter Summary	55
CHAPTER FIVE	56
SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, RECOMMENDATIONS, AREAS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH AND CONCLUSIONS	56
Introduction.....	56
Summary of Findings.....	56
Areas of Conflict among Married Couples in Kiambu County	56
Effects of Marital Conflicts on Academic Performance.....	57

Possible Solutions to Marital Conflicts.....	57
Recommendations	58
Areas for Further Research	59
Conclusions.....	59
REFERENCES	61
APPENDICES	68
Appendix I: Research Instruments.....	68
Appendix II: Informed Consent Form	73
Appendix III: PAC University Introduction Letter.....	74
Appendix IV: NACOSTI Research Permit.....	75
Appendix IV: NACOSTI Research Authorization	76

DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my husband John, our three daughters Jacque, Kayu and Mish, my parents, my three brothers Japhet, Isaac, John and their families for all their love and support.

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ABSTRACT

The family is one of the most powerful primary agents of socialization and achievement of the entire family including children at school is very important. The general objective of this study was to investigate the effect of marital conflicts on the academic performance of public and private day secondary school students in Kenya based on a case study of selected schools in Kiambu sub-County. The study was anchored on Erickson's theory, Behavioral theory and Abraham Maslow's theory on hierarchy of needs. A descriptive survey design was adopted. Data was collected using a questionnaire through the drop and pick method. Findings were organized into themes and according to research questions and objectives. Data was tabulated and presented descriptively using frequency tables, charts and graphs. The first objective sought to establish the areas of conflict among married couples in Kiambu sub-County. It was found that on a 5-point scale from strongly disagree to strongly agree, a high mean score was obtained on the statement that parents disagreed due to financial dissatisfaction, struggle for power and control of the family, show of public disapproval contributed to conflict between their parents and gender preference on children. The second objective of the study was to explain the effect of marital conflicts on the academic performance of students in public and private day secondary schools in Kiambu sub-County. Results showed that most of the respondents had a low concentration as a result of quarrels between parents/guardians, and majority of the respondents agreed that their academic grades were affected by marital conflicts among parents. With respect to the third objective which sought to establish the possible solutions to the problems regarding marital conflicts and academic performance of secondary school students, most of the respondents acknowledged that learning to calm down can reduce distraction from class as a result of family conflicts. It was also found that most of the respondents agreed that learning to speak and listen non-defensively was a way to resolve marital conflicts. It was concluded that marital conflict negatively impacted on children's academic performance. It was recommended that parents or guardians who are experiencing conflicts in their families should consider counselling options as soon as possible to avoid negative effects on their children. Further studies could be focused on the effects of guidance and counseling on students' academic performance.

LIST OF TABLES

Table 4.1: Response Rate.....	34
Table 4.2: Number of Parents Living with the Respondents	36
Table 4.3: Frequency of Parents' Presence at Home	37
Table 4.4: Respondents' Rating of Communication with Parents/Guardians	39
Table 4.5: Experience of abuse by parents	41
Table 4.6: Respondents' Communication with Parent(s)/Guardian after Quarrel.....	42
Table 4.7: Agreement with Various Reasons for Disagreements among Parents	43
Table 4.8 Parents/guardians assisting in doing homework/school work	47
Table 4.9 Concentration in class if parents/guardians quarrel	48
Table 4.10: Agreements with effects of Marital Conflicts on Academic Performance....	49
Table 4.11: Solutions to Problems of Marital Conflicts and Academic Performance.....	53

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 2.1: Conceptual Frameork	28
Figure 4.1: Gender of the Respondents.....	35
Figure 4.2 Distribution of Respondents in the Various Types of Schools	36
Figure 4.3: Respondents' rating of their Relationship with Parent/Guardian.....	38
Figure 4.4: Respondent's rating of frequency of disagreements between their parents ...	40
Figure 4.5 Whether the Parents/Guardians Fight Between Themselves.....	42

ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

CDE	County Director of Education
KCPE	Kenya Certificate of Primary Education
KCSE	Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education
MoEST	Ministry of Education, Science and Technology
NACOSTI	National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation
SPSS	Statistical Package for Social Sciences

DEFINITION OF TERMS

Academic performance: Attainment demonstrated, using grades and scores on any examination, assignments, tests, presentations, and so on in an academic environment.

Academic: Connected with education especially studying in school and universities.

Conflict: The confrontation between one or more parties aspiring towards incompatible or competitive means or ends.

Couple: Two heterosexual people who are married whether customary or in church.

Divorce: A separation, the ending of a marital relationship.

Family: A group consisting of one or two parents, their children and close relations.

Marital: Connected with marriage or with the relationship between a husband and wife.

Marriage: The legal relationship between a husband and a wife.

Performance: How well or badly one does something or work

Society: People in general living together in communities.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

Introduction

This chapter provides an introduction of the study. It consists of the background that highlights the concept of marital conflict and academic performance from a global perspective to a local one. It also presents the problem statement, purpose of the study, research objectives and questions, scope of the study as well as the significance.

Background to the Study

Conflicts occur in all human societies and in various degrees. Marital conflict is depicted by husband and wife having different opinion about issues, events or activities which cannot be mutually resolved. Marital conflict usually arises mostly due to lack of understanding between the man and the woman (Margolin, 2007). This comes in different ways such as difference in education and social backgrounds, physical maintenance, love making, extra marital affairs among others. In marriage, Daniel, Liza and Shapiro (2014) affirm that couples that have never had any conflict or argument in their lifetime are not true and honest to each other. They add that conflicts may occur in any relationship, but what makes the difference is how these conflicts are handled. If controlled or managed constructively, the outcome would be better living (Daniel et al., 2014). Some conflicts are “mutually satisfactory while others end up frustrating one or all parties (Girgis, Anderson & George, 2012).

The effects of marital conflicts on children are traumatic as they may cause children to question their self-worth, experience unnecessary grief, guilt, or confusion (Siti, Nor & Zalina, 2013). In particular, young children especially, have difficulty

understanding the rationality of their parents' reasons for conflict (Vander Valk, Spruijt, Goede, Maas & Meeus, 2015). In a family experiencing marital conflicts, it is difficult for children to find a sense of security because experience shows that what seemed stable and good could fall into pieces, leaving the children empty (Rodman, 2010).

Marital relationship plays a very important role in determining the academic performance of the spouses' children in school. According to Rodgers & Rose (2011), family harmony can easily be affected due to parental conflicts. The degree of parental conflicts varies from mild to serious. These conflicts affect the academic performance of their children, forcing them to drop out of school. In their study, Harold, Aitken and Shelton (2007) revealed the roles of marital relations and children's academic achievement. In accounting for the relationship between marital relations and children's adjustment, researchers suggest that marital relationship affects the children's adjustment directly through the emotional stress level, role modeling and academic performance (Cummings & Davies, 2014).

An unhappy marriage of parents may be associated with low achievement, because witnessing conflicts between parents heightens a level of stress on children and keep them from focusing on schoolwork (Hurlock, 2011). These children also learn inappropriate social problem-solving skills through modeling parental behaviors. Lee and Chung (2014) found that the marital relationship perceived by Korean adolescent students were positively related to their school adjustment. Parents in a dysfunctional marriage are likely to be distressed and distracted by marital conflicts. As such, they cannot afford to invest their time and energy in children. As a result, inappropriate parenting style worsens parent-child relationship and their academic performance. This

process is consistent with interdependence between subsystems that family systems theorists maintain (Whitchurch & Constantine, 2008).

The quality of parental relationship spills over into relationship with their children because couples with satisfying marital relationships are more warm and supportive towards their children. Amato and Keith (2008) noted that the gap in well-being between children with divorced and non-divorced parents might have narrowed because either divorce became more easily socially accepted or parents were making greater efforts to reduce the potentially disruptive impact of divorce on their children. Children with divorced parents score lower than children with continuously married parents on measure of academic success.

Collective parents' commitment as well as their oneness participation in a child's education influences performance at school. According to Levine (2010), parents are supposed to be role models and best champions for their children in the expectation of what children holds for their future. Gunderson & Levine (2011) posit that parents play a big role in shaping a child's performance in school. A study at the North Carolina State University, Brigham Young University and the University of California-Irvine found that parental involvement, checking homework, attending school meetings and events as well as discussing school activities at home has a powerful influence on students' academic performance more than anything else (Paul, 2012).

Literature on the relationship between marital conflicts has focused on work performance, personality development and school going children's drop out (Cummings & Davies 2014). Information on the relationship between marital conflict and academic performance of secondary school students in Africa and Kenya in particular is scanty.

This study intends to fill in the knowledge gap by focusing on the effects of marital conflicts on secondary school students' academic performance in Kiambu sub-county, Kiambu County, Kenya.

Statement of the Problem

Over the years, the society has remained passively helpless with the high increase of divorce rate that is a result of marital conflicts. This is despite the fact that the family is one of the most powerful primary agents of socialization and achievement of the entire family; parents at work and children at school (Wilson, 2013). Even though disagreements in marriages are inevitable, the way parents choose to respond to the discord creates a positive or negative impact on the child (Erel & Burman, 2010). Conflict between parents determines the children's social, emotional and cognitive development (Cummings & Davies 2014; Grych, Seid & Fincham, 2012).

Research on the impact of marital conflict on academic performance of secondary school students is scanty in Kenya. Most studies has focused on the developmental stage and gender of the child (Cummings, Zahn-Waxler & Radke-Yarrow, 2011; Cummings & Davies, 2014; Emery & O'Leary, 2010; Raver, 2014). Academic performance of students, particularly in Kenya is a key factor for their future. It is measured using grades achieved. Failure in the national examinations like KCPE and KCSE make the life of students almost uncertain and full of despair (Sunal & Mutua, 2007).

Locally, Maina's (2010) studied the impact of family conflicts on the academic performance and interpersonal relationships of pupils in public primary schools in Nakuru Municipality. Although the study found linkages between marital conflict and academic performance, the research was limited to Nakuru Municipality, thus the need

for this study to establish whether similar results can be obtained in other regions. Limited research had been undertaken focusing on the link between marital conflict and academic performance of students in public secondary schools in Kiambu sub-county. It was upon this background that this study sought to fill in the identified knowledge gap.

Objectives of the Study

Broad Objective

The purpose of this study was to establish the effect of marital conflict on academic performance of students in public and private day secondary schools in Kiambu sub-County.

Specific Objectives

The specific objectives were:

- (i) To identify the areas of conflicts among married couples in Kiambu Sub-County.
- (ii) To explain the effect of marital conflicts on the academic performance of students in public and private secondary schools in Kiambu Sub-County.
- (iii) To suggest possible solutions to the problems identified.

Research Questions

The study aimed at answering the following questions: -

- i) What are the areas of conflicts among married couples in Kiambu Sub-County?
- ii) What is the effect of marital conflicts on the academic performance of students in public and private day secondary schools in Kiambu Sub-County?
- iii) What are the possible solutions to the problems identified?

Assumptions of the Study

The researcher assumed that the respondents would be honest, cooperative, factual (objectivity) and trustworthy in their response to the research instruments and would be available to respond to the research instruments in time. It was also the assumption of the researcher that the authorities in the schools and Kiambu County in general would grant the required permission to collect data from the target population. The study further made the assumptions that there would be no serious changes in the composition of the target population that would affect the effectiveness of the study sample.

Justification of the Study

Marriage and family life is very important in the lives of people. In Kenya, family is considered as a key social pillar as envisaged in the social pillars of Kenya's Vision 2030. Over the recent years, marital conflicts have been on the rise among couples due to economic, power control, lack of preparedness, sexual dissatisfaction, and poor communication among other reasons. Previously, students' performance was very encouraging irrespective of family background, because marital conflicts were controlled through intervention of relatives. This was due to the fact that most couples were living in close proximity with their relatives; there were check measures whenever there was any disagreement. However, in recent years probably due to increase in acquisition of knowledge, urbanization and struggling to make ends meet by spouses, relatives no longer live in close proximity. As such, no relation seems to know when spouses have any form of marital conflict, hence, no caution.

Majority of public and private mixed day secondary school students in the county commute from home to school on a daily basis. Therefore, they are likely to be aware of various marital conflicts that may be faced in their homes, which would greatly affect their academic performance. This may have been due to lack of good parental guidance, enough resources to cater for their academic needs, physical and psychological torture incase of assaults and abusive conflicts. Against the rise in marital conflicts and the consequential increase of poor academic performance among students in the conflicting families, there has been little or no effort to improve the situation, hence the need for this study.

Significance of the Study

It was anticipated that the data and study would trigger and guide discussions amongst stakeholders in the education sector. This included parents who were able to make informed decisions regarding the kind of learning environment they want to offer to their children in order to enhance their academic performance.

Educational planners would immensely benefit from the study because it would enable them to plan well to offer effective solutions and appropriate interventions in case of marital conflicts which affect students' academic performance. Further, the study would inspire the Ministry of Education (MOE) to ensure that mechanisms are put in place to enhance learning amid students affected by marital conflicts. It would provide insight to the Government about the needs of learners in order to increase investment such as finances and support for such students whose academic performance is threatened by marital conflicts. The study would also

help the teachers and the school administration to use appropriate strategies to minimize poor academic results among students from troubled marriages.

Researchers who would wish to undertake further studies in this area may find the research useful in gaining valuable knowledge on effects of marital conflict on academic performance in Kenya. The study was also expected to help researchers and academicians with additional information on how to minimize marital conflicts among families, hence improve students' academic performance.

Scope of the Study

This study focused on investigating the effects of marital conflicts on academic performance of students in both public and private day secondary schools in Kiambu Sub-County. Data was collected from form 3 students of public and private day secondary schools within the sub-county. The respondents in the study included form three students in the sampled schools within the sub-county. The form three students were targeted because they were more experienced than those in the lower classes since they have been in school longer. Form 4 students did not participate in the study because they were busy preparing for their Mock and final year examinations by the time the researcher was collecting data.

Limitations and Delimitations

Collecting information on the effects of marital conflicts on academic performance of students in public and private day secondary schools in Kiambu Sub-County was faced with some problems. Respondents had different perspectives and perceptions about marital conflicts and the extent to which they affect academic performance of students. Another limitation of the study arose from the interrelation of

some aspects of family conflicts and social – economic hardships and how they contribute to conflicts and consequently academic performance. It was difficult for the researcher to determine which area of marital conflict had the greatest effect on academic performance. The researcher relied on the respondents' perceptions on the level of effect of each type of marital conflict on academic performance before and after marital conflicts. Some respondents might have inflated or deflated the number of marital conflicts experienced to justify their perceptions, hence create an impression that they were justified in their laxity. Head and class teachers were required to provide evidence of family conflicts reports available in the schools, in order to confirm authenticity of the information provided.

Summary

This chapter concentrated on background of the study, statement of the problem, objectives and research questions, assumptions of the study, justification, significance and scope including limitations and delimitations this study. The following is chapter two which discusses a detailed literature review and conceptual framework in which this study was anchored on.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

Literature review involves locating, reading and evaluating of previous studies, observations and opinions related to the planned studies. The review helps determine new approaches and stimulates new ideas. The review is undertaken to bring out the gaps and enhance knowledge related to the research problem being investigated. A review of related literature materials conceptualizing the effect of marital conflict on academic performance is done in this chapter. It also contains theoretical review, and conceptual framework.

Literature Review

Marital Conflicts

Marriage is the united platform between man and woman which fetches an intimacy and the color of evergreen relationship. Over the years, the institution of marriage has continued to face numerous marital conflicts, divorce being top in the list. Onyango (2013) asserts that families are undergoing rapid and dramatic changes in form, composition and structures as follows: both the husband and wife will hold job outside home, increase in single – parenthood, sharp rise in single people living alone, and greater prevalence of step families. There is also increases in cohabitation, rise in intermarriages, prevalence of out of wedlock children, need to balance work and family responsibilities, postponement of marriage and family responsibilities, and increase in childfree marriages as well as high divorce rate.

Conflict refers to the lack of peace in an environment. Marital conflict is therefore a situation whereby the smooth interaction and relation between couples is disrupted because of one thing or another (Gottman, 2004). According to La Haye (2008), conflict is usual in marriage since couples enter it having different cultural backgrounds and worldviews. As a result, the two people joining together tend to have problems of coping with one another. Parsons (2008) found that while men and women have a part to play, the problem is that women have evolved socially and economically, while men have remained the same old domineering African males who want to be the managers, rulers and kings of the homesteads. However, Kunhiyop (2008) opines that some women still prefer to be dependent on men being handed over everything and not opting to play a key economic role within the family.

Changes in the last three decades have resulted in families that are more diverse and complex in their structure (Gunderson & Levine, 2011). More couples are cohabiting and becoming parents, though the risk of parental separation among this group is higher than among married parents; divorce rates have remained relatively constant and the number of stepfamilies is growing fast. Children now have a higher probability of experiencing parental separation, having a lone parent, and being part of a stepfamily than was once the case. Marital conflict is often viewed as a couple's private affair because it often involves 'only' the husband and wife (Waithaka, 2006). However, the conflict often has a bigger impact on the children because children born to such a couple grow up regarding the mother and father as equal.

According to Emery and Laumann-Billings (2008), children become attached to both parents and learn to depend on them for their survival. As a result, children become

extremely overwhelmed after witnessing violent scenes between their parents and the parent-child relationship they have been relying on for nurture, safety and help is threatened by this violence. The family situations cannot be detached from the general culture (example, societal values, traditions, attitudes and home environment). The consequences of single-parent homes are mainly related to economic deprivation of single-parent families. As a result, many children faced with marital conflicts within their families are exposed to psychological, physical and social torture which affects their participation, concentration and overall performance in class.

Causes of Marital Conflicts

Families that come from lower incomes are more likely to divorce, which in turn cause them to have lower standard of living (Emery & O'Leary, 2010). Due to the lower incomes having a lower standard of living Emery and Laumann-Billings (2008) found that children may have to change schools, a parent may have to work longer hours, older children may be told they have limited choices for college and may have to deal with their parents fighting over financial issues. These are concerns that children may face after their parents' divorce. This could add more stress, anxiety and emotions for an adolescent. A number of issues have been raised in connection with marital conflict in terms of stability, satisfaction and adjustment (Greenstein, 2012). According to Ilumoka (2010), marriage and family life are very important in the lives of all people and most individuals are expected to marry and procreate. However, a number of reasons have been cited to hinder unions of all kinds between men and women who have come together for the common purposes of forming families (Gitaari, 2002).

Power struggle is one of the causes of marital conflicts (Razavi & Jenichen, 2010). Completion and competition are two principles that characterize spousal relation whereby spouses both desire to have intimacy and gain control (Scanzoni, 2011). In such cases, men generally act in a possessive and domineering manner especially when they feel insecure about their masculinity. Similarly, the women seek an independent role. If any of the spouses seek to dominate a marriage, conflict ensue because the spouses end up having an adversarial relationship instead of an independent one (Wright et al., 2014). Another major cause of marital conflict is the confusion of the spouse's role. According to Musau et al. (2015), spouses enter a solemn and binding arrangement in marriage and their unique roles are complementary. However, as each couple hold to their competing views on gender roles, disorder and disagreement are likely to characterize their marriage (Ross, 2007). The inner desire for self-fulfillment could lead spouses to enter a competition and comparison game, leading to misinterpretation of roles.

According to Hurding (2010), there is the heartfelt human need in each of the spouses for self-identity. Spouses are therefore constantly striving for fulfillment, identity and control which negates the idea of marital oneness that predicates on complementary roles and equality of personhood. It is therefore clear that if spouses disregard the idea of distinct gender roles, conflict would ensue and persist (Corollary, 2010). According to Gitaari (2002), marriage is a bond of two heterogeneous persons with different outlook to life. In the marriage, new living and sexual demands continuously emerge and this challenges the individual rights and privileges of spouses who express their full range of emotions and behaviour in attempt to mesh their lives (Goldenberg & Goldenberg, 2010). Since their approach, response and feelings towards

life is different, they must make remarkable living and sexual adjustments to accommodate each other's personalities, views and attitudes.

Smalley (2011) asserts that selfishness means that a person devotes himself to satisfying his needs at the expense of others. Their will, thoughts and actions are self-serving. A selfish person has distorted ways of thinking and behaving. Hughes (2007) asserts that in every human heart, there's a strong desire to regain what has been lost and to become what the inner design of their being beckons. Mistaken notion about sex, abuse of sex and at times dysfunctional sexual organs create frustrations, anxieties and fears between spouses (Scanzoni, 2011). Sometimes either or both spouses may have misconceptions concerning sex, which may cause problems. Razavi and Jenichen (2010) articulate that many view that sex and holiness are opposing and that sex and Christian faith do not mix making some spouses to abstain from it thus frustrating their partners. However, Kiura (1999) explains that it is important that spouses realize that three purposes of marriage namely companionship, physical intimacy and procreation are discrete, though interrelated.

As such, if one were to envision sex as having valid purpose only for the procreation of children before physical relationships in importance, the place of sex would be altogether different and the concept of the threefold purpose of marriage would also be altered. Hence, sex is not wrong and married couples should fully enjoy it. In sum, if any aspect of sex is unclear to spouses, conflict could ensue (Greenstein, 2005). Natural or accidental hardships and family pressure may also bring discomfort or pain to spouses resulting in marital conflict (Fisher et al., 2009). In any marriage, hardships test the depth of a couples love for one another either in having mutual endurance, or in

blame or desertion. For instance, childlessness may evoke sorrow, anger, and feelings of inadequacy in spouses who get caught in a fierce dilemma that cannot be humanly resolved (Nguru, 2006). In other cases, parents and relatives may unduly interfere with a couple's private life, thus causing tension. This makes a couple to feel strongly compelled to live by the expectations of their parents. This being the case, spouses have no independence or autonomy in their domestic affairs at all (Barry & Williams, 2009).

According to Sternberg (2006), the interference by in-laws in a couple's private life often leads to marital disharmony because the primary relationship that spouses have with their parents could significantly influence the conduct of the former marriage. Coontz (2005) adds that a spouse may carry the stereotype of their parent's image into their marriage which, if their mate fails to meet the expected image of their parents, may also lead to conflicts in the marriage. Myers (2009) cited the opinions of in-laws as having a great effect on the couple's disagreements over money or appropriate husband-wife roles. Frequently also, when relatives treat a spouse with scorn, hatred and prejudice, a conflict ensues.

Another common problem experienced by married partners is infidelity; the act of not being faithful to one's partner (Du Rocher Schudlich et al., 2014). It occurs when a person has sexual relationship with someone else other than his/her marriage partner. Infidelity may be caused by the enthusiasm about the sexual freedom upon marriage where one or both partners get disappointed when they discover that sex within marriage is not as consistently exciting or pleasurable as they had hoped or expected (Miller et al., 2006).

Environmental stimulation, social pressure, distance between couples may also result to infidelity, as spouses get tempted to engage in sexual relations outside marriage. Infidelity related problems create anger, resentment, interpersonal tension, impatience and communication breakdown. Donovan and Emmers-Sommer (2012) found that infidelity affects the faithful partner because it creates jealousy, bitterness and all kinds of suspicion in marriage resulting to mistrust and lack of confidence between spouses. According to Leeker and Carlozzi (2012), infidelity leads to the neglect of the family and use of money on another sex partner instead. The children also suffer the consequences by not being fed, clothed, lack of proper shelter and dropping out of school (Levy & Kelly, 2010). Some studies have cited money as one of the most common sources of couple's disagreements and eventual divorce (Leeker & Carlozzi, 2012).

Money issues are central to couple relationships, from the earliest years of partnerships and even through the process of divorce (Leeker & Carlozzi, 2012). According to Barry and Williams (2009), money tensions predict marital distress and dissolution. He further opines that money and lack of it is the source of conflict in marriage because money is essential not only for obtaining necessities of life but also for obtaining luxurious items. Husbands who spend money impulsively and extravagant wives who spend excessively on cosmetics and clothes at the expense of the family budget will lead their families into poverty (Conger et al., 2009). Domestic violence in Kenya tends to increase in the months when children are going or joining Schools, Middle Colleges and Universities due to the high cost of fees which leave couples with less to spend.

Depending on the level of interference that a husband allows, it is noted that mother in-laws have the potential to make or break marriages (Maina, 2010). The influence of in-laws warrant consideration and engage in more frequent contact with the couples. If the in-laws are more knowledgeable of their future child-in-law, their relationship is likely to be harmonious, with more positive expectations. This could enhance family ties resulting to reduced marital conflicts. Less knowledgeable and absent in-laws might cast favors and discrimination among the conflicting couples, hence reducing student performance due to increased conflicts and lack of supportive grandparents.

Marital Conflicts and its Effects on Children Development

Marital conflict has deleterious effects on mental, physical, and family health. Many studies have found evidence that negative marital functioning has significance for physical health and mental well-being (Grych & Fincham, 2001). Marital conflict has been linked to the onset of depressive symptoms, anxiety disorders, eating disorders, episodic drinking, binge drinking, out-of-home drinking, and male alcoholism. Although married individuals are healthier on average than the unmarried, marital conflict is associated with poorer health and with specific illnesses such as cancer, cardiac disease, and chronic pain perhaps because hostile behaviors during conflict are related to alterations in immunological, endocrine and cardiovascular functioning (Grych & Fincham, 2001).

Marital conflict creates frustrating and lasting psychological torture in children (Havighurst et al., 2009). According to Steinberg (2006), marital conflict is a critical aspect of family functioning that often outweighs the influence of family structure on the

child's development. In addition, it shows that children's health and social development is most effectively promoted by love and at least some moderate parental control (Macharia and Ngwiri, 2004; Lung and Daro, 2006; Lowry and Rankin, 2007; Jaffe et al., 2010). According to Gitaari (2012), children who have lived for years in situations of neglect or abuse suffer severe stress. Macharia and Ngwiri (2004) stated that students who often receive long-term support from parents or other adults at home as well as strong support from teachers and others at school perform better in their academic. Involving parents in learning activities with their children at home is one kind of parental involvement that many educators believe is an important aspect of the child's learning. If the family is undergoing conflict, parents will not have time for their children.

As Cherlin (2014) observes, when marital conflict arises, it threatens that security of not only the people involved in the conflict but the entire family. Whether the disharmony initiates from within the family unit or from external sources, individual family members and the family as a whole are affected in one way or another. Children raised in intact married families are physically and emotionally healthier, are less likely to use drugs or alcohol and to commit offending behaviors and more likely to attend college (Korotayev, 2008). In addition, they are less likely to become pregnant/impregnate someone as a teenager. In a family suffering from marital conflict, the children do not receive gender specific support from having a mother and a father. Research shows that particular roles of mothers and fathers, as well as complex biologically rooted interactions are important for the development of boys and girls (Tanya, 2005).

Children are affected negatively when parents are involved in family conflicts. The more destructive the conflict behavior is, the more negative its effects on the child's condition and behavior (Emery and O'Leary, 2010). According to Donovan and Emmers-Sommer (2012), children who watched videos of conflicts were witnesses of real conflicts afterwards. Their study showed that the experience of destructive conflict behavior provokes more negative reactions than exposure to constructive conflict behavior. Cummings et al. (2011) observed that if the conflict is about the child itself or the marriage, the child's behavior is more aggressive. Children who are exposed to these marital conflicts may have their character both in school and outside adversely affected. The impact of the aggressive misconduct towards his or her academic performance too would be affected negatively (Greenstein, 2012). Levin (2010) concluded that the kind of relationship between parents affects their children's academic performance either negatively or positively.

Hall (2010) pointed out that older children are more prone to marital conflict and divorce than younger ones. Older children who witness their parents' conflicts may suffer deep disillusionment that bitters their view of marriage and other institutions such as school (Scale & Roehlkepartain, 2008). According to Schultz (2006), some adolescents will be affected to the extreme when they experience the parents' divorce and may turn to use of drugs, fall down to sexual promiscuity and run away from home while others become gangsters. This may result to dismal performance in school and college. Marital conflicts also pose social consequences to the children because the behavior of children from families which are not intact experience high rate of delinquency and anti-social behaviors than those children from intact families (Kamp et al., 2008). Studies indicate a

close correlation between increase in divorce and increase in juvenile delinquency (Ni Bhrolchain, 2010). Marital conflict has been cited as one of the leading factors that contribute to child depression in the world (Amato & DeBoer, 2011).

Bowman (2012) showed that women who reported inter parental violence were less likely to report having a regular primary pediatric provider for their child. Marital conflicts were examined as a predictor of the quantity and quality of sleep in a sample of 8 – 9 years old (Bowman, 2012). Marital conflict may be more disruptive to sleep in children if they perceive it as destructive or if they are very anxious or fearful about their own safety. Girls slept longer and had less activity during the night when compared with boys. Youths from unstable families have been found to be more delinquent in the society they live in while children from single parents have been reported to be more inclined to criminal offenses (Bowman, 2012). According to Bradbury et al. (2010), there is evidence to suggest that rates of crimes amongst young people and alcoholism amongst the middle-aged are higher among those people from unstable families.

Relationship between Marital Conflicts and Children Education

Home has been identified as an overwhelming factor affecting students' performance academically. Academic performance is an active demonstration that assess students learning, such as; presentation, musical and dramatic performance. Exposure to marital conflict might influence student directly or indirectly through its effect on their academics. It would appear, then, that broken homes may present a very serious danger to the emotional, personality, and mental adjustment of the young adolescent. This impinges on students' academic achievement. Cumming and Davies (2014) explained that couples from conflict free family tend to contribute immensely to the society through their high

level of productivity within and in their places of work. The connection between parental conflict and academic achievement operated in at least two ways; mediated by family support and directly. High levels of parental conflict and family discord may relate to lower motivation by parents being involved with their adolescents in schools related activities.

According to Levine (2010), family factors greatly impact achievement levels in academics. These researchers suggested that achievement in school is formed through marital experience in childhood. It is commonly believed that divorce has a negative impact on children's cognitive performance. Deficits of cognitive performance have been found when children in divorced or father- absent families are compared with children from intact families particularly in the area of quantitative performance. For given observable parental characteristics, children with divorced or separated parents tend to perform less well at school than children living with their two parents.

According to Bulduc, Caron, & Logue (2012), a child from a divorce family may face more difficulty than those in intact families, due to having to cope with a familial, emotional, or residential change. Bulduc, Caron, & Logue (2012) specifically examined students that had experienced parental divorce while attending college. Of the 17 interviewed, only one-fourth reported their grades suffering due to the divorce. Similar to the work of Bulduc, Caron, & Logue (2012), Mulholland, Watt, Philpott, & Sarlin (2011), found that school performance of both girls and boys from divorced families tend to be inferior to that of children from non-divorced families. In contrast to these findings, Ross & Wynne (2010) found no clear difference between participants that had

experienced divorce and those from intact families. For those having experienced parental divorce, academic standing is a clear variable to measure for college students.

Kamau (2013) investigated the relationship between family background and academic performance of secondary school students in Siakago Division, Mbeere North District, Kenya using a descriptive research design with a target population of 1,081 students in Siakago Division and 1,081 parents. The study used a sample of 338 students and parents which were selected by use of a proportionate stratified random sampling method. The study revealed that parental marital status, family size, parent's education level and family financial status had a positive relationship on academic performance of students. However, the findings showed that while the marital status of the parents was not significant in explaining the academic performance of students, the type of family, either cohesive or conflictive had an effect in academic performance. The findings also showed that only 7% of students' academic performance would be explained by the parents' education level.

Possible Strategies for Marital Success

Studies that resulted in the development of Gottman's Sound Relationship House Theory pointed out that the ratio of positive behaviors have a stronger influence on couples' satisfaction and marital success than does the absolute frequency of either positive or negative behaviors (Vangelisti, 2012). Drawing from the research on couple relationships, Gottman proposed four keys to a successful relationship. The first one is for couples to learn to calm down. He was of the view that this will cut down on the negative responses that make further communication difficult. He then recommended for the calm couple to learn to speak and listen non-defensively, for instance by

reintroducing praise and admiration into the relationship. He goes ahead to advise that couples should validate their partner by acknowledging the partner's point of view, accepting appropriate responsibility and apologizing when clearly on the wrong. The last point of Gottman is practicing the three points above, until it becomes second to nature (Gottman & Levenson, 1992).

On the other hand, Oranthikal and Vabsteenwegen (2006) reviewed Gottman's ideas and emphasized that couples need to forgive one another. They were of the view that couples who forgive one another have more adaptive marital functioning. This is to say that the more couples forgive one another, the more they make more positive marital assumptions, feel more equal balance of power in their marriage, and have more well-adjusted relation. In addition, Birch and Oginde (2008) see forgiveness in two different points of view. One, when apology is required from one partner and thereafter commitment to good behavior from that point. Secondly, when the two parties have recognized a degree of responsibility for a conflict, agree to forgive each other, and become transparent before God, the fellowship is restored and keeps developing (Birch & Oginde, 2008). As a result of the spouse's good relationship, the whole family is happy, hence better academic performance of the children.

Theoretical Review

Theory helps make sense of complex situations by directing attention to key issues as well as guiding methods of analysis. The study relating to marital conflict and academic performance of students cannot be exhausted without considering the supporting theories and models. Numerous theories have been proposed regarding the family, marital conflict, child development and behavior (Boss, Doherty, LaRossa,

Schumm, & Steinmetz, 2008). This study is anchored on the following theories: Erickson's (1950) theory, Pavlov's (1927) Behavioural Theory and Maslow's (1970), Hierarchy of Needs Theory.

Erickson's Theory

Erikson (1968) proposed a psychoanalytic theory of psychosocial development comprising eight stages from infancy to adulthood. Erikson's ideas were greatly influenced by Freud (1923) going along with Freud's theory regarding the structure and topography of personality. Erickson's theory is divided into various stages based on a child's age. The first stage is trust versus mistrust. Some of the many problems due to marital conflict experienced in this stage are insecurity and hostility (Crain, 2011). The second stage is autonomy versus shame/doubt. When pupils' needs at this level are not met, they are likely to shift into great shame and doubt in themselves. The third stage, which is between 2-6 years, is initiative versus guilt. Here the pupils create their social world.

Failure to meet their demands leads to development of an inner sense of guilt hampering the normal social development process which may result into build-up anxiety. The fourth stage is industry versus inferiority. This is between 6-12 years. During these years, pupils have tasks of facing and meeting the family, peers and school expectations. Problems at this stage include feelings of inadequacy, poor self-image, fear of school, lack of concentration, poor memory, excessive competition, expressing anger and sexual disadvantages (Bee & Boyd, 2009).

In this study, pupils in homes with marital conflict lack trust in their parents because they are unable to provide basic needs for them. They will also be very ashamed

of their background or family set-up because of the marital problems in those families. Some of the pupils feel guilty and blame themselves for their parent's fighting. Such feelings of guilt and low self-esteem lead to inferiority complex, which in turn leads to poor academic performance and poor interpersonal relationship with peers (Macnow, 2014).

Behavioural Theory

Behavioural theory was proposed by Pavlov in 1900 and holds the view that the person is the product of his/her environment whereas the radical behaviorists such as Skinner ruled out the possibility of self-determination and freedom (Pavlov, 1927). It outlines that behaviorism equates learning with behaviors that can be observed and measured. Reinforcement in learning is key to successful transfer through behavioristic learning; there is need for strong emphasis on the stimulus and the response and their relationship.

According to the theory, the primary goal of behaviorism is to form a relationship between a stimulus and a response. Behaviour modification aims to increase a person's skills so that the number of the response options is increased by overcoming disturbing behaviours that restrict choices. Bandura (1977) supports the belief that students learn their behaviour from others with whom they interact with through observation or modeling. In addition, the mind, behaviour and the environment all play an important role in the learning process (LeClaire & Rushin, 2010).

Students normally model parents, peers, siblings, authority figures, teachers and others whom they admire and trust (Staddon, 2014). In this study, the environment in which students grow up in shape their future. Those who grow up in an environment full

of marital conflicts between their parents will exhibit different behaviours as compared to those who have grown up in a peaceful environment. Each student that observes or witnesses marital conflict is bound to adopt coping mechanisms which affect their academic performance and interpersonal relationships (Baum, 2005).

Abraham Maslow's Theory

Abraham Maslow's theory on hierarchy of needs focuses on self-actualization of a person (Maslow, 1970). Some characteristics of a self-actualized person include tolerance, welcoming uncertainty, acceptance of self and others, creativity, need for privacy, autonomy, genuine caring for others, sense of humor and directedness. Maslow divided human needs into five categories. The most basic category is the physiological needs, which include food, shelter, clothing and education. When students lack these basic needs due to marital conflicts, they cannot grow well balanced, and their concentration is negatively affected. After the basic needs, a person yearns for safety needs. Students who witness their parents fighting all the time do not feel safe in that home. There is the fear that the parents might separate or even hurt them. Maslow also discussed the belonging needs. This refers to the need to be accepted and be able to affiliate with others. If students are communicating well with parents, they will feel accepted.

In most cases, parents who are fighting do not have time to make the students feel needed. Students are bound to think that they are the cause of their parents' fights, which makes them feel unloved (Rennie, 2008). Esteem needs come forth on the hierarchy. This need makes one gain approval from others. When a couple is fighting, they cannot gain approval from the students as well as other society members. The highest need on

the hierarchy is self-actualization. This need makes one feel self-fulfilled, hence able to realize their own potential. If all other needs are not fulfilled, one cannot reach the stage of self-actualization. It all starts at the physiological needs which can only be satisfactorily met in a loving family environment with minimal conflicts (Hoffman, 2009).

Conceptual Framework

A conceptual framework is a collection of concepts or models from literature, which inform a research study. It relates a study to existing ideas or principles. Due to experiencing these conflicts, children's academic performance and interpersonal relationships may be affected negatively. If there is no intervention in form of psychological counseling or marriage and family therapy, students may grow up to become mentally disturbed. As a result, children growing up in such families are likely to use modeling effect to repeat the same in their own families in future. A disturbed and unstable individual may eventually mean an unstable society, which is a very unworthy state to think of. The model below shows some of the conflicts that may exist in families and which if students are exposed to are likely to have poor academic performance in school. In the figure below, marriage and family therapy is presented as the intervening variable.

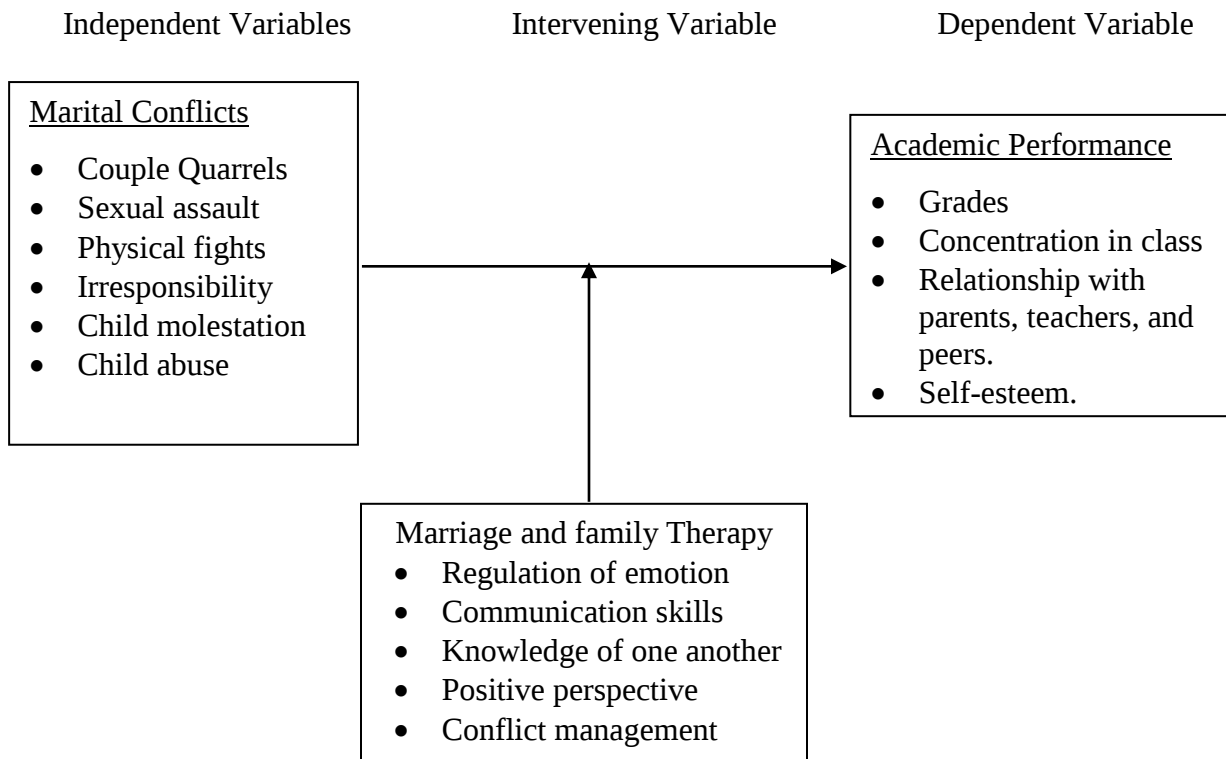


Figure 2.1: Conceptual Framework

Source: Author (2017)

Summary

This chapter concentrated on review of existing literature on the concept of marital conflicts and their effect on academic performance followed by detailed theoretical review and finally the conceptual framework. The following is chapter three which discusses the research methodology that was used in conducting this study. It set out various stages and phases that were followed in completing the study. It involved a blueprint for the data collection, measurement and analysis of data.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Introduction

This chapter presents the research methodology. It described the procedural plan that was used by the researcher to validly, objectively, economically and accurately answer the research questions. It included the research design, an explanation on the target population, sampling design, description of research instruments, description of data collection procedures and a description of data analysis procedures.

Research Design

Research design refers to the plan and structure of investigation intended to answer the research question (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003). This study adopted a descriptive research design to investigate the effects of marital conflict on academic performance of students in public and private day secondary schools in Kiambu Sub-County. Orodho (2009) states that, survey study gathers data at a particular point in time with the intention of describing the nature of the existing conditions. Descriptive research design was used when collecting information about people's attitudes, opinions, habits or a variety of education or social issues.

Target Population

Target population refers to all the items or people under consideration in any field of enquiry that constitute a targeted population (Orodho, 2009). There was a total of 22 secondary schools in Kiambu Sub- County. The target population comprised of 720 Form Three students in 4 public and 2 private mixed day secondary schools in Kiambu sub-county (Ministry of Education, Science and Technology- MoEST, 2015). This was because students

from these public schools and private mixed day schools usually go home after school, and are likely to understand the nature and extent of marital conflicts in their homes.

Sampling Design

The researcher selected a sample of 72 respondents from the 4 public and 2 private mixed day secondary schools in Kiambu sub-county through purposive sampling. This sample was appropriate because it represented 10% of the target population as recommended by Mugenda and Mugenda (2003). A simple random sample of students was picked from the respective schools.

Types of Data

The study relied on primary and secondary data. Primary data refers to what is collected directly by the researcher for the purpose of the study while secondary data refers to the data that was obtained from published information on the effects of marital conflicts on academic performance of students in Kiambu Sub-County (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003). The primary data was collected by use of research questionnaires. Research questionnaires having both structured and unstructured questions were designed and administered. They were administered to the respondents and collected after some time during the day to give respondents time to fill them in. Questionnaires enabled the researcher to get vital data directly from the respondents while secondary data sheet enhanced collection of published data on the issue sought.

Data Collection Methods

The primary data was collected using a questionnaire of closed and open-ended questions formulated in line with the objectives of the study. The closed and open-ended questions facilitated the collection of information to aid in analyzing the data. The

questions were also based on a 5-point Likert scale. The researcher personally delivered the questionnaires to the respondents, and then collected them later through the drop and pick later method. This ensured the capturing of all the issues required and ensured high response rates. Secondary data was obtained from both internal and external documentation through document analysis technique in the schools' policy and/ strategy documentations as well as various published sources like the internet.

The researcher sought written permission to carry out the proposed research from the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology. A research permit from National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI) and authority from the County Director of Education (CDE) were sought in order to carry out research in Kiambu Sub-County. The researcher also sought permission from the principals of the sampled schools, after which the schools were visited for the administration of the questionnaires. Careful instructions were given to the respondents on how to fill in the questionnaire. The researcher ensured confidentiality of the information in the questionnaires.

Instrument Pre-Testing

To achieve content validity, questionnaires mainly consisted of questions on the variables. Content validity was ensured by consistency in administering the questionnaires. A measure of reliability and validity was guaranteed by discussion of the instrument with experts and research supervisor as well as ensuring high precision and minimal errors in the data entry through training of the research assistants.

To further strengthen the reliability and validity measures, a pilot study was conducted in order to ascertain and detect any ambiguities, questions that cannot be easily

understood or are poorly constructed as well as those that are irrelevant. A pilot study was conducted in Ruiru sub-county where the questionnaire was administered to 5 Form 3 students in one public secondary school. Thereafter, the feedback was obtained through debriefing them individually and comparing the results. The results of the pilot study were analyzed using Cronbach alphas with a set lower limit of acceptability of 0.7. From the responses, comments and results of the analysis, the entire questionnaire was refined and improved to take care of the observed shortcomings.

Data Analysis

Mugenda and Mugenda (2003) state that data obtained from the field in raw form is difficult to interpret. The data must be cleaned, coded, keypunched into a computer and analyzed. From the results, one is able to make sense of the data. The researcher went through the process of data editing and cleaning to make sure that all the questions on the questionnaires are answered and the answers are properly recorded. The researcher checked for accuracy of the answers and uniformity in the interpretation of questions. The data was then coded to simplify its' entry.

The collected data was both qualitative and quantitative. Qualitative data was analyzed by establishing relationships between variables. The data was organized into themes and according to research questions and objectives. Quantitative data was analyzed using descriptive statistics. Data was tabulated and presented descriptively using frequency tables, graphs, percentages and charts. The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) programme was used to organize the data.

Ethical Considerations

Prior to commencing the field data collection exercise, the researcher sought approval through a letter of recognition from Pan Africa Christian University, and subsequently obtained a research permit from the relevant authorities in Kiambu Sub-County. The authorities in Kiambu Sub-County were informed about the study. Due to sensitivity of some information collected, the researcher held a moral obligation to treat the information with utmost propriety. Since the respondents approached were likely to be reluctant to disclose some information, the researcher reassured them of confidentiality of the information given. The research assistants explained to the respondents the scope and purpose of the study and further reassured them of confidentiality.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Introduction

This chapter presents the analysis and discussion of findings. The chapter first presents a descriptive analysis of respondents' demographic profile. The second section presents results on the areas of conflicts among married couples in Kiambu sub-county. The third section analyzes the effect of marital conflicts on the academic performance of students in public and private secondary schools in Kiambu sub-county whereas the last section presents the analysis of possible solutions to the problems identified.

Response Rate

A total of 60 questionnaires were administered. The response rate is presented in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1: Response Rate

Response	Frequency	Percentage
No Response	14	19.4
Response	58	80.6
Total	72	100.0

Table 4.1 shows that 58 responses were obtained while 2 questionnaires were not responded to. This translated into 80.6% response rate. This was considered high as asserted by Kerlinger (2006) that a return rate of above 60% is considered high enough for a study. Thus, the response rate was adequate for analysis.

Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents

The study sought to establish distribution of the respondents by gender, number of parents respondent lived with, presence of parents or guardians at home, relationship

of the respondents with their mothers/female guardians, relationship with their fathers or male guardians and communication with their parents or guardian.

Distribution of the Respondents by Gender

Data on gender of the respondents was sought since male and female respondents perceive issues differently. Figure 4.1 presents the results.

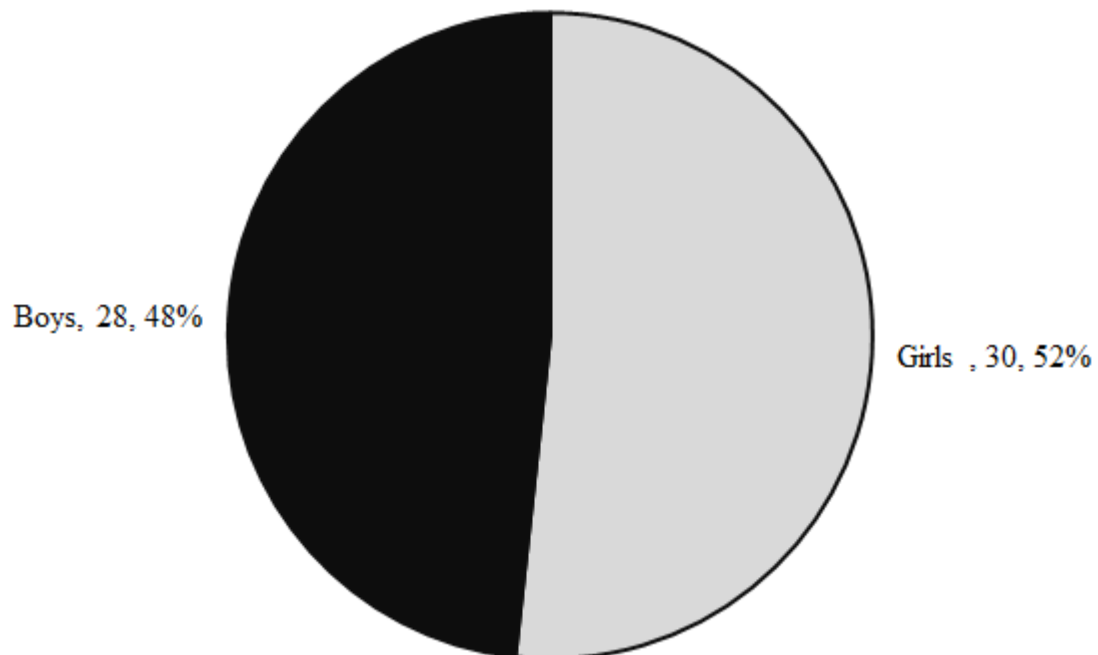


Figure 4.1: Gender of the Respondents

According to Figure 4.1, 52% of the respondents were girls while 48% of the respondents were boys drawn from the secondary schools in Kiambu Sub-County. The results suggest each gender was adequately represented in the study.

Parents Living with the Respondents

The respondents were required to indicate the parents they were living with at their homes. This was to establish the compactness of the nuclear families of the sample studied. Table 4.2 present the findings.

Table 4.2: Number of Parents Living with the Respondents

Number of Parents	Frequency	Percentage
One	14	24.1
Both	38	65.5
None	6	10.3
Total	58	100.0

According to Table 4.2, 65.5% of the respondents indicated that they lived with both of their parents. In comparison, 24.1% of them indicated that they lived with only one of their parents, while 10.3% of the respondents do not live with any of their parents. These results imply that majority of the respondents lived with both parents.

Attitude towards Home

The study further sought to establish whether the respondents looked forward to going home after school or being in school all the time. Figure 4.2 presents the findings.

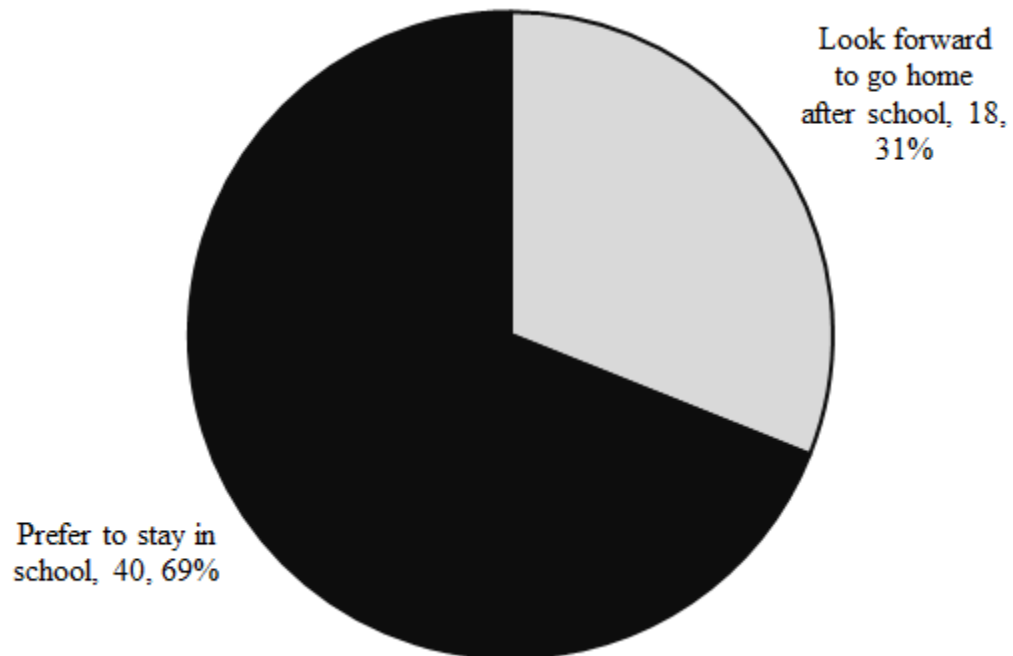


Figure 4.2 Distribution of Respondents in the Various Types of Schools

As per Figure 4.2, 69% of the respondents indicated that they look forward to being in school all the time. However, 31.0% of the respondents looked forward to going home after school. The results suggest that more students preferred to remain in school and few looked forward to going home after school. This implies that respondents had a negative attitude towards home and this could be caused by an unfriendly home environment which may be as a result of marital conflict of the parents. This is in line with Schultz (2006) who asserted that some adolescents can be affected to the extreme when they experience an unconducive home environment as a result of marital conflict that they no longer look forward to going home.

Presence of Parents or Guardians at Home

The study further sought to establish how often the parents or guardians are found at home. The results are as depicted in Table 4.3.

Table 4.3: Frequency of Parents' Presence at Home

Availability	Frequency	Percentage
Always	44	75.9
Frequently	10	17.2
Rarely	4	6.9
Total	58	100.0

Table 4.3 reveals that 75.9% of the respondents said their parents were always found at home, 17.2% indicated that their parents were frequently at home, while 6.9% of the respondents said their parents are rarely available at home. The results suggest that most of the respondents' parents were always found at home, which means that most parents were present at home.

Rating the Relationship between the Respondents and their Parents

Respondents were asked to rate their relationship with their parents/guardian.

Figure 4.3 compares the distribution of respondents' rating by gender of parent/guardian.

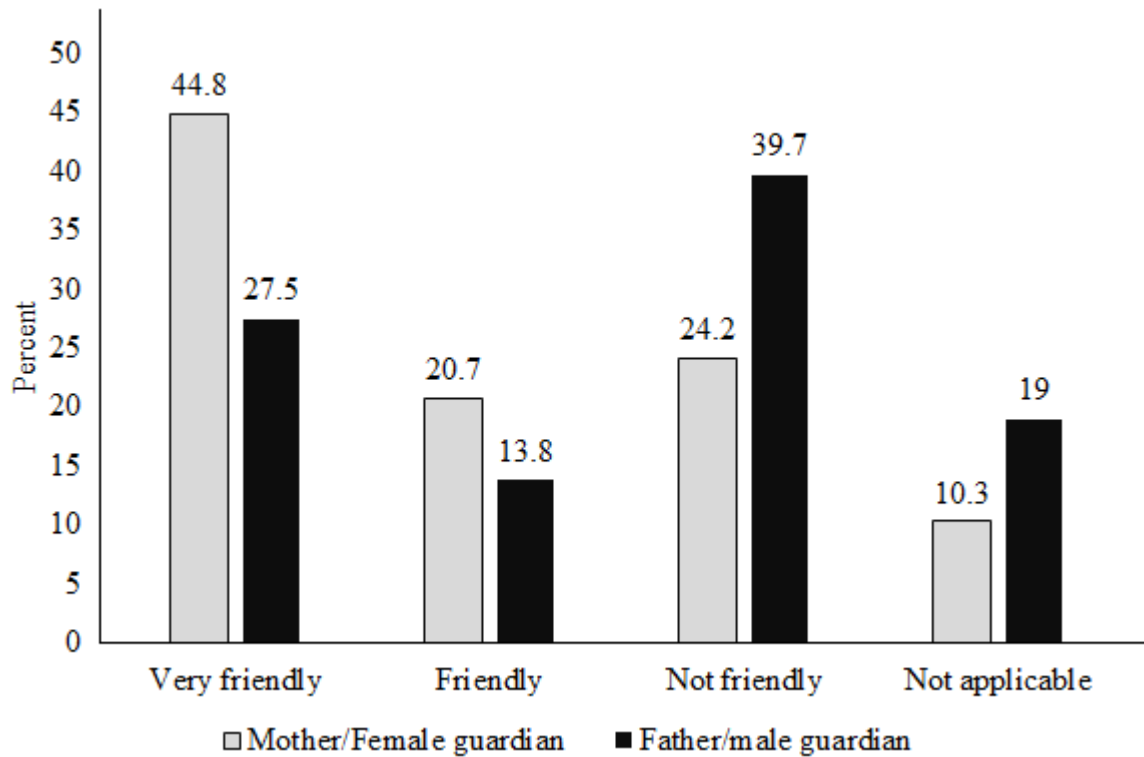


Figure 4.3: Respondents' rating of their Relationship with Parent/Guardian

According to Figure 4.3, 44.8% of the respondents rated the relationship with their mothers/female guardians as very friendly compared to 27.5% who rated the relationship they had with their father/male guardian as very friendly. The figure also shows that a higher proportion (20.7%) of the respondents rated the relationship with their mother/female guardian as friendly compared to 13.8% of the respondents who rated their relationship with the father/male guardian as friendly. On the other hand, 39.7% of the respondents rated the relationship with their father/male guardian as not friendly compared to 24.2% of the respondents who observed that the relationship they

had with their mother/female guardian was not friendly. On aggregate, the results suggest that majority of the respondents had a friendly relationship with their mother/female parents more than their father/male guardian. This is consistent with past research by Maller, Charles, Neupert and Almeida (2010) whose findings revealed that children have a closer and more cordial relationship with their mothers than their fathers due to a stronger maternal bond established during caregiving and nurturing role of mothers.

Rating the Communication between the Respondents and Parents or Guardian

The study sought to establish how respondents rated the communication they had with their parents/guardians. Table 4.4 shows the findings.

Table 4.4: Respondents' Rating of Communication with Parents/Guardians

Rating	Frequency	Percentage
Very good	11	19.0
Good	14	24.1
Adequate	21	36.2
Inadequate	12	20.7
Total	58	100.0

The results in Table 4.4 reveal that 36.2% of the respondents rated the level of communication they had with their parents/guardians as adequate, 24.1% indicated that their communication was good and a further 19.0% said that communication with their parents/ guardians was very good. However, some 20.7% of the respondents rated the level of communication with their parents as inadequate. The results suggest that respondents had a good communication with their parents/guardians.

Areas of Conflict among Married Couples in Kiambu Sub-County

This section analyzes the first objective which sought to establish the areas of conflict among married couples in Kiambu Sub-County.

Frequency of Disagreement between Respondent's Parents

The study sought to establish the frequency of disagreements between respondent's parents. Figure 4.4 presents the results.

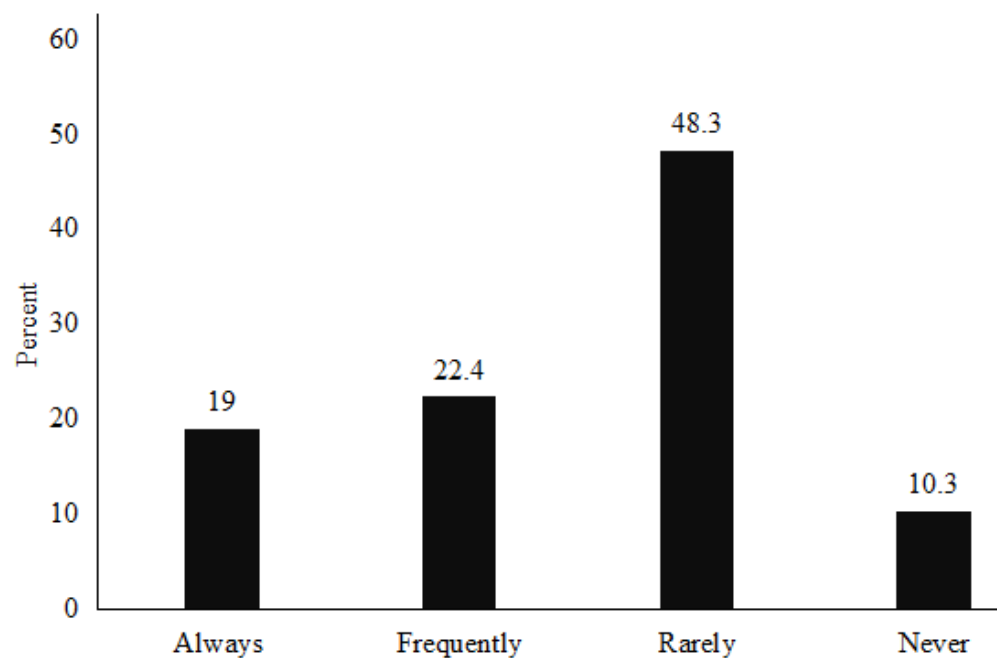


Figure 4.4: Respondent's rating of frequency of disagreements between their parents

Figure 4.4 shows that 48.3% of the respondents said their parents rarely disagreed with each other and a further 10.3% said their parents never disagreed. However, 22.4% of the respondents said their parents frequently disagreed and 19% of the respondents said their parents always disagreed. The results indicate that majority (58.3%) of the respondents said their parents rarely or never disagreed. It can thus be inferred from the finding that most parents of the children rarely if ever disagreed. However, the other

41.7% of the respondents said that their parents frequently disagreed or always disagreed suggests that there was a significant proportion of respondents hailing from families where marital conflict was prevalent. This finding supports the notion by Odhiambo and Maito (2013) that marital conflict was on the increase in Kenya.

Respondent's experience of abuse by parents

Respondents were asked whether they had ever been abused/molested by their parents. Table 4.5 displays the findings.

Table 4.5: Experience of abuse by parents

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	14	24.1
No	44	75.9
Total	58	100.0

As per Table 4.5, 75.9% of the respondents indicated that they had never been molested by their parents but some 24.1% of the respondents were affirmative that they had been molested by their parents. The results suggest that most of the respondents had not experienced abuse under the care of their parents. This may be because marital conflict between parents may not have reached a level that spills over to extent of parents molesting their own children. The finding also implies that incidences of marital conflict between parents do not necessarily have to involve abuse of children.

Incidences of Fights between Parents

The study sought to establish whether respondents' parents fought between themselves. The results are presented in Figure 4.6.

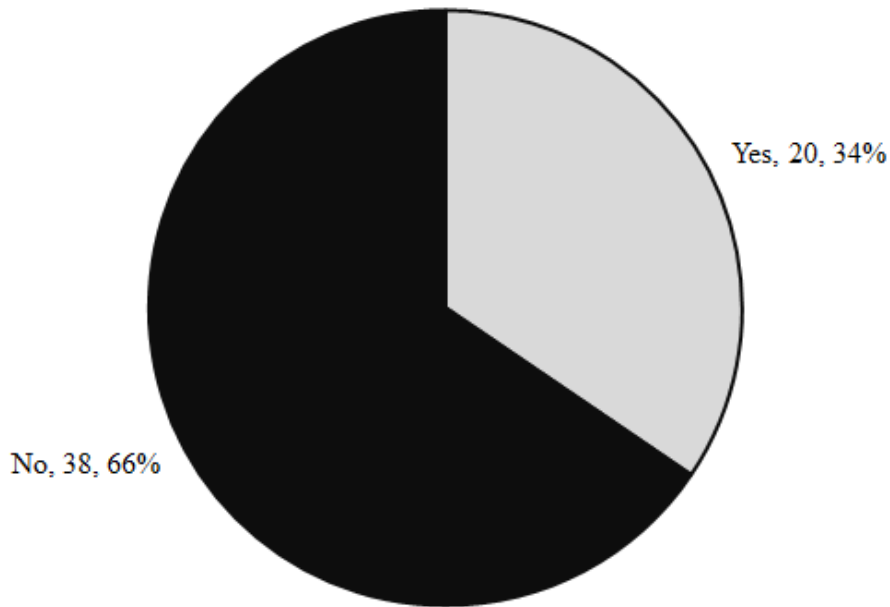


Figure 4.5 Whether the Parents/Guardians Fight Between Themselves

Figure 4.5 shows that 66% of the respondents indicated that their parents did not fight with each other while 34% of the respondents said their parents fought with each other. Therefore, majority of the respondents reported no incidences of fights between their parents. This means that most of the respondents' families were not characterized by marital fights.

Effect of Fights between Parents on Communication

Out of the 20 respondents who said their parents fought with each other, the study sought to establish how they rated their communication with their parents/guardians after the incidence of fighting. The findings are presented in Table 4.6.

Table 4.6: Respondents' Communication with Parent(s)/Guardian after Quarrel

Rating	Frequency	Percentage
Very good	0	.0
Good	0	.0
Adequate	0	.0
Inadequate	20	100.0
Total	58	100.0

Table 4.6 shows that 100% of the respondents said the communication between them and their parents was inadequate after their parents' fight. The finding suggests that in families where parents fought each other, the conflict between the parents affected communication with the children.

Causes of Conflict between Parents

The respondents were provided with several statements on the various areas where parents disagree, causing marital conflicts in the families. Table 4.7 presents the results.

Table 4.7: Agreement with Various Reasons for Disagreements among Parents

Statements Regarding Causes of Conflicts	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Mean (5-point scale)	Std. Dev.
My parents disagree and conflict due to financial dissatisfaction	0%	2.0%	39.6%	54.2%	4.2%	3.60	0.61
My parents have had conflicts due to struggle for power and control in the family	0%	3.2%	40.6%	51.0%	5.2%	3.58	0.64
Infidelity or unfaithfulness among parents stirs conflict between them	0%	3.0%	49%	43.8%	4.2%	3.49	0.63
Showing disapproval of action openly in front of people around has led to marital conflicts	0%	8%	30.1%	40.7%	21.2%	3.75	0.88
My parents have had quarrels as a results of sexual dissatisfaction	0%	17.6%	26.9%	47.2%	8.3%	3.46	0.88
Choice of particular children based on gender result to family side envy	0%	2.0%	39.6%	54.2%	4.2%	3.60	0.61

As per the results in Table 4.7, 54.2% and 4.2% of the respondent agreed and strongly agreed, respectively, that their parents had conflict due to financial dissatisfaction, 39.6% of the respondents were neutral and 2.1% of the respondents disagreed. On a 5-point scale from strongly disagree to strongly agree, a high mean score was obtained ($M=3.60$, $SD= 0.61$) which implies that there was a general agreement with the statement that parents disagreed and conflict due to financial dissatisfaction. The finding agrees with a study by Emery and Laumann-Billings (2008) which found that incidences of parents fighting over financial issues was a major cause of marital conflict. This may be because of lack of financial accountability or financial stress due to low income.

Table 4.7 shows that 51.0% and 5.2% of the respondents agreed and strongly agreed, respectively, that their parents had conflicts due to struggle for power and control in the family, 40.6% of the respondents were neutral while 3.1% of the respondents disagreed. A high mean score was obtained on a scale of 1 to 5 ($M=3.58$, $SD=0.64$) which implies that most of the respondents agreed that conflict between their parents was due to struggle for power and control of the family. This finding agrees with Razavi and Jenichen (2010) who observed that power struggle is one of the causes of marital conflicts. This may be due to role conflict that may arise from differences in cultural expectations and gender roles.

Results in Table 4.7 further reveal that 43.8% and 4.2% of the respondents agreed and strongly agreed, respectively, that infidelity or unfaithfulness among parents stirs conflict between them. However, 49% of the respondents were neutral whereas 3% of the respondents disagreed. An average mean score was obtained on a 5-point scale ($M=3.49$,

SD=0.63) which suggests that respondents were not sure whether infidelity or unfaithfulness contributed to conflict between their parents. This finding contradicts the view of Du Rocher Schudlich et al. (2014) who assert that infidelity is a common problem experienced by married partners. This may be explained by the fact that the children may not have intimate knowledge of the marital issues related to spousal unfaithfulness since such matters are often undertaken in secret and discussed privately.

The findings in Table 4.7 shows that 40.7% of the respondents agreed and 21.2% strongly agreed, respectively, that showing disapproval of action openly in front of people around led to conflict between their parents. However, 30.1% of the respondents were neutral while 8% of the respondents disagreed. On a scale of 1 to 5, a high mean score was obtained ($M=3.75$, $SD=0.88$) suggesting that respondents were of the view that show of public disapproval contributed to conflict between their parents. The finding highlights the issue of disrespect for one another as one of the predictors of marital conflict and dissatisfaction in line with Gottman's (2004) theory.

Results in Table 4.7 further shows that 47.2% and 8.3% of the respondents agreed and strongly agreed, respectively, that their parents had had quarrels as a result of sexual dissatisfaction. However, 26.9% of the respondents were neutral whereas 17.6% of the respondents disagreed. The finding suggests that while sexual dissatisfaction may cause marital conflict as implied by Razavi and Jenichen (2010). However, it is also noteworthy that the respondents in this study, being still children, may not be exposed to intimate knowledge about sexual life of their parents and thus may not have been competent to respond to the question from a point of information.

The findings in Table 4.7 reveals that 54.2% and 4.2% of the respondents agreed and strongly agreed, respectively, that choice of particular children based on gender resulted to family side envy. The table nonetheless also indicates that 39.6% of the respondents were neutral and 2.0% of the respondents disagreed. A high mean score was obtained on a 5-point scale ($M=3.60$, $SD=0.61$) which suggested that gender preference on children potentially contributed to family conflict. This finding is in line with past empirical research by Meunier, Roskam, Stievenart, Van De Moortele, Browne and Wade (2012) which linked gender favoritism to marital conflict and consequent child externalizing behaviors. The finding suggests that some parents practiced gender bias in parenting and this potentially contributed to marital conflict between the parents of the respondents.

Effects of Marital Conflicts on Academic Performance

The second objective of the study was to explain the effect of marital conflicts on the academic performance of students in public and private day secondary schools in Kiambu sub-County. This section presents the findings on various dimensions of school performance.

Parental Assistance with Homework

Respondents were asked whether their parents/guardians assisted them with doing their homework/schoolwork. Table 4.8 presents the findings.

Table 4.8 Parents/guardians assisting in doing homework/school work

Responses	Frequency	Percent
Always	0	0.0
Frequently	46	78
Rarely	6	10.9
Never	6	10.9
Total	58	100.0

Table 4.8 reveals that 78% of the respondents said their parents frequently assisted them in doing their homework/schoolwork. However, 10.9% of the respondents said their parents/guardians rarely assisted them and another 10.9% of the respondents said their parents never assisted them. This contradicts the perspective of Cumming and Davies (2014) who argue that high levels of parental conflict and family discord may relate to lower motivation by parents being involved with their adolescents in schools related activities. There are two possibilities that may explain this contradiction. First, high level of conflict may not be prevalent among the parents of respondents under review and since not all marital conflict are destructive; the parent's participation in their children's school activities may not be affected. The other possible reason may be because the parent's bond and love for their children and sense of responsibility that motivate them to be involved with the school activities of their children irrespective of the issues they are dealing with in their marriage.

Effect of Parents/Guardians Quarrelling/Fighting on School Performance

The study sought to establish the effect of quarrelling/fighting of parents on respondent's level of concentration in class. Table 4.9 displays the findings.

Table 4.9 Concentration in class if parents/guardians quarrel

Concentration in class if parents/guardians quarrel	Frequency	Percent
High	0	0.0
Average	24	41.4
Low	34	58.6
Total	58	100.0

Table 4.9 shows that 58.6% of the respondents said their concentration in class was low when parents/guardians quarrel and 41.4% of the respondents said they had an average concentration level in class when parents/guardians quarrel. The finding implies that most of the respondents had a low concentration as a result of quarrels between parents/guardians. This implies that respondents' level of concentration was affected by conflicts between parents. This finding is in line with the argument fronted by Hurlock (2011) that a marriage riddled with conflict may be associated with low achievement, because witnessing conflicts between parents heightens a level of stress on children and keep them from focusing on schoolwork.

Perceived Effect of Marital Conflicts on Academic Performance

Respondents' views were sought with respect to several dimensions of marital conflict and their effect on various aspects of academic performance such as academic grade, participation in school activities and concentration while in class. The results are presented in Table 4.10.

Table 4.10: Agreements with effects of Marital Conflicts on Academic Performance

Statements on Effects of Marital Conflicts	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Mean	Std. Dev.
If parents/ guardians are quarrelling/ fighting, children cannot perform well in school	0%	4.4%	16.8%	41.6%	37.2%	4.12	0.84
When my parents quarrel, I become withdrawn from school activities	0%	2.3%	44.2%	53.5%	0%	3.51	1.36
My academic grades are negatively affected by the marital conflicts among parents	0%	3.1%	45.8%	45.8%	5.2%	3.53	0.65
The parental quarrels affect my relationship with teachers in school hence my poor academic performance	0%	17.6%	26.9%	47.2%	8.3%	3.56	0.88
I feel drawn away from my peers due to family conflicts between my parents which distracts my performance in school	0%	2.1%	39.6%	54.2%	4.2%	3.60	0.61
The marital conflicts affect my self-esteem which negatively affects my academic performance	0%	8%	30.1%	40.7%	21.2%	3.75	0.88

Table 4.10 shows that 41.6% and 37.2% of the respondents agreed and strongly agreed, respectively, that children cannot perform well in school if parents/guardians are quarrelling/fighting. However, 16.8% of the respondents were neutral while 4.4% of the respondents disagreed. Therefore, majority (78.8%) of the respondents were of the view that children cannot perform well in school if parents/guardians are quarrelling/fighting. A high mean score was obtained on a 5-point scale ($M=4.12$, $SD=0.84$), implying that the quarrelling/fighting between parents potentially affected children's academic performance. This finding is in line with a previous study undertaken by Harold et al. (2007) which associated marital conflict with children's poor academic achievement.

The results in Table 4.10 reveal that 53.5% of the respondents agreed that they became withdrawn from school activities when their parents quarreled. However, 44.2% of the respondents were neutral and 2.3% of the respondents disagreed. The results suggest that most of the respondents became withdrawn from school activities as a high mean score ($M=3.51$, $SD=1.36$) was obtained. This is consistent with the observation by Cummings and Davies (2014) that marital relationship affects the children's adjustment directly through the emotional stress level leading to withdrawal from school activities which reflects on their school outcomes.

Further findings in Table 4.10 indicate that 45.8% and 5.2% of the respondents agreed and strongly agreed, respectively, that their academic grades were negatively affected by marital conflicts among parents. The table also shows that 45.8% of the respondents were neutral and 3.1% of the respondents disagreed. On aggregate, majority (51%) of the respondents agreed that their academic grades were affected by marital conflicts among parents ($M=3.53$, $SD=0.65$).

Table 4.10 also shows that 47.2% and 8.3% of the respondents agreed and strongly agreed, respectively, that the parental quarrels affected their relationship with teachers in school hence their poor academic performance. However, 26.9% of the respondents were neutral whereas 17.6% of the respondents disagreed. In total, 55.5% of the respondents agreed that quarrels between parents had an effect on the relationship they had with teachers which reflected on their poor academic performance ($M=3.56$, $SD=0.88$). This may be through externalizing behavior in line with studies such as previously undertaken by Macharia and Ngwiri (2004) which found that children raised in conflict riddled families have aggressive tendencies that may affect their relationship with teachers and peers.

As per Table 4.10, 54.2% and 4.2% of the respondents agreed and strongly agreed, respectively, that they felt drawn away from peers due to family conflicts between parents which affected their performance in school. However, there were 39.6% of the respondents who were neutral and 2.1% of the respondents who disagreed. Thus majority (58.4%) of the respondents felt drawn away from peers in school due to family conflicts. A high mean score was obtained on a 5-point scale ($M=3.60$, $SD=0.61$) which implies that marital conflicts potentially affected the relationship children had with their peers in school. This finding agrees with the viewpoint of Kamp et al. (2008) that marital conflict pose social consequences to the children because the behavior of children from families which are not intact experience emotional trauma that make them withdraw from social relations. The finding agrees with Erikson's (1968) psychoanalytic theory of psychosocial development which suggests that children from families with conflict often

experience feelings of inadequacy and poor self-image, with a tendency to withdraw from social activities.

Further, results in Table 4.10 reveal that 40.7% of the respondents agreed and another 21.2% strongly agreed that the marital conflicts between their parents affected their self-esteem which negatively affects my academic performance. However, 30.1% of the respondents were neutral whereas some 8% of the respondents disagreed. Thus, majority (61.9%) of the respondents held the view that marital conflicts between their parents negatively affected their self-esteem and reflected on their academic performance. A high mean score was obtained on a scale of 1 to 5 ($M=3.75$, $SD=0.88$), which implied that parental conflict had a negative effect on children's self-esteem and academic performance. This finding is in line with Siti et al. (2013) who asserted that marital conflicts cause children to question their self-worth. It also agrees with Macnow's (2014) view that children lose self-esteem which in turn leads to poor academic performance and poor interpersonal relationship with peers (Macnow, 2014). (Rennie, 2008). The finding conforms to Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory which places esteem needs forth on the hierarchy.

Possible Solutions to Marital Conflicts

In its third objective, the study sought to establish the possible solutions to the problems regarding marital conflicts and academic performance of secondary school students. Accordingly, the respondents were requested to indicate their levels of agreement with various statements regarding how to solve problems arising from marital conflicts. Table 4.11 presents the results.

Table 4.11: Solutions to Problems of Marital Conflicts and Academic Performance

Statements	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Mean	Std. Dev.
I can tell my close friends anything I feel if my parents/guardians are quarrelling/ fighting.	0%	12.5%	14.6%	25%	29.2%	3.53	1.49
If my parents/guardians are quarrelling/ fighting, I can talk to my teacher(s) about it.	2.3%	44.2%	0%	53.5%	0%	3.51	0.82
Learning to calm down can reduce distraction from class by family conflicts	0%	0%	49%	47.9%	3.1%	3.54	0.56
Learning to speak and listen non-defensively ensures that academics are not affected by marital conflicts	0%	2.1%	39.6%	54.2%	4.2%	3.60	0.61

Table 4.11 indicates that 25% and 29.2% of the respondents agreed and strongly agreed, respectively, that they could tell their close friends anything they felt if their parents/guardians were quarrelling/ fighting. However, 14.6% of the respondents were neutral whereas 12.3% of the respondents disagreed. On aggregate, 54.4% of the respondents agreed that they could talk to their close friends if parents/guardians were fighting/quarrelling. A high mean score ($M=3.53$, $SD= 1.49$) was obtained on a scale of 1 to 5, meaning that respondents were of the view that they could confide in their close friends if parents/guardians were fighting. The results further reveals that 53.5% of the

respondents agreed that if their parents/guardians were quarrelling/fighting, they could talk to their teachers about it. However, 44.2% and 2.3% of the respondents disagreed and strongly disagreed, respectively. A high mean score ($M=3.51$, $SD=0.82$) was obtained on a 5-point scale, which suggests that most of the respondents could confide in their teachers about marital conflict between their parents. This finding is in line with social support perspectives which encourage victims of marital conflict to find a trusted friend to talk to hence get emotional release through talking.

Table 4.11 also indicates that 47.9% and 3.1% of the respondents agreed and strongly agreed, respectively, that learning to calm down can reduce distraction from class by family conflicts. The table also shows that 49% of the respondents were neutral. A high mean score ($M=3.54$, $SD=0.56$) was obtained. This implies that respondents acknowledged that learning to calm down can reduce distraction from class by family conflicts. This is in line with Gottman's theory (Gottman & Levenson, 1992) which proposes learning to calm down as one of the ways of mitigating adverse effects of marital conflicts on children's academic performance.

The results in Table 4.11 also shows that 54.2% of the respondents agreed and a further 4.2% strongly agreed that learning to speak and listen non-defensively ensured that academics are not affected by marital conflicts. However, 39.6% of the respondents were neutral and 2.1% of the respondents disagreed. Therefore, majority (58.4%) of the respondents concurred that learning to speak and listen non-defensively ensured that academics are not affected by marital conflicts ($M=3.60$, $SD=0.61$). This finding is in line with literature which recommends that individuals learn to speak and listen non-defensively towards the path to conflict resolution (Gottman & Levenson, 1992).

Chapter Summary

This chapter has presented, interpreted and discussed the findings of the study. The chapter has described the causes of marital conflict and their effect on various aspect of children's academic performance. The chapter has also analyzed the opinion of respondents on how marital conflict can be mitigated. In the next chapter, a summary of the findings is presented and implications discussed.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, RECOMMENDATIONS, AREAS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH AND CONCLUSIONS

Introduction

The aim of the study was to establish the effect of marital conflict on academic performance of students in public and private day secondary schools in Kiambu Sub-County. This chapter summarizes the study findings, provides conclusions, recommendations and suggestions for further findings based on the objectives of the study.

Summary of Findings

Areas of Conflict among Married Couples in Kiambu Sub-County

The first objective sought to establish the areas of conflict among married couples in Kiambu Sub-County. It was found that on a 5-point scale from strongly disagree to strongly agree, a high mean score was obtained on the statement that parents disagreed due to financial dissatisfaction. A high mean score was also obtained on a scale of 1 to 5 on the statement that conflict between their parents was due to struggle for power and control of the family. An average mean score was obtained on a 5-point scale on whether infidelity or unfaithfulness contributed to conflict between their parents, suggesting that respondents were unsure that infidelity is a common problem experienced by married partners. On a scale of 1 to 5, a high mean score was obtained on the statement that show of public disapproval contributed to conflict between their parents. Further, a high mean score was obtained on a 5-point scale with regards to whether gender preference on children potentially contributed to family conflict.

Effects of Marital Conflicts on Academic Performance

The second objective of the study was to explain the effect of marital conflicts on the academic performance of students in public and private day secondary schools in Kiambu sub-County. Results showed that most of the respondents had a low concentration as a result of quarrels between parents/guardians. It was also found that majority of the respondents were of the view that children cannot perform well in school if parents/guardians are quarrelling/fighting. Also, most of the respondents became withdrawn from school activities because of conflict between their parents. Majority of the respondents agreed that their academic grades were affected by marital conflicts among parents. Further, most of the respondents agreed that the parental quarrels affected their relationship with teachers in school hence their poor academic performance. Also, most of the respondents felt drawn away from peers due to family conflicts between parents which affected their performance in school. Related findings indicated that most of the respondents agreed that marital conflicts between their parents negatively affected their self-esteem and reflected on their academic performance.

Possible Solutions to Marital Conflicts

With respect to the third objective which sought to establish the possible solutions to the problems regarding marital conflicts and academic performance of secondary school students, it was found that most of the respondents agreed that they could talk to their close friends and teachers if parents/guardians were fighting/quarrelling, which suggests that most of the respondents could get emotional release through talking. The results also showed that most of the respondents acknowledged that learning to calm down can reduce distraction from class as a result of family conflicts. It was also found

that most of the respondents agreed that learning to speak and listen non-defensively was a way to resolve marital conflicts.

Recommendations

Based on the summary of findings, the researcher made the following recommendations:

- i) Parents or guardians who are experiencing conflicts in their families should consider counselling options as soon as possible to avoid negative effects on their children. Creating awareness about the impact of domestic violence on communities conveys the importance of preventing such violence in the families.
- ii) Teachers in secondary schools should frequently organize parents' days, whereby parents or guardians go to school and together with the students get a full report on the students' overall performance. Parents and teachers should unite with a common goal of fully assisting students to excel academically and socially. More focused efforts are required in order to reduce the overall level of marital conflicts to the population.
- iii) The local community needs to be mobilized to oppose marital conflicts in its midst. Actions taken by local people may include greater observation of conflicts situations, offering support for victim-survivors, and challenging married couples to stop the marital conflicts. This would involve strengthening the knowledge base concerning the casual links between marital conflicts and adverse outcomes as well as ascertaining the extent to which long-term risks of adverse outcomes are due to processes that link marital conflicts to academic performance.

Areas for Further Research

The following areas for further research were identified:

- i) Replications of this study five years from now to find out what changes have taken place with regard to the effect of marital conflict on academic performance of students in public and private day secondary schools in Kiambu Sub-County as well as other counties across Kenya is recommended.
- ii) There is need for further research on the impact of socio-economic status of students on academic achievement in secondary schools in Kiambu County.
- iii) Further, studies could be focused on the effects of guidance and counseling on students' academic performance. Such studies pave way for gathering generalizable findings that could act as guidelines for policy recommendations in effect of marital conflicts on academic performance of students in public and private day secondary schools in Kiambu Sub-County.

Conclusions

The study concludes that marital conflicts usually affect the relationship not only between spouses but also between parents and the children. The findings reveal that there is poor relationship among fathers and their children resulting from conflicts, the relationship between the students and their parents has been affected negatively by conflicts. The study concludes that molestation of children is one aspects of family conflicts which affects the development and wellbeing of children in their activities. The study deduces that the welfares of the students are affected due to inadequate communication that pursues after the parents' quarrels. The various causes of disagreement among parents include financial dissatisfaction, struggle for power and

control in the family, infidelity or unfaithfulness, showing disapproval of action openly in front of people around and choice of particular children based on gender.

The study deduced that the students are affected by their parents' quarrels, which reduce their concentration in class. According to the study, family conflicts have an outright effect on children's performance in their academics. If the cases of conflicts increase, the level of self esteem and consequently academic performance decreases and vice versa. Conflicts affect interactions among peers, leading to distraction in school. Academic grades are negatively affected by the marital conflicts among parents quarrels between parents renders the students withdrawn from school activities and the students' achievement in school is formed through marital stability, whose lack would lead to deteriorating performance in academic.

The study finally concludes that sharing the problems arising from marital conflicts can be solved to some extent by talking to various people including friends, peers and teachers. In addition, learning to concentrate and focusing in class can be another way of ensuring the academics are not affected by the conflicts. Marital conflicts has significant influence on student's academic performance especially when spouse show disapproval openly by reprimanding the other spouse in the presence of people.

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APPENDICES

Appendix I: Research Instruments

INSTRUCTIONS

This questionnaire is meant for completing research in partial fulfillment of requirements for a Master of Arts in Marriage and Family Therapy of Pan Africa Christian University. I will be most grateful if you could kindly complete this questionnaire. This questionnaire consists of four major parts. Kindly respond to all questions by putting a tick (✓) in the box matching your answer or write your answer in the space provided if it is not included in the choices. The information given here will only be used for purposes of this study and will be treated with utmost confidentiality. Your cooperation will be highly appreciated.

SECTION A: INTRODUCTION

1. Name of school:

2. Gender:

Male ☐ Female ☐

3. How many of your parents live with you?

One ☐ Both ☐

None ☐

4. I look forward to going home after school.

Yes ☐ No ☐

5. I look forward to being in school all the time

Yes ☐ No ☐

6. My parents/guardians are at home

Always ☐ Frequently ☐

Rarely ☐

7. How do you rate your relationship with your mother/female guardian?

Very Friendly ☐ Friendly ☐

Not Friendly ☐ Not applicable ☐

8. How do you rate your relationship with your father/male guardian?

Very Friendly	☐	Friendly	☐
Not Friendly	☐	Not applicable	☐

9. How do you rate your communication with your parents/guardian?

Very good	☐	Good	☐
Adequate	☐	Inadequate	☐

SECTION B: MARITAL CONFLICTS

10. My parents/ guardians disagree

Always	☐	Frequently	☐
Rarely	☐	Never	☐

11. My parents / guardians abuse/molest me

Yes	☐	No	☐
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12. My parents/guardians fight between themselves

Yes	☐	No	☐
-----	--------------------------	----	--------------------------

13. How do you rate your communication with your parent(s)/guardian after they have quarreled?

Very good	☐	Good	☐
Adequate	☐	Inadequate	☐

14. My parents disagree and conflict due to financial dissatisfaction

Strongly Agree	☐	Agree	☐
Neutral	☐	Disagree	☐
Strongly Disagree	☐		

15. My parents have had conflicts due to struggle for power and control in the family

Strongly Agree	☐	Agree	☐
Neutral	☐	Disagree	☐
Strongly Disagree	☐		

16. Infidelity or unfaithfulness among parents stirs conflict between them

Strongly Agree	☐	Agree	☐
----------------	--------------------------	-------	--------------------------

Neutral	☐	Disagree	☐
Strongly Disagree	☐		

17. My parents have had quarrels as a results of sexual dissatisfaction

Strongly Agree	☐	Agree	☐
Neutral	☐	Disagree	☐
Strongly Disagree	☐		

18. Showing disapproval of action openly in front of people around has led to marital conflicts

Strongly Agree	☐	Agree	☐
Neutral	☐	Disagree	☐
Strongly Disagree	☐		

19. Choice of particular children based on gender result to family side envy

Strongly Agree	☐	Agree	☐
Neutral	☐	Disagree	☐
Strongly Disagree	☐		

SECTION C: EFFECTS OF MARITAL CONFLICTS ON ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

20. My parents/guardians assist me in doing my homework/schoolwork.

Always	☐	Frequently	☐
Rarely	☐	Never	☐

21. If my parents/guardians are quarrelling/fighting, my level of concentration in class is

High	☐	Average	☐
Low	☐		

22. In my opinion, if parents/guardians are quarrelling/fighting, children cannot perform well in school.

Strongly Agree	☐	Agree	☐
Neutral	☐	Disagree	☐
Strongly Disagree	☐		

23. When my parents quarrel, I become withdrawn from school activities

Strongly Agree	☐	Agree	☐
----------------	--------------------------	-------	--------------------------

Neutral	☐	Disagree	☐
Strongly Disagree	☐		

24. My academic grades are negatively affected by the marital conflicts among parents

Strongly Agree	☐	Agree	☐
Neutral	☐	Disagree	☐
Strongly Disagree	☐		

25. The parental quarrels affect my relationship with teachers in school hence my poor academic performance

Strongly Agree	☐	Agree	☐
Neutral	☐	Disagree	☐
Strongly Disagree	☐		

26. I feel drawn away from my peers due to family conflicts between my parents which distracts my performance in school

Strongly Agree	☐	Agree	☐
Neutral	☐	Disagree	☐
Strongly Disagree	☐		

27. The marital conflicts affect my self-esteem which negatively affects my academic performance

Strongly Agree	☐	Agree	☐
Neutral	☐	Disagree	☐
Strongly Disagree	☐		

SECTION C: POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS TO MARITAL CONFLICTS

28. I can tell my close friends anything I feel if my parents/guardians are quarrelling/fighting.

Strongly Agree	☐	Agree	☐
Neutral	☐	Disagree	☐
Strongly Disagree	☐		

29. If my parents/guardians are quarrelling/fighting, I can talk to my teacher(s) about it.

Strongly Agree	☐	Agree	☐
Neutral	☐	Disagree	☐
Strongly Disagree	☐		

30. Learning to calm down can reduce distraction from class by family conflicts

Strongly Agree	☐	Agree	☐
Neutral	☐	Disagree	☐
Strongly Disagree	☐		

31. Learning to speak and listen non-defensively ensures that academics are not affected by marital conflicts

Strongly Agree	☐	Agree	☐
Neutral	☐	Disagree	☐
Strongly Disagree	☐		

32. What do you think should be done to address the effects of marital conflict on academic performance in schools in Kenya?

.....

.....

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR TIME AND COOPERATION.

Appendix II: Informed Consent Form

My name is Inanga Ann Nkirote. I am a post graduate student conducting research for the award of a Master Degree in Marriage and Family Therapy at Pan Africa Christian University.

Purpose of study: The purpose of this study is to determine the effect of martial conflicts on students' academic performance: a case study of Kiambu Sub-County, Kenya.

Confidentiality: To enhance your confidentiality, all the information you write in the questionnaire is strictly confidential and will be used for the purpose of this research study only. Please do not reveal your identity anywhere in the document.

Statement of informed consent: I understand that the participation in this study is voluntary, and that I am free to withdraw my consent to participate in this study at any time. Refusal to participate or withdrawal will involve no penalty or benefits. I have been given the opportunity to ask questions about the research, and I have received answers concerning the areas that I do not understand. I willingly consent to participate in this research.

Appendix III: PAC University Introduction Letter

May 31st, 2017



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

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

Dear Sir/Madam,

RE: INANGA ANN NKIROTE REG. NO. MFT/0178/14

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

She is at the final stage of the programme and her is preparing to collect data to enable her finalise on her thesis. The thesis title is "Effects of Marital Conflict On Academic Performance of students in Public and Private Sec. Schools in Kiambu Sub-County, Nairobi, Kenya".

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

Warm Regards,

Lilian Vikiro

Dr. Lilian Vikiro

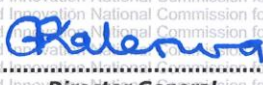
Registrar Academics

PAN AFRICA CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY
REGISTRATION
REGISTRY

Where Leaders are made

Appendix IV: NACOSTI Research Permit

CONDITIONS	
1. The License is valid for the proposed research, research site specified period.	 REPUBLIC OF KENYA  National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation RESEARCH CLEARANCE PERMIT Serial No. A 15779 CONDITIONS: see back page
2. Both the Licence and any rights thereunder are non-transferable.	
3. Upon request of the Commission, the Licensee shall submit a progress report.	
4. The Licensee shall report to the County Director of Education and County Governor in the area of research before commencement of the research.	
5. Excavation, filming and collection of specimens are subject to further permissions from relevant Government agencies.	
6. This Licence does not give authority to transfer research materials.	
7. The Licensee shall submit two (2) hard copies and upload a soft copy of their final report.	
8. The Commission reserves the right to modify the conditions of this Licence including its cancellation without prior notice.	

THIS IS TO CERTIFY THAT:	
MS. ANN NKIROTE INANGA	Permit No.: NACOSTI/P/17/92959/19216
of PAN AFRICA CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY,	Date Of Issue : 18th September, 2017
56875-200 nairobi, has been permitted	Fee Received :Ksh 1000
to conduct research in Kiambu County	
on the topic: EFFECTS OF MARITAL	
CONFLICT ON ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE	
OF STUDENTS IN PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN KIAMBU SUB-COUNTY, KENYA	
for the period ending:	
18th September, 2018	
	
Applicant's Signature	Director General
	National Commission for Science, Technology & Innovation

Appendix IV: NACOSTI Research Authorization



NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION

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

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

Ref. No. **NACOSTI/P/17/92959/19216**

Date: **18th September, 2017**

Ann Nkirote Inanga
Pan Africa Christian University
P.O. Box 56875-00200
NAIROBI.

RE: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION

Following your application for authority to carry out research on *“Effects of marital conflict on academic performance of students in public secondary schools in Kiambu Sub-County, Kenya,”* I am pleased to inform you that you have been authorized to undertake research in **Kiambu County** for the period ending **18th September, 2018.**

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

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

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

Copy to:

The County Commissioner
Kiambu County.

The County Director of Education
Kiambu County.