MARITAL CONFLICTS AMONG CHURCH LEADERS AND ITS IMPACT ON CHURCH PARTICIPATION IN A.C.K THIMBIGUA ARCHDEACONRY, A.C.K DIOCESE OF MT.KENYA SOUTH

Submitted

By

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This Dissertation is submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of the Masters Degree of Theology (Mth), Counseling from St. Paul's University.

AUGUST, 2018.

DECLARATION

Declaration by the Student

This Dissertation is my original work and has not been presented to any other examination body

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Declaration by the Supervisor

This Dissertation has been submitted for defense with my approval as the St Paul's University Supervisor.

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DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my loving husband Joseph Mburu and our children Carol, Sam and Immaculate for their unending emotional and financial support. Special thanks to my mother in law for your continued prayers and encouragement.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

First I would like to with thank God for his mercies and Grace which has enabled me to come this far. It has been a long academic journey but the Almighty God has given me the ability to complete this work. My gratitude goes to my family members for their support and encouragement. Special thanks to my loving husband, who spent sleepless nights, your motivation towards the completion of this project. Carol my first born daughter for your sacrifice; Sam and Immaculate for your encouragement may God bless you abundantly. My heartfelt appreciation goes to my supervisors, Dr. Elijah Macharia and Professor J.B Ikenye for your professional guidance patience, advice and concern for quality work. I hereby acknowledge the support of Dr. Gathungu for your mentorship standing with me throughout entire period of this research project. Rev. Samuel Ndirangu my Rural Dean for your prayers and encouragement. May God bless you in a mighty way?

ABSTRACT

Marital conflict among couples is an issue of concern in Kenyan societies. The church members are also experiencing marital conflicts, hence withdrawing from active participation in church activities. The Study focused on marital conflict among church leaders and its impact on church participation in A.C.K Thimbigua Archdeaconry in the A.C.K diocese of Mt. Kenya South. The research objectives of this study were to establish; factors contributing to marital conflicts; assess the relationship between marital conflicts and church participation; to assess the pastoral role of the church in its interventions on marital conflicts; and to identify more appropriate ways of interventions. The study used Bowen system theory and Behavioral theory which has helped the study in developing categories which assessed marital conflicts among church leaders. Research study used descriptive design; purposive sampling was used to sample population from the larger population. Simple random sampling was adopted in choosing the parishes where the participants were drawn. The sample size included 100 participants who were strictly church leaders. Key informants were eight (8) Parish Vicars; key respondents included twenty four (24) lay readers, twenty four (24) mother's union leaders , twenty (24) leaders for the Kenya Anglican Men Association (20) for focused group. Questionnaires and focused group discussions were used as research tools for collecting data. Quantitative data was analyzed by use of SPSS while qualitative data was analyzed by use of Content Analysis. Based on the findings the study was able to attain its main objective which focused on marital conflicts among church leaders and its impact on church participation. The main findings of the study were; factors that contributes to marital conflicts which were economic issues, communication breakdown, mistrust, and cultural aspects among others. The findings show that marital conflicts have contributed to decline on church leaders participating on their ministerial work in Thimbigua Archdeaconry.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ATR	African Traditional Religions
ACK	Anglican Church of Kenya
IVP	Intimate Violent Partners
NMP	National Marriage Project
BV	Background Variables
IV	Independent Variables
DV	Dependent Variables
CV	Control Variables
MU	Mothers Union
KAMA	Kenyan Anglican Men Association
KDHS	Kenyan Demographic Health survey
UNODC	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1Introduction

This chapter gives the background of the study, statement of the problem, research objectives, research questions, significance of the study, scope, limitations, justification of the study, definition of terms and conclusion.

1.2 Background of the Study

Marriage is an institution in which two loving people covenant themselves to be partners for life. The love they share is often challenged by humanness as two individuals with histories, experiences, temperaments, feeling and opinions which can come into conflict. However the heartache associated with the conflicts can be minimized if couples acquire some skills with which they can resolve their conflicts in order to get on with life (Nyomi & All Africa Conference of Churches, 2000: 34).

Marital conflict among couples is not a new phenomenon. It has a historical background of the first couple having marital conflict. The Bible in the book of Genesis (3:12) gives a story of Adam and Eve who hid themselves after disobeying God. The Bible states that; "The woman you gave to me, gave me fruit and I ate" this is according to Holy Bible (RSV) when God asked their reason for hiding, the argument resulted to a blame game and this proves the historical background of marital conflict. The guilt feeling, fear and anxiety affected their relationship and eventfully went into hiding and withdrew from their initial assignment and their interaction between God and this couple was affected. This relates to the current study which seeks to assess the marital conflict among church leaders and its impact on church participation. It also shows that when couples are faced by challenges their active participation is affected.

According to Achtemeier (1987: 48), marital relationships should be a source of joy, something to celebrate and enjoy the blessings of marriage and children. However, there are a period in life of every couple when all seems hopeless and ruined this is the time when conflicts arise; misunderstanding and betrayal dominate the home. This makes the couple to feel as if their marital relationship can never be whole and joyful. Christian couples especially church leaders

who are expected to lead by example suffers guilt and shame and are tempted to shy of from active participation in church activities.

Ikenye (2014: 202), posits that couples having marital conflict tend to have sharp disagreements and arguments, they also register extreme emotional separateness, little involvement between the couple, physical separateness and independence; each couple does his or her own things and has separate interests. Similarly (Kennedy, 1977: 88) argues that people enter marriage with an expectation of some kind of magical state that will answer all their questions and respond to all their needs. This idea shows that such a couple enters marriage with the assumption that healthy marital relationship is automatic but the actual work of building a deep relationship commences on the wedding day and should be based on commitment between the couple.

According to Freud & Rickman (1957: 102), couples having marital conflicts register high level of emotional separateness or cut off and tend to report more stress and discord in their marriages. This study suggests that, differentiation or having clear boundaries must be taken into consideration because it's an important process which helps couples to be connected without being consumed by the other. When couples lack clear boundaries the outcome is that they become unproductive in their day today activities. Similarly, (Worthington, 1989: 212) posits that married couples having marital conflicts have lost romance in their relationships and all positive mutual interaction. Such couples do little together as either of the spouses involves and pursues different interests. Such a person lacks motivation to enjoy life especially work, leisure, taking care of children or even church activities. This informs the current study which focuses on marital conflict among church leaders and its impact on church participation.

1.2.1 Global Perspective on marital conflict

Marital conflicts within married couples are a global problem. According to Olson & De Frain, (Olson & De Frain, c2011.: 6) In United States, cases of marital conflicts caused by a number of factors such as money, communication breakdown has led to a lot of instability hence to resulting to unproductivity in their daily activities. This has also caused decline of marriages whereby, in 1970, marriages declined from 66 percent to 49.7 percent in 2006.

(Newman, 2009: 54) reveals that church is not different, Christians also are faced with issues of marital conflicts but they are expected to be outstanding in handling their conflicts. In the book of 1st peter 5:3 the bible says "church leaders should not be domineering over those in your charge but being examples to the flock?" Leaders are expected to provide to their flock with spiritual oversight, feed, and lead and be a role model. The study has found that, a number of factors have contributed to this issue. Domestic violence, communication breakdown unfaithfulness lack of trust economic aspects and substance abuse are the key agents contributing to the rampant increase of marital conflicts

The study further observed that in developing countries such as Columbia about one third of women have been victims of intimate violence, (Miles, 2002: 24) concurs with above study arguing that Christians are also vulnerable to violence and church in its pastoral role must change the approach in more effective ways in order to handle the escalating problem.

A study taken in the Lutheran church in America revealed that strains always existed in marriage but sometimes the effects are more disruptive than others. Several studies have shown a consistent pattern in marriage satisfaction as it has been revealed by Worthington (1988: 62) who states that, generally marriage satisfaction is highest in couples before they bear children.

Marital conflicts among married couples are experienced in many parts of Africa. According to (Mbiti, 1969: 133) African marriage is a formal commitment between a man and a woman to cohabit permanently. In many African societies, marriage and family life are considered as important aspects since marriage leads to a family. However, Mwiti et al. (2007: 190), challenges the permanency of marriage citing impact of western values in the name of Christianity which could have continued to threaten African traditional ways of life. The balance between the African traditional system and western values has led to differentiation of self and contributes to marital conflicts.

In Uganda it is culturally and socially acceptable to hit a woman in order to discipline her. Beating of wives in Uganda costs its economy billions of shillings annually. As ascertained by (Bogere, 2016: 2) Ugandan child sponsorship coordinator who argues that many women experience violence and remain in their marriages. The assumption is that this has affected them

socially and psychologically and it has made the married couples to suffer economic and spiritually set back.

According to amnesty international, statistics 25 women in the town of Mbeya and 27 in Geta, were killed by their husbands as a result of marital conflict. The Tanzanian Newspaper owned by East African Media company reports that women in Tanzania are meant to tolerate their husbands and as a result of fear of taboos, such beliefs affects even the church leaders in their ministerial work because they live under stressful relationships. Ikenye Ndung'u (2008: 156), supports this statement arguing that optimal and pathological functioning among couples is defined by the boundaries of culture hence, more effective ways of counseling need to be integrated.

1.2.2 Kenyan Perspective on Marital conflicts

Mbiti, (1969:133) argues that Marriage is a fundamental rite of passage in African society, through which a generation's continuity is determined. It is in one's family that living dead are kept in personal memory the longest after their physical death; however, God does not promise us marriage without tension. Similarly, Mwiti & Dueck, (2007: 190) concur suggesting that all marriages face challenges, indigenous African traditions not an exception.

According to Kenya demographic health survey (Kenya National Bureau of Statistics, 2015) conflicts in marriages is being experienced by many communities in Kenya. Infidelity, poverty, modernization, urbanization, industrialization and gender roles have been found to be key factors. Childlessness according to Mbiti (1996) is among the factors which contribute to marital instability because a child is considered vital to establishing lasting marital relationships.

A study undertaken by Ikenye, (2015: 90) suggested that due to colonial and post-colonial experiences, Kenyans have gone through biological, cultural, Christian and other religious adaptation meaning that marital conflicts are inevitable. Similarly, Waruta & Kinoti (2013: 103) postulated that societies have been affected by modernization and with problem of adaptation, marital relationships have been affected in a negative way hence, resulting to decline in their daily routines.

The survey status of institutions of marriage in Kenya especially in Nairobi in 2011 reviewed that more than 60 percent of people living in Nairobi live in unhappy marriages 29 percent of marriages are headed into separation or divorce. Tight schedule and daily routines have been reported to have been the main causes of marital conflicts as it has been indicated by (Heitler, 2013: 2).

According to Bromiley (1980:5), marriage can work only as it conforms to the purpose and work for him who created and established it. In this it resembles all other relationships whether with other human beings or with larger world of nature and animals. Inner human harmony depends on harmony with God, meaning that disruption with God means disruption of inner harmony. This disruption will be felt most keenly at the closest and therefore the most sensitive point of relationship. Such marriage stands to lose most if disobedience interferes with the relation to God and hampers the fulfillment of his plan for the creature. When Adam and Eve in Genesis 3 foolishly and arrogantly rejected the way of the creator and chose their way they not only spoilt their relationship with God but also with one another and with the world in which they have been set and hence fails to fulfill the assignments that God gave them.

The study further pursues that even in the best of Christian marriages in which there is an earnest resolve to live a happy life and a kind of marriage that God desires, at times such marriages are also faced with strains and stresses resulting to marital conflicts. When such arises then, it necessitate a ministry of love if the marriage will survive, when this lacks such marriages fails to achieve its goals such as, lack of commitment, lack of peace, church attendance and also other activities that has been assigned to them by their vicars. This then becomes the motivation of the current study which focuses on marital conflicts among church leaders and its impacts on church participation in Thimbigua Archdeaconry.

1.3 Statement of the Problem

Conflict in marriages is a phenomenon that is emerging in an alarming rate in Kenyan societies. The church members also experience marital conflicts. According to Waruta & Kinoti (2013: 175) the church must function within a system where all aspects of life whether physical or emotional must be taken care of especially marital relationships. Ikenye (2014: 202), posits that

couples having marital conflict tend to have sharp disagreements and arguments, they also register extreme emotional separateness hence affecting their daily activities. Church leaders also face the same problem as they tend to depend more on their spouse's approval more than anyone else to confirm the value of their ministerial work, as Hart, (1984:134) ascertains. This can neither be ignored nor avoided because if not well managed it can destroy the institution of marriage and affect the church activities respectively. The study focused on assessing marital conflicts among church leaders and their impact on church participation. The motivation of the study was due to the fact that there is no other study that has been carried out in A.C.K Thimbigua Archdeaconry.

1.4 Objectives of the Study

1. To establish factors contributing to marital conflicts among church leaders in A.C.K, Thimbigua Archdeaconry.
2. To assess the relationship between marital conflicts and church participation in A.C.K Thimbigua Archdeaconry.
3. To assess the pastoral role of the church in enhancing stable marriage relationships among church leaders in A.C K, Thimbigua Archdeaconry.
4. To identify appropriate interventions to be used in enhancing healthy marriage relationships among church leaders in A.C.K, Thimbigua Archdeaconry.

1.5 Research Questions

1. What are the factors that contribute to marital conflict among church leaders in A.C.K Thimbigua Archdeaconry?
2. What is the relationship between marital conflicts and church participation among church leaders in A.C.K Thimbigua Archdeaconry?
3. What is the pastoral role of the church in enhancing stable marital relationships among church leaders in A.C K Thimbigua Archdeaconry.?
4. What are the appropriate interventions which can be used to assist the church leaders in enhancing their marital relationships in A.C.K Thimbigua Archdeaconry?

1.6 Scope of the Study

The study was carried out in Thimbigua Archdeaconry in the Diocese of Mt Kenya South. The Diocese has thirteen Archdeaconries and Thimbigua being among them. The Archdeaconry has four administration wards, namely Njiku, Karuri, Gachorie, and Muchatha. It is headed by the Archdeacon; it has two Rural Deaneries headed by the Rural Deans. Thimbigua Archdeaconry has ten parishes and fourteen congregations. The area is characterized by both low income earners and financially stable families who are in business.

1.7 Limitation of the Study

Confidentiality was a major challenge due to the nature of the study and the sensitivity of the issues. Most of the respondents and being the church leaders believed that their marital information should not be shared to a stranger in any way and so willingness to participate was a challenge. However, with the assurance of confidentiality and attaining information for the purpose of the study the respondents agreed to voluntarily give the information being sought.

1.8 Significance of the Study

The study will help the churches in Thimbigua Archdeaconry to understand the wider and varied contexts of family problems leading to marital conflicts among church leaders and their impact on church participation. The study was crucial in that it aimed to establish the factors that contributes marital conflicts among church leaders, assessed the relationship between marital conflicts and church participation and the pastoral role of the church. The study was able to identify new ways of interventions which has added new information to the existing. It has laid a background for more studies to be undertaken to cover a wider area and even other church traditions.

1.9Justification

Sufficient materials on marital conflicts among church leaders and their impact on church participation has been lacking in A.C.K Thimbigua Archdeaconry. However, incidents of marital conflicts are prevalent. Hence there was an urgent need for the current study to unearth the situation on the ground and help the Archdeaconry have a clear understanding of the problem.

The existing material by (Kenya National Bureau of Statistics, 2015) reveals that marital conflicts are increasingly becoming common. However, the important issues such as factors

associated with the trend and their impact on church participation were left out. This study will uncover the existing and real scenarios contributing to marital instabilities

1.10 Definition of Terms

Marital conflict: The term refers to a situation whereby couples fail to agree and reacts negatively towards one another hence leading to inability to accomplish their daily activities.

Marriage - Marriage is by nature a multifaceted institution to which can be defined as emotional and legal commitment of two people to share emotional and physical intimacy in various tasks and economic resources.

Pathological relationship - This is unhealthy way of family functioning, where couples pursues individual interests

Optimal relationship -This is a sense of togetherness among married couples or a healthy functioning.

Differentiation - Differentiation is the life long process of striving to keep one's being in balance through the reciprocal, external and internal process.

Self-disclosure - revealing oneself, hopes, fears and everyday life to others in need of affirmation and support.

Diocese- This is ecclesiastical entity in the Anglican Church under the jurisdiction of the Bishop.

Archdeaconry- An ecclesiastical entity in the Anglican Church comprised of a number of Deaneries and under the jurisdiction of the Archdeacon

Deanery - An ecclesiastical entity in the Anglican Church comprised of three to four parishes headed by the Rural Dean.

Parish – An ecclesiastical entity in the Anglican Church headed by the parish Vicar.

Lay reader –Commissioned person by the Bishop given the mandate of leading church services and working under the parish Vicar.

1.11Conclusion

The chapter gives the background of the study, statement of the problem and how the issue of disconnected relationships among married couples has contributed to the decline in church participation. Therefore, optimal relationship among married couples is a key aspect and it should be protected under all costs.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

In this chapter, the study discusses the related literature, highlight the factors that could have contributed to conflicts among couples, assess the relationship between marital conflicts and church participation, assess the role of the church and identify more effective ways of intervention. It will provide explanation of the theoretical rationale, theological perspective, research gaps and conceptual framework of the research under study. The literature is being reviewed from books, journals and internet sources.

2.2 Related Literature Review

Nyomi (2000:34) defines marital conflict as the absence of coherence, harmony or agreement between the parties involved. Gichinga (2007:15) concurs with the definition arguing that marital happiness as the balance between good and bad marriage and once the balance lacks conflict become inevitable. This shows that that such relationship could be very stressful especially because of the meanings the conflicting parties attribute to the fact of the conflict as well as the standpoint of the other partner. There are many possible causes that contribute to such conflicts and the current study focuses on establishing those factors and their impact on church participation.

2.2.1 Factors that contribute to marital conflicts

According to (Lamanna & Riedmann, 2002: 168) conflicts among Christian couples is not a new phenomenon. In United States, the function of marriage was meant for providing support, love and ongoing emotional support. However, this has drastically changed where marriage has become considerably less permanent now than in the past. The Bible supports this statement in (Gen. 3) where the first married couple engaged themselves in unhealthy conflict which was against the teachings and historical expectations that marriage should be lifelong undertaking until “death do us part”.

(Melgosa & Melgosa, 2011: 64) states that communication is one of the major factors that contribute to conflicts among married couples. Communication is the heart of a family life in that family members interact through verbal and non-verbal exchanges to express their thoughts,

wishes and their core emotions. Jack & Judith (2013: 239) concur stating that through honest expressions of thought and emotions couples come to know one another in very personal ways. Without the ability to communicate effectively the family unit becomes a mare collection of individuals whose thoughts, feelings and desires are nobody's but their own. This creates a distrustful atmosphere in which no one knows what the other is thinking and feeling. With such misunderstanding which results from this state of affairs productivity of either party is affected and each pursues different interests. Strong & De Vault, (1997: 136) affirm and supports that lack of proper communication negative feedback is received which weakens the ego especially for a husband thus leading to low self-esteem.

Similarly Brown & Brown,(Brown & Brown, 1999: 86) concurred with Melgosa stating that communication is a factor which contributes to marital conflicts When communication begins to breakdown married couples stays silent in the same home and this affects sexual intimacy. The study pursues that sex is a gift from God and sexual intercourse is a means of communication at the deepest level. The study suggests that quality time should be invested on sexual process to ensure mutual pleasure Nyomi (2000 :36) posits that such relationships affect their carrier whereby a partner can becomes workaholic or redundant at the same time. The study by Melgosa (2011) and for Brown (1999) has given the detailed effect on communication breakdown on marriages but the impact on church participation have been left out and this has motivated the current study.

(Levinthal, 2014: 199) contends that alcoholism and substance abuse are contributors to marital conflicts. The study argued that a person who is under the impact of alcohol or substance abuse is in danger of maintaining a job, family and even social relationships. This means that one problem triggers the other. Numerous clinical studies like one done by United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), shows that in 2005 some 200 million people at the age of 15-64 had used drugs supporting the idea of increased domestic instability in the lives of substance abusers and alcoholics.

(Benokraitis, 2011: 391) demonstrates that domestic violence is also a contributing factor to disconnected relationships among young couples. The study is supported by (Newman, 2009.: 354) who argues that most people around the world have been the victims of the perpetrator or a

witness to violence within the families. The study contends that, according to the (García-Moreno et al., 2013), in most of developed or developing countries, issues of domestic violence among couples is alarming. The study further posits that about one third of the women in Columbia and in South Korea have been beaten and physically abused by their spouses or partner respectively. In response to the above study, (Pinheiro, 2006) argued that educated couples in the large cities perceive that beating is wrong but violence continues to be a norm among Korean families.

According to (Lamanna & Riedmann, 2002: 168) couples are more likely to break-up when one partner has more power in decision making. Decisions which mostly concern financial matters are very sensitive as the power is one-sided. Similarly, a study conducted by (Mwiti & Dueck, 2007.: 179) revealed that financial aspect is a major factor that contributes to disconnected relationships. The study argues that in Africa, there is never enough money and even with its availability, there is misuse. The study further showed how some marriage partners continued with old habits like overspending or hoarding of money. The problem worsens when there is early retirement and often depression, bitterness and hopelessness follow.

Culture is also a factor that contributes to marital conflict, Turnbull,(Turnbull, 2006: 10) posits that one's cultural background influences what they value, how they think and how they behave. The term culture refers to the fundamental values and beliefs that set the standards for how people perceive, interpret and behave with their family. Culture has micro-cultures that create a person's overall cultural identity, that is, religion as well as beliefs and customs and language which influences all aspects of communication. This then motivates conducting the current study in assessing such micro-cultures on marital conflicts church leaders.

(Strong & DeVault, 1997: 79) argues that every culture determines the content of gender roles in its own way. Among the Arapesh of New Guinea both male and female possess feminine traits and so they value men and women as equal. Further the study observes that both men and women alike tend to be passive, cooperative, peaceful and nurturing. However, this study has been challenged by, (Mead et al., 2001) who observed that in other cultures, men and women are expected to be violent, aggressive, competitive and jealous.

Similarly, ((Kim, 2013) & Mbiti (1969) concurs with the above findings about change of arrangement due to economic hardships, the study suggests that women have become full time income earners and men on the other hand men are now doing more jobs within the household than their fathers used to do. This arrangement therefore has caused a lot of conflict among married couples where women have resented due to the feeling that they have to carry more of their share of the second shift. This proves that more knowledge is needed to help such couples to be able to adapt to such changes.

(Ikenye, 2008: 154) argues that every culture transmits its core value and core systems through institution of enculturation. For him culture is a filter of reality. However, it can also be perceived as a problem or a hindrance to be overcome rather than an asset that can contribute to development. Such statements prove the importance of culture and the magnitude of its impact to married couples who have adequate knowledge on their culture as a necessity for enhancing optimal functioning. The above findings have been the motivation of conducting the current study to help church leaders in having a clear understanding of their cultural background and how it affects their work in the ministry

2.2.2 Relationship between marital conflict and church participation

According to Nyomi, (2000: 43) a Christian couple should identify with Joshua of the Bible who said that "As for me and my house will serve the lord" This shows that a family with no clear direction produces children with no clear direction. A family that have respect to one another has a potential of commitment of loving and serving God and have the right sense of direction towards spiritual and emotional fulfillment. Loving and well balanced families that depend on the Lords guidance are able to carry out the awesome responsibility of Gods work. However, it's important to find out how the same family that has no love towards one another responds to the work of God.

The study further asserts that when a family finds peace. Security and rest in the home, it becomes a witness to the neighborhood. In this way, the couple becomes a witness in their Jerusalem even before carrying their mission to Judea, Samaria and to the other parts of the world (Acts 1:8). The family is also a major means of introducing its young members to their faith and church. This couple being church leaders has the tasks such as evangelizing, nurture

ring and socializing its members to effective living in church and society. The family which finds peace and security in their homes and have effective communication are able to attend church together, spend more time in church meetings, social occasions, and bible studies among others even after Sunday worship. The current study focuses on assessing whether couples who are having conflicts are still active in church.

According to Bromiley (1980: 5) marriage can work only as it conforms to the purpose and work for him who created and established it. In this it resembles all other relationships whether with other human beings or with larger world of nature and animals. Inner human harmony depends on harmony with God, meaning that disruption with God means disruption of inner harmony. This disruption will be felt most keenly at the closest and therefore the most sensitive point of relationship. Such marriage stands to lose most if disobedience interferes with the relation to God and hampers the fulfillment of his plan for the creature. When Adam and Eve in Genesis 3 foolishly and arrogantly rejected the way of the creator and chose their way they not only spoilt their relationship with God but also with one another and with the world in which they have been set and hence fails to fulfill the assignments that God gave them. This then becomes the motivation of the current study to assess whether marital conflicts among church leaders in Thimbigua Archdeaconry have any relation to their church participation.

Piper & Grudem (2006: 10), argues that the Bible has caused much suffering in the lives of many Christian couples. The Biblical teaching persuades women to be royal and submissive to their husbands. This teaching has promoted emotional abuse to women in such a way that the woman has been left under the mercies of their husbands. Lim & Isaac (1988:153) contrast the above study stating that the Bible is a powerful tool in counseling but for it to be effective, the counselor need to be familiar with the scripture. However, the current study has found a gap on whether this suffering has affected women in their service to God.

2.2.3 The Pastoral Role of the Church on marital conflicts

A study carried out by (Dominian, 1981: 35) argues that the church must be on the front to emphasize on the scripture where the principle of relationship is found. The study further asserts that marriage is a call; God calls a particular man and woman into life partnership. The above study concurs with the teaching of the Anglican Church in our modern services, Anglican

Church of Kenya where marriage is regarded as a gift from God and a means of grace. The church emphasizes that a husband and a wife belong to each other, committing themselves in absolute fidelity, love and respect. However even with such emphasis, the marriage institution among many married couples is a major concern. The church therefore needs to have a new approach in dealing with pathological relationships among married couples.

(Kiarie, 2013: 86) in her article postulated that the pastoral work of the church is to be seen in terms of healing, guiding and sustaining and reconciling people. Similarly, Worthington, (1989:49) asserts that the role of the church on helping couples with disconnected relationships is to emphasize on the intimate love. The church is required to tend for its flock and continually feed it with the proper values such as encouraging them to be responsible and be trustworthy. (Collins, 1988: 237) maintains that even with the above emphasis, the church must realize other forces that contribute to increased interpersonal tension.

(Waruta, 2013: 84) argues that healing covers all aspects of disorder which affects all levels being. It is crucial for pastoral care in church to be holistic attending all levels of human caring that is; physical, moral and spiritual. Good pastoral cares do not ignore physical needs of a person or a community. The church must function from within the systems and not merely as a 'voice crying in the wilderness. The instability of social systems leads to instability of individuals in the presence of conflict.

(Mwiti & Dueck, (2007: 179) feels that the process of a couple becoming one is built on mutual love and honor between the couple. For the optimal functioning of this family is also dependent on health of Christian community. This means this couples depends more on support which should be provided by the church in order to enhance the optimal functioning of such marriages. Therefore, the above study has a direct relationship with the current study which sought to assess the role of the church on marital conflicts among church leaders on their church participation in A.C.K Thimbigua Archdeaconry.

Ikenye, (2008: 45) postulates that church has responsibilities of pastoral counseling to be able to meet people at their point of need regardless of their cultural background. The church has a big

role in enhancing strong optimal relationships among married couples. Churches provide outstanding support for those in the early formative stages of their relationships. Training and seminars have been the key tools used by churches to mentor couples who have been faced with marital conflicts. Similarly, Waruta, (2013: 10) contends that the church should tackle the institutions of marriage and family in contemporary Africa with a fresh look. This is because in his view the church has not been successful in strengthening marriages. The writer states that to some extent the church has been part of the problem rather than the solution. The church must play its role in building strong marriage relationships which in return would produce a stable society hence a stable community of believers.

2.2.4 Interventions on Marital Conflicts

Collins, (1988: 16) defines counseling as the art and skill which attempts to provide encouragement and guidance for those who are facing losses decisions or disappointments. It's a way of helping individuals and group, to understand them better and relate to fellow human beings in a mature and healthy manner. Effective counseling facilitates healthy and mature relationships which guarantee survival of marriages among married couples. It is a skill that enables both partners to live with a positive hope considering that none of them can live without the support of the other person. Concurrently, a research done by Ikenye, (2008: 28) postulates that interpersonal relationships are not only central to Christian living, but also to the African living. The writer states that disconnectedness and brokenness in relationships creates an emotional tension, proposing that living to the commandment to life as a whole, love God, love neighbor and love self would help the couple in finding inner peace.

Ikenye, (2008: 48) argues that effective pastoral counseling in the African context cut across ethnic and cultural lines. It must cut beyond gender, age and through traditions, rituals and rites. Similarly, Waruta, (2013: 2) supports this statement by stating that in the contemporary Africa where professional counseling has not yet been established counseling goes on informally through family relationships, friends, peers, neighbors and elders. In traditional African Society, this role is filled by the medicine-men, mediums, seers and religious specialists.

According to Wimberley, (1982: 116) for effective intervention, a pastoral counselor must differentiate himself or herself from the family of origin. This is an important aspect for a counselor to be able to have own values and inner strength. This would be of much help during interventions to marital relationship conflicts among church leaders. A well differentiated pastoral counselor must be flexible and spontaneous in the use of his or her person as well as therapeutic resources.

Ikenye, (2014 : 59) argues that entering into another person's world of experience requires closeness, warmth, hospitality and distance at the same time. Dealing with a person's journey and experience is like entering a cloud and staying there, observing and listening. Therefore, the writer suggests that the counselor must have listening skills and not only listening but active listening. One must unearth the underlying issues and even be able to read between the lines. This would help him or her to understand the presenting problem and identify where and how to interject and give support. This then was the motivation for the current study to be able to identify more effective ways to curb marital conflicts.

Ikenye, (2014: 60) posits that a pastoral counselor must not engage in passing judgment to any of the spouses who seeks help. One must be ready to show love and care and also demonstrate the expertise through caring and giving comfort, kindness, goodness and mercy. The counselor and his or her clients must share their Christian worldview and this would enhance their working relationship. It is also important for the counselor to let both spouses understand that they share in one Lord, Christ to whom they belong and this sign of unity would shape the counseling process.

Mwiti & Dueck, (2007: 190) maintains that the Bible encourages believers to enjoy positive interpersonal and sexual relationships with their spouses. Finding a mate is described as a good thing "receives favor from the Lord". However, God does not promise marriages without tension and neither do indigenous African traditions. This means that people walking together must have dynamics of the walk. One must learn to forgive, have positive communication, esteeming the other in order to have an optimal relationship.

2.2.5 Theological Perspective on Marital Conflicts

In Gen 3 the Bible records a long history of interpersonal problems and communication breakdown Dominion, (1981: 9) concurred with the above statement by affirming that it is at the beginning of scripture where principle of relationship is found. Adam and Eve the first married couple, had disagreements when God questioned them on their disobedience. The study further asserts that the man-woman relationship is the right order of humanity and the destiny of this relationship is towards togetherness and intimacy. Therefore, marriage is a sacred institution which should not be broken.

2.3 Theoretical Framework

The study used Bowen's System Theory where the basic assumption is that individual's grows out of the interactional unit of the family as well as the larger community. The study was also guided by behavioral theory.

2.3.1 Bowen's System Theory

Bowen's theory helped the study to understand marriage relationships for it views the family as a natural system of relationships and also help in understanding the most fundamental patterns of human functioning. The theory was first coined by Murray Bowen in 1913.

His main objectives in therapy were to help family members develop a rational, non-reactive approach to living and optimal relationship.

According to Wineck, (2010: 82) the goal of this approach is not symptom reduction but it is interested with improving the inter-generational transmissions process. The focus of approach is consistent whether therapist is working with an individual, a couple or the entire family. For him there are major theoretical constructs which are crucial for understanding Bowen approach. They are differentiation, emotional system, multigenerational transmission emotional triangle, nuclear family projection process, sibling position and social regression. All these constructs are interconnected and very effective in helping persons with marital conflicts but for this study five of the constructs have been discussed.

a. Differentiation

Ikenye, (2014: 126) postulates that differentiation of self as the ability to separate and balance feeling from thinking. This results to having the capacity for strong emotion and also to restrain emotional impulses with reality and objectivity. Bowen's theory is also concerned with

triangulation where two people systems require a circle of closeness, togetherness and distance-separateness. Differentiation is central to balanced marital and family functioning and it works against all systems of self-fusion and emotional illness meaning that a sense "I ness" and "we ness" contributes to the welfare of all members of the family.

b. Emotional system

Winek, (2010: 85) emphasizes that in Bowenian theory, the emotional system is the context in which an organism must exist. It connects members of a system to each other through predictable principles of organization. Family emotional system includes feelings, thoughts, emotions, fantasies and past connections individual and together. Bowenian theory has been used for the purposes of developing categories to assess marital conflicts among church leaders.

c. Emotional triangle

Winek, (2010: 86) states that a triangle is the network and relationship among three people, under Bowen's theory the triangle as the molecule of any emotional system and the total system as network of interrelated triangles. Anxiety according to Bowen is the compelling factor that motivates people to participate in a triangle. Two person's relationship can remain stable until anxiety is introduced. When anxiety is introduced into the dyad, a third party is recruited to reduce the overall anxiety. When a couple engages in unhealthy argument in most cases it leads to unhealthy relationship at such time Bowenian theory encourages a third person who can assist the couple in reducing anxiety.

d. Multigenerational

Ikenye, (2014: 126) posits that nuclear family emotional process is transferred from one generation to another. These emotional systems may be balanced or unbalanced, where unbalanced ones lead to over-oneness and fusion that lead to emotional cut off from parents or siblings. Emotional reactivity between spouses may lead to physical and emotional distance which results to abuse by either of the spouse. This can also include cold war silence, marital conflict and emotional projection to one or more children.

e. Nuclear family emotional system

According to Winek, (2010: 87) Bowen noted that nuclear family as the most basic unit in society and the main concern was the much that emotional fusion can occur in a family system. This results to chronic anxiety overtime which generates symptoms in the relationship system. Corey, (Corey, 2013: 401) postulates that the opposite of differentiated self is experienced emotional reactivity and especially when others push your button. Bowen argues that when people marry individuals with the same level of differentiation the greater the emotional fusion. When emotional fusion increases there is likelihood that anxiety will be present and the couple will seek resolution through fighting, distancing, depression, criticism or substance abuse.

2.3.2 Behavioral Theory

This theory was first coined by Albert Bandura. In his construction he argues that the human thought process or cognitive processes should be the focus of attention when talking about personality. It's in social contests that thinking develops and so Behavior changes as a result of interaction between a person and the environment. Bandura asserts that even with outside forces a human being is able to overcome the forces with their cognitive capacity (Mweru & Njuguna, 2009: 27).

Corey, (2013: 227) asserts that Behavioral theory focuses directly on observable behavior, current determinant of behavior change. Behavioral theory had been used to treat quite a number of clients with psychological disorders. It also helps in treating anxiety disorders depressions, substance abuse, pain management and many others. It has its origin in the 1950s which was a radical departure from the dominant psychoanalytic perspective. This theory relates to the current study whereby the study aims to assess the observable behaviors.

(Gladding, 2014: 206) asserts the behavioral theory of counseling focuses on a broad range of client behaviors. This approach aims at helping the study to be able to identify new appropriate ways of interventions. It helps a client in modifying the present behavior replacing those that were maladaptive. This behavioral change acts like a door opener to a perceptual change. The approach is a choice in working with clients who have specific problem such as eating disorders, substance use and psychosexual dysfunction.

Behavioral theory can be applicable in this study by helping the couples in identifying the undesirable behaviors. Intervention using behavioral theory and its skills can help the couples in A.C.K Diocese of Mt. Kenya South in changing to behaviors which would enhance optimal marital relationships.

According to Okun, (197 : 20) behavioral helping approaches are specifically directive and controlled. The helper identifies the causes and the end results of the target behavior with the aim of bonds interfering with or to extinguish this unsuitable behavior. The helper assists the client with learning new desirable stimulus responses bonds which can help in learning more appropriate behavior. There are four approaches that can help the client changing their undesirable behavior. They are converting modeling, cognitive learning, and emotional learning such as operant conditioning.

2.4 Research gaps

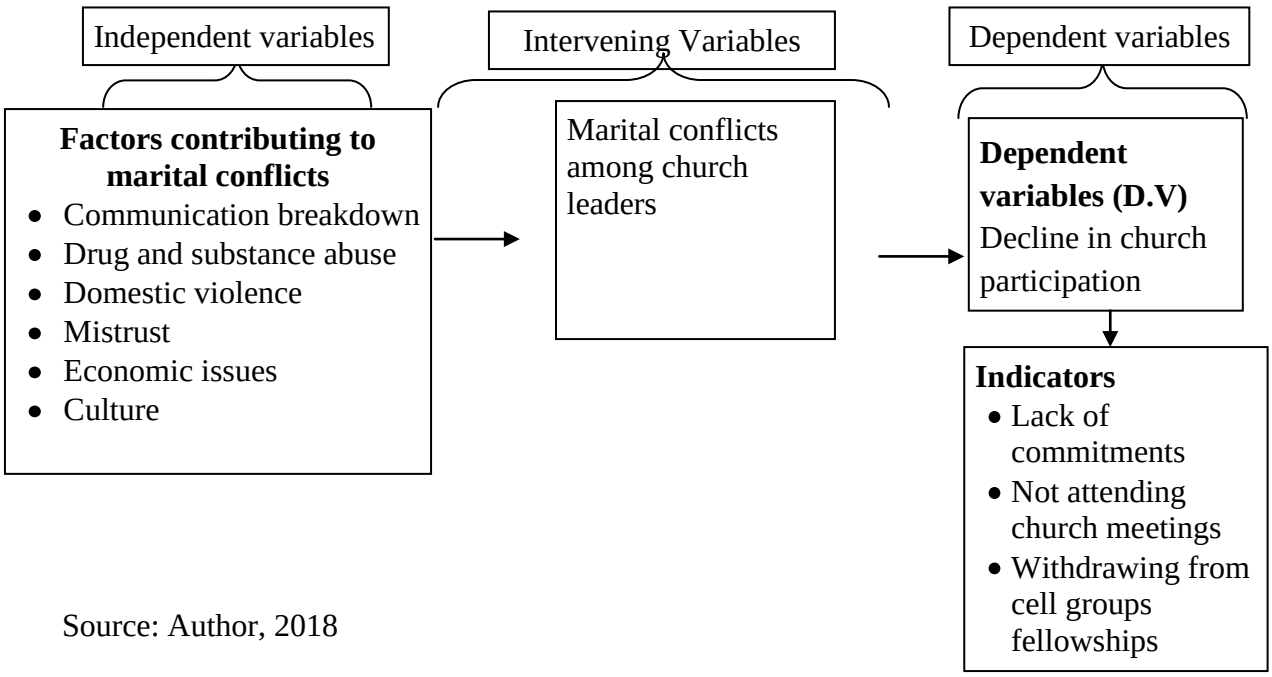
The current study has interacted with the above related literature and found gaps which it has filled with the help of the field findings. A research gap is created in Strong & De Vault's study which supports communication breakdown but does not provide ways of improving the communication breakdown and its impact on marital conflicts among couples on their church participation. The study has suggested recommendations on how to improve communication skills. Study done by Melgosa & Melgosa about jealousy and self-disclosure responded to the impact of the above factors to disconnected relationships but the study did not suggest effective ways of interventions which would result to optimal relationships.

Study done by (Mbiti, 1969: 1) on culture and religion shows that Africans are religious but the study has not shown the impact of African Traditional Religion on marital relationships and has not identified effective ways of interventions. The current study has given recommendations on empowering pastoral counselors to be able to learn new ways of interventions. Financial matters being a sensitive issue and a major contributor towards disconnected relationships, has only been highlighted in, (Lamanna & Riedmann, 2002: 168) study but effective ways of helping the couple to resolve such issues have not been provided. The current study has given recommendations on empowering couples through counseling and seminars.

2.5 Conceptual framework

The diagram below represents the relationship between the independent variable and the dependent variable. For this study, independent variables are the factors contributing to marital conflicts, intervening variable being marital conflicts. Dependent variable is decline in church participation while indicators are; lack of commitment, not attending church meetings and withdrawing from cell groups.

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework



Source: Author, 2018

2.6 Conclusion

The literature review found quite a number of factors that have been assumed to be contributing to marital conflicts among church leaders. In this chapter, research gaps such as appropriate ways of improving communication breakdowns, effective ways of helping couples resolve finance-based conflicts have been identified. Theoretical framework has also been elaborately discussed and the relationship between the independent and the dependent variables as presented in the conceptual framework frame work.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter describes the specific procedures that has be used in data collection and how the data was be analyzed. The chapter focuses on the methodology, research design, target population, sampling technique, research instruments, data collection procedures, data analysis procedures and the ethical consideration to the study above.

3.2 Research Design

The study adopted a descriptive research design. Both the qualitative and quantitative method of research has been used. The qualitative method was appropriate in collecting information, opinions, life experiences feeling and thoughts of the participants in the area of the study. Descriptive research design was important because it helped the study to gather information, interact and interpret the data for the purpose of bringing out the information in a format that is more understandable.

3.3 Target Population

For this study the target population was the Anglican congregation in the Diocese of Mount Kenya South. The diocese of Mt Kenya South is made up of 13 Archdeaconries. Thimbigua is one of the 13 Archdeaconries, from which the respondents are drawn. The respondents were drawn from church leaders namely Lay readers, Mothers' Union leaders and KAMA leaders. The main reason for choosing such population is because they have the characteristics and traits that correlate with the problem under study.

3.4 Sampling Procedures and Sample size

According to (Kombo, 2006: 27) no study whether quantitative, qualitative or both can include everything and one cannot study everyone, everywhere doing everything and therefore sampling is the procedure that this study used to gather data. The study used systematic sampling which is a type of probability sampling method which samples members from a larger population has been selected according to a random starting point and a fixed periodic interval. This was done in two steps. In the first step, Thimbigua was sampled from the thirteen archdeaconries.

The second step was to come up with the parishes from which respondents were drawn, simple random sampling was done. This involved writing the names of the parishes in the archdeaconry on pieces of papers. The papers bearing the names were folded and put into a box, properly shuffled and picked at random. The respondents were then drawn from the first eight parishes picked to make up the sample.

Table 1: Shows the representation of respondents sampled

Key respondents	Number of respondents	No. of participants FGDs
Lay readers	24	7
Mother's Union	24	7
Kenya Anglican Men Association	24	7
Vicars	8	
Total	**80**	**21**

3.5 Data Collection Instruments

The study used questionnaires and interview guides as the method of data collection. Two types of questionnaires were administered; one to the church leaders and the other to the Vicars. The first questionnaire which was administered to the church leaders was divided into five sections. The sections include; background information, factors contributing to marital conflicts, cultural influence on marital conflict, pastoral counseling and interventions to marital conflicts respectively. The Vicars questionnaire was divided into three sections.

3.6 Data collection methods.

Questionnaires were administered directly to the respondents, by dropping and leaving them with the respondents and collecting them latter. The questionnaires were then collected by the researcher at the agreed time. Where the respondents required explanations, this was done at the time of collection. The Focused Group Discussions were carried out through invitation of participants by making telephone calls.

For the Focused Group Discussion, the researcher had intended and invited a total of 21 participants. However due to commitments, some invitees could not make it, and the researcher ended up with three groups of 5 participants each. The focused group discussions were

conducted through use of an interview guide. The F.G.Ds took approximately 2-3 hours respectively.

3.7 Validity and Reliability of the Research Instruments

To check the validity and reliability of the research instruments a pilot study was conducted before the actual study. The aim was to assess whether the research instruments functioned well and to check whether they were understood by the respondents. The instruments were piloted in Limuru Archdeaconry which was purposively sampled due to time and finance. After the piloting the study found that some of the questions and terms were not understood for example the word marital conflicts. Rectification and adjustments was done appropriately. Lay readers, Mothers union (M.U) and Kenya Anglican Men Association (K.M.A) were all classified as church leaders. The study also checked the consistency of the data provided.

3.8 Data Analysis Procedures

According to Punch, (Punch, 2006) data analysis is the process of bringing order structure and meaning to the mass of information collected. Therefore, this study used both quantitative and qualitative methods of data analysis. Data analysis started with checking the questionnaires for completeness and accuracy followed by separating the qualitative data from the quantitative data. Quantitative data were summarized in tables, charts and graphs using frequencies (f) and percentages (%).Qualitative data were coded into themes in order to establish patterns trends and relationship among categories. Content analysis was used for qualitative data whereby themes were formulated from the responses given by the respondents.

3.9 Ethical considerations

Macniff, (2009:130) states that ethical consideration was a key aspect in demonstrating critical engagement which involves care for the wellbeing of others and where confidentiality is upheld. Before collection of data, research permit was obtained from National Council of Science and Technology of Kenya. This was followed by seeking permission for Authorization from Kiambu County Commissioners office. Permission was also sought from the County Director of Education which was followed by seeking permission from the Archdeacon Thimbigua Archdeaconry. The Archdeacon welcomed the idea who then informed all the Clergy within the Archdeaconry and requested them to assist the study being undertaken.

Finally, onset for the study was sought from all the participants who voluntarily accepted to participate. Respondents were treated with utmost dignity and respect and any information given was safeguarded. Confidentiality was assured as an affirmation that the information they will provide will only be for the purpose of the study and in under no circumstance will it be manipulated in any way.

3.9 Conclusion

In this chapter all the procedures followed by the study were indicated which were of great help during the field work. The procedures constituted the blueprint for the collection of data. Data collection instruments and their validity and reliability have been indicated.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter focuses on the analysis of data collected and its interpretation. The key issues discussed include demographic information of the respondents, presentations, interpretation and discussions of research findings. The presentations were done based on research questions.

4.2 Questionnaire return rate

The questionnaires distributed to the respondents were divided into five sections. The first section gives the demographic information of the respondents. Section two is about factors contributing to marital conflicts. Section three is for cultural issues. Section four is about Pastoral counseling while Section five deals with interventions to marital conflicts.

A total of 72 questionnaires were distributed to the main respondents (church leaders). This composed of 24 questionnaires for lay readers, 24 for Mothers Union (M.U) executive, 24 questionnaires for Kenya Anglican Men Association (K.A.M.A). The return rate for the main respondents was 71 out of 72 which represent 98.6% were return rate. Another 8 Questionnaires from the key informants were returned representing a return rate of 100. Data analysis was done through both qualitative and quantitative methods whereby analysis started by checking questionnaires for completeness and accuracy. Quantitative data were summarized in tables and charts using percentages which were followed by analysis using descriptive statistics. Qualitative data were coded and categorized into themes in order to establish the patterns trends and relationships among categories. The patterns, trends and the relationships were then used to make general statements to arrive at the conclusions.

4.3 Demographic information of the respondents

This section discusses demographic information of the respondents. The demographic information is based on age, gender, area of residence, level of education and their current occupation which the respondents were asked to indicate on the questionnaire.

4.3.1 Age of the respondents

To find out the age of the church leaders in the churches within Thimbigua Archdeaconry the respondents were asked to indicate the range which they fell in terms of age. Table 2 shows the distribution of respondents by age.

Table 2: Age of respondent

	Frequency(*f*)	**Percent (%)**
Below 31 Years	2	2.8
31-35 Years	5	7.0
36-40 Years	10	14.1
41-45 Years	14	19.7
46-50 Years	18	25.4
51 and above	22	31.0
Total	**71**	**100.0**

Source: Author, 2018

From the findings, the majority of the participants were those above 50 years 31%. This means that the majority of the respondents have real life experiences which were important in answering the research questions under study. Those between 46-50 years represented 25.4% followed by those between 41-45 years 19.7% and 36-40 years 14.1%. Those between 36-40 years represented 7% and those below 31 years represented 2.8%.

4.3.2 Gender of respondents

Table 3: Gender of respondent

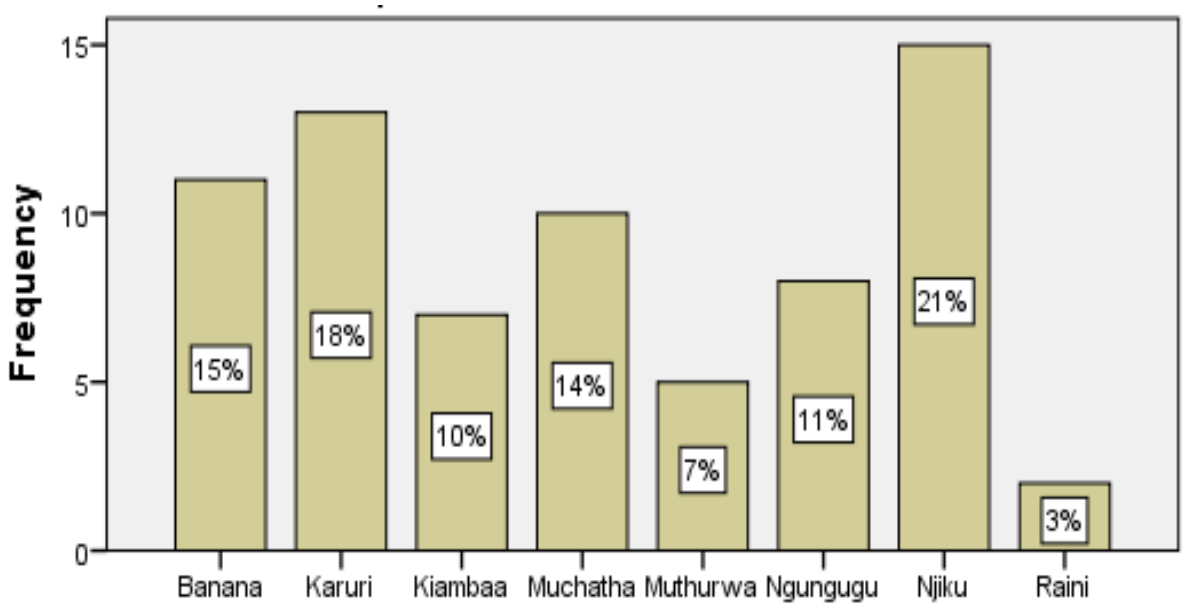
Gender	Frequency (f)	Percent (%)
Male	31	43.7
Female	40	56.3
Total	**71**	**100.0**

Source: Author, 2018

Table 3 gives the proportions of gender and percentages of the respondents. The findings show that female gender represented 56.3% where male gender represented 47.7% therefore this meant that the female gender respondents were the majority.

4.3.3 Respondent's area of residence

Figure 2: Respondent's area of residence



Source: Author, 2018

Based on findings from figure 2, most of the respondents 21% reside in Njiku area, 18%, from Karuri, 15% from Banana, 14% from Mucatha, 11% from Ngegu, 10% from Kiambaa, 7% from Muthurwa and 3% from Raini.

4.3.4 Location of church attended by the respondents.

Table 4: Location of church attended by respondent

Church attended	Frequency	Percent (%)
Muthurwa	21	29.6
Karuri	16	22.5
Muchatha	10	14.1
Njiku	9	12.7
Tiikaya	8	11.3
Banana	7	9.9
Total	**71**	**100**

Source: Author, 2018

The findings from table 4 show the location and the percentage of the churches attended by the respondents. Most of the respondents 29.6% attend church at Muthurwa followed by Karuri with a representation of 22.5%, Mucatha with 14.1%, Njiku with 12.7%, Tiikaya with 11.3% and the least of the respondents 9.9% attend church at Banana. As per the evidence of the above analysis it can be deduced that Muthurwa seems to the best location of the church attended.

4.3.5 Highest level of education

Table 5: Highest level of education

Level of education	Frequency (f)	Percent (%)
Primary	3	4.2
Secondary	30	42.3
Diploma	25	35.2
Bachelor	11	15.5
PhD	2	2.8
Total	**71**	**100.0**

Source: Author, 2018

The findings from table 5 show the distribution of church leaders by academic qualifications. From the analysis, 42.3% of the respondents had a secondary level education. Those who had a

diploma level of education were 35.2%, for those who had Bachelors' degree education were 15.5%, 4.2% represented respondents who had attained primary level education. Respondents who had attained PhD level of education were 2.8%. This means that those who had attained secondary level of education were the majority and greatly influenced the information given.

4.3.6 Current occupation among the respondents

Table 6: Current occupation among the respondents

Occupation	Frequency	Percent (%)
Business	21	29.6
Farmer	17	23.9
Teacher	12	16.9
Clerk	3	4.2
Nurse	3	4.2
Accountant	2	2.8
House wife	2	2.8
Salesman	2	2.8
Technician	2	2.8
Others	7	9.8
Total	**71**	**100.0**

Source: Author, 2018

Table 6 shows the distribution of church leaders in percentages by their occupation. The findings indicate that, 9.6 % were business people, 23.9% were farmers, and 16.9% were teachers. Clerks and nurses each had 4.2% Accountant and house wives, sale and technicians each had 2.8%. The other respondents were Administrator Banker, Evangelist, and Hair dresser, Lecturer, Manager and Tailor who represented 1.4% each. This means that the majority of the respondents were business people.

4.3.7 Number of years in marriage

Table 7: Number of years in marriage

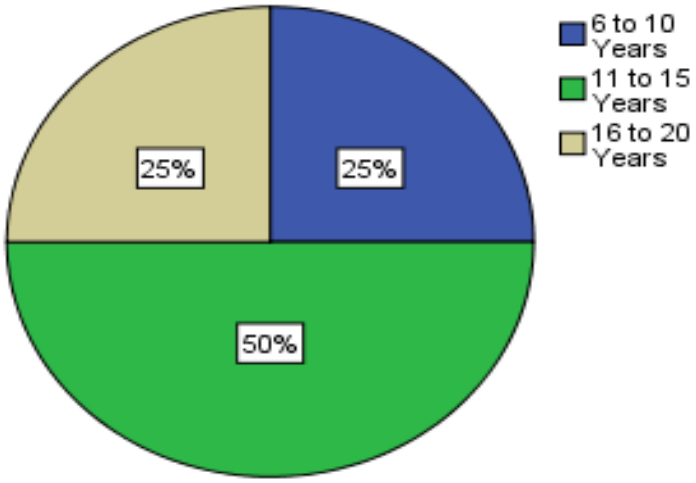
Year in marriage	Frequency	Percent (%)
Below 6	3	4.2
6 to 10 Years	6	8.5
11 to 15 Years	9	12.7
16 to 20 Years	14	19.7
Above 20 Years	39	54.9
Total	**71**	**100.0**

Source: Author, 2018

Table 7 shows the church leaders number of years they had been in their marriage. To get this information the church leaders were asked to indicate the range which they fell in terms of number of years they had been married. There were 54.9% who had 20years and above in marriage. 19.7% fell between 16-20 years, 12.7% fell between 11-15 years, 8.5% were those who fell between 6-10 years and 4.2% were those who 6 years and below in their marriage. From the analysis it can be deduced that the majority of respondents were above 20 years in their marriage.

4.3.8 Marriages prone to marital conflicts

Figure 3: Years in marriage prone to marital conflicts



Source: Author, 2018

Figure 3 shows the prevalence of marital conflicts by duration of marriage. From the findings those between 11 to 15 years in marriage are the most prone to marital conflicts while those in 6 to 10 and 16 to 20 years of their marriage had an equal representation of 25%.

Focused group discussions (FGD) findings as per the guided questions by the researcher shows that the age prone to marital conflicts is between 11- 15 years arguing that this is the period where there are many responsibilities relating to parenting. Majority of the respondents agreed that in this age, couples tend to have many conflicts due to the issue of gender roles, allocation and distribution of duties and responsibilities that are presented to the couple. Members of the groups had heated arguments on communication breakdown and in agreement it was found that communication breakdown was also a factor. Factors like mistrust, infidelity and money issues were among the factors that were raised to be issues that caused conflicts.

4.4 Factors contributing to marital conflicts

4.4.1 Main factors leading to marital conflicts

The study sought to find out the main factors that lead to marital conflicts. The findings are indicated in table 8.

Table 8: Main factors leading to marital conflicts as given by respondents

Factor of Marital Conflict	Frequency	Percent (%)
Money issues	51	25.0
Communication breakdown	42	20.6
Infidelity	23	11.3
Mistrust	18	8.8
Drug and substance abuse	17	8.3
Domestic violence	12	5.9
In laws	10	4.9
Unemployment	7	3.4
Issues of sexual intimacy	5	2.5
Mismatch in marital expectations	4	2.0
Negligence of roles	4	2.0
Lack of premarital preparedness	3	1.5
Others	8	3.9
Totals	**204**	**100.0**

Source: Author, 2018

The findings show that money issues occurred fifty-one times (51) and represents 25%. Communication breakdown appears 42 times and represents 20.6%. Infidelity is another factor and it occurs twenty three (23) times which is 11.3%. Mistrust occurs eighteen (18) times and represents 8, 8%. Drug and substance abuse appears seventeen times (17) and represents 8.3%. Domestic violence has also been indicated as a factor and appears twelve (12) times. Unemployment appears seven (7) times and represents 3.4%. Issues of sexual intimacy appear five (5) times and represent 2.5%. Mismatch in marital expectations appears four (4) times and it represents 2%. Negligence of roles has also been found to be a factor that leads to marital conflict appears four (4) times and represents 2%. Lack of premarital preparedness appears eight (8) times which represents 3.9%. The category tabulated as others includes peer pressure to conform, struggling for gender equality, Lack of spiritual guidance, Lack of transparency, Level of education, Negative attitude towards each other, Problem avoidance, and Religious differences.

4.4.2 Factors causing marital conflict from the key respondents

Table 9: Factors causing marital conflict from the key informants

Factors	Frequency	Percent (%)
Money issues	8	31
Infidelity	6	23
Communication breakdown	4	15
In laws	3	12
Conjugal rights	1	4
Domestic violence	1	4
Role conflicts	1	4
Sexual matters	1	4
Unemployment	1	4
Total	**26**	**100**

Source: Author, 2018

Table 9 shows the findings from the key informants. The findings revealed that Money issues have occurred eight (8) times representing 31%. Infidelity has also been cited to be a factor which has led to marital conflict among couples and it appears six (6) times and represents 23%. Communication breakdown appears four (4) times and has a proportion of 15%. . In laws appears three (3) times and represents 12% respectively. Other factors like Conjugal rights, .domestic violence, Role conflicts, sexual matters and unemployment appear once, which represents 1%.

Focused group discussions (FGD) findings as per the guided questions by the researcher shows that money issues appeared to be the major factor that contributes to marital conflict Members of the groups had a heated argument on communication breakdown and in agreement it was found that communication breakdown was also a factor. Mistrust was also cited to be a factor although members were not committal about the issue. Infidelity appeared also to be a key issue, and out of 15 members of the FGD 12 were strongly in agreement about infidelity, however they could not agree who among the couples is vulnerable to unfaithfulness. Drug and substance abuse was also found to be a factor even as members through their visual expression suggested that Anglican churches have never come out clearly about the issue. Other factors that were of major concern in the discussion were issues related to conjugal rights, in laws and negligence of roles among couples. Based on the above findings it can be deduced that money related issues is the major factor that contributes to marital conflicts. Communication breakdown appears to be the

second major factor. Infidelity also follows closely being the factor leading to marital conflicts among couples.

4.4.3 Couples participation in church

Table 10: Extent of agreement that factors listed decreases couples participation in church

Scale of agreement	Frequency	Percent (%)
Strongly Agreed	39	54.9
Agreed	28	39.4
I don't know	1	1.4
Disagreed	1	1.4
Strongly Disagreed	2	2.8
Total	**71**	**100.0**

Source: Author, 2018

Table 10 gives the information the main factors leading towards marital conflicts. Out of 71 respondents 55% strongly agreed that such factors decrease couples church participation 39% agreed but 1.4% do not know while 1.4% disagreed and 2.8% strongly disagreed. From the above information it can de deduced that the listed factors decrease couples church participation.

4.4.4 Communication breakdown and marital conflicts

Table 11: Extent of agreement that communication breakdown contributes to marital conflict

Scale of agreement	Frequency	Percent (%)
Strongly Agreed	53	74.6
Agreed	16	22.6
I don't know	1	1.4
Strongly Disagreed	1	1.4
Total	**71**	**100.0**

Source: Author, 2018

The analyses in table 11 shows majority of the respondents 97.1% were in agreement that communication breakdown contributes to marital conflicts. 16 which represent 22.5% agree that communication breakdown is a factor that contributes to marital conflict. While only 2.8% disagreed that communication breakdown does not contribute to marital conflicts. From the analysis above it can be proved that communication breakdown is a factor that contributes to

marital conflict. This concurred with (Collins 1988:234) who pursued an idea that communication inefficient contributes to interpersonal relationships and eventually leads pathological marital relationships among couples.

Table 12: Extent of agreement that communication breakdown contributes to marital conflict according to key informants

Scale of agreement	Frequency	Percent (%)
Agreed	1	12.5
Strongly Agreed	7	87.5
Total	**8**	**100.0**

Table 12 shows the results of the extent of agreement that communication breakdown contributes to marital conflicts. The number of those who agreed appears once and it represents 12.5%. Those who strongly agreed appear seven (7) times which is has a proportion of 87.5%. The field finding reveals that all key informants affirmed that communication breakdown contributes to marital conflict.

4.4.5 Drug and substance abuse and its contribution to marital conflicts

Table 13: Extent of agreement that drug and substance abuse contributes to marital conflict

Scale of agreement	Frequency	Percent (%)
Strongly Agreed	42	59.2
Agreed	25	35.2
I don't know	2	2.8
Disagreed	1	1.4
Strongly Disagreed	1	1.4
Total	**71**	**100.0**

Source: Author, 2018

Table 13 shows that majority of the respondents 94.4% confirmed that drug and substance abuse contributes to marital conflicts, while 2.8% were in disagreement and another 2.8% were not aware about substance abuse and its contribution to marital conflicts.

From the analysis it can be deduced that drug and substance abuse is a factor that contributes to marital conflicts. The findings from the analysis supports the study (Talley, 2011: 69)who

pursued the idea that excessive or inappropriate use of drugs and alcohol puts a person in awkward situation in that one cannot be able to fulfill obligations at home or at work.

The study sought to find out from the Parish Vicar's the extent of agreement that drugs and substance abuse contributes to marital conflict. Table 14 shows the findings.

Table 14: Extent of agreement that drug and substance abuse contributes to marital conflict according to the key respondents

	Frequency	Percent (%)
Strongly Agreed	4	50
Agreed	2	25
I don't know	1	12.5
Disagreed	1	12.5
Total	**8**	**100**

Source: Author, 2018

The findings indicate that, 75% of the Vicar's were in agreement that drug and substance abuse contributes to marital conflicts, while 12.5% disagreed and another 12.5% had no answer. From the above findings it has been revealed that both church leaders and the Vicars strongly agreed that drugs and substance abuse was a factor that contributes to marital conflict.

4.4.6 Domestic violence and marital conflicts

Table 15: Extent of agreement that domestic violence contributes to marital conflict

Scale of agreement	Frequency	Percent (%)
Strongly Agreed	46	64.8
Agreed	21	29.6
I don't know	3	4.2
Disagreed	1	1.4
Total	**71**	**100**

Source: Author, 2018

The results in Table 15 revealed that 64.8% strongly agreed that domestic violence contributes to marital conflict. 29.6% agree on the same but 4.2% indicated that they do not know. However, 1.4% disagreed that domestic violence can be a contributor to unhealthy marital relationships among married couples. The study sought to find out whether domestic violence is one of the

factors that contributes to marital conflicts. Findings from the field study prove without beyond doubt that domestic violence actually contributes to unhealthy marital relationships.

The analysis confirms the study by (Collins, 1988:294) who argues that violence and abuse, especially in the home appear to be increasing by the day. The further indicates that it is possible that we are only now beginning to recognize the widespread prevalence of the problem that has been there with us for centuries.

Table 16: Extent of agreement that domestic violence contributes to marital conflict according to the key informants

	Frequency	Percent (%)
Strongly Agreed	3	37.5
Agreed	2	25.0
I don't know	3	37.5
Total	**8**	**100.0**

Source: Author, 2018

Research findings from the key informants as indicated in table 16 reveal that 62.5% were in agreement that domestic violence contributes to marital conflict while 37.5% did not have any idea. Based on the above findings from Vicars and church elders it was clear that domestic violence contributes to marital conflicts.

4.4.7 Mistrust and marital conflicts

Table 17: Extent of agreement that mistrust contributes to marital conflict

Scale of agreement	Frequency	Percent (%)
Strongly Agreed	41	57.7
Agreed	29	40.8
Strongly Disagreed	1	1.45
Total	**71**	**100**

Source: Author, 2018

Table 17 shows the extent of agreement that mistrust contributes to marital conflicts and it has been revealed that it's true that mistrust actually contributes to marital conflicts. This can be attributed to the in-depth analysis which shows that almost all the respondents were in agreement that mistrust contributes to marital conflicts. 98.5% while 1.45% was in disagreement.

The analyzed data supports Skogrand (2011) finding that trust is the most bonding factor which contributes to a couple's long term success. Without trust a relationship lacks security and strong bond and eventually the couple lives in suspicion hence these results to a very strenuous relationship.

Table 18: Extent of agreement that mistrust contributes to marital conflict by key informants

Scale of agreement	Frequency	Percent (%)
Strongly Agreed	7	87.5
Agreed	1	12.5
Total	**8**	**100.0**

Source: Author, 2018

Mistrust contributes to marital conflict. It appears the rate in which domestic violence is strongly agreed that it contributes to marital conflict represents 87.5% which is seven times indicated. The frequency of agreement represent 12.5% meaning that there is strong evidence of domestic violence contributes to marital conflict.

4.4.8 Economic issues and marital conflict

Table 19: Extent of agreement that economic issues contributes to marital conflict

Scale of agreement	Frequency	Percent (%)
Strongly Agreed	38	53.5
Agreed	28	39.4
Disagreed	2	2.8
Strongly Disagreed	3	4.2
Total	**71**	**100**

Source: Author, 2018

Findings from table 19 indicate that majority of the church leaders 92.9% were of the opinion that economic issues highly contribute to marital conflicts while 7% were in disagreement. The findings concur with (Hart, 1984: 134)who postulates the idea that most church leader's families

suffer from financial problems. The struggle can occur when families are not able to provide for their families, the struggle can also be brought about by either the couple or especially women earning more than their husbands.

Table 20: Extent of agreement that economic issues contributes to marital conflict by key respondents

Scale of agreement	Frequency	Percent (%)
Strongly Agreed	5	62.5
Agreed	3	37.5
Total	**8**	**100.0**

Source: Author, 2018

The analysis from table 20 shows that the Key respondents were all in agreement that economic issues contribute to marital conflict. Out of eight (8) times the rate of those who strongly agreed appears five (5) times which is has a representation of 62.5% is. Those who strongly agreed represented 62.5% while those who agreed represented 37.5%. From this, it can be deduced both the Vicar and the church leaders were in agreement that economic issues contribute to marital conflict among couples.

4.5 Factors causing marital conflicts and couples' participation in church activities

To establish the level of agreement that communication breakdown among couples affects their participation in church activities the church leaders were asked to indicate the extent to which they agreed or disagreed that the factors that contributed to marital conflict also lead to the decline in church participation among couples.

4.5.1 Communication breakdown and couples church participation

Table 21: Extent of agreement that communication breakdown affects couples church participation

Scale of agreement	Frequency	Percent (%)
Strongly Agreed	30	42.3
Agreed	34	47.9
I don't know	1	1.4
Disagreed	4	5.6
Strongly Disagreed	2	2.8
Total	**71**	**100**

Source: Author, 2018

Table 21 shows the findings from the field which indicate that majority 90.2% of the church leaders affirmed that communication breakdown affects couples church participation while 8.4% were in disagreement and 1.4% had no idea. From the analysis it can be deduced that communication breakdown strongly affects couple's participation.

Question on the extent of agreement that communication breakdown affects couples church participation was posed in the Focused group discussions (FGDs). From the FGDs, it was found that communication breakdown was a major factor that influenced couples church participation.

4.5.2 Drug and substance abuse and couples church participation

Table 22: Extent of agreement that drug and substance abuse affects couples church participation

Scale of agreement	Frequency	Percent (%)
Strongly Agreed	36	50.7
Agreed	28	39.4
I don't know	4	5.6
Disagreed	2	2.8
Strongly Disagreed	1	1.4
Total	**71**	**100**

Source: Author, 2018

Table 22 indicates that majority of the church leaders 90.1% concurred that drug and substance abuse affects couples' participation in church activities while 4.2% were in disagreement and

5.6% had no idea. From the analysis likelihood is that drug and substance abuse affects couples' participation in church activities.

The FGDs were also involved in finding out the extent of agreement to which drug and substance abuse affect church participation. From the discussions it was evident that drug and substance abuse was a factor that majorly affected couples' participation in church activities as a large number amongst the groups strongly supported this factor.

4.5.3 Domestic violence and couples church participation

Table 23: Extent of agreement that domestic violence affects couples church participation

Scale of agreement	Frequency	Percent (%)
Strongly Agreed	35	49.3
Agreed	27	38
I don't know	5	7
Disagreed	1	1.4
Strongly Disagreed	3	4.2
Total	**71**	**100**

Source: Author, 2018

Findings from table 23 reveals majority of the church leaders 87.3% corresponded that domestic violence really affects couples church participation while 5.6% were in disagreement.

The FGDs were also involved in finding out the extent of agreement that domestic violence affects couples' church participation. From the discussions it was evident that domestic violence was a factor that majorly affected couples' participation in church activities as a large number amongst the groups strongly supported this factor.

4.5.4 Mistrust and couples church participation

Table 24: Extent of agreement that mistrust affects couples church participation

Scale of agreement	Frequency	Percent (%)
Strongly Agreed	31	43.7
Agreed	32	45.1
I don't know	2	2.8
Disagreed	4	5.6
Strongly Disagreed	2	2.8
Total	**71**	**100**

Source: Author, 2018

Findings in Table 24 above indicate that majority of the church leaders 88.8% were in agreement that mistrust affects couple's church participation while 8.4% disagreed and 2.8% had no idea. From the above findings it can be deduced that mistrust affects couples' participation in church activities.

The FGDs were also involved in finding out the extent of agreement to which mistrust affect couples church participation. From the discussions it was evident that mistrust and infidelity were a factor that majorly affected couples' participation in church activities as a large number amongst the groups strongly supported this factor.

4.5.5 Economic issues and couples church participation

Table 25: Extent of agreement that economic issues affects couples church participation

Scale of agreement	Frequency	Percent (%)
Strongly Agreed	29	40.8
Agreed	30	42.3
I don't know	2	2.8
Disagreed	8	11.3
Strongly Disagreed	2	2.8
Total	**71**	**100**

Source: Author, 2018

Results in Table 25 shows that majority of the church leaders 83.1% were in agreement that economic issues affect couple's participation in church activities while 14.1% disagreed and 2.8% had no idea. From the above analysis it can raveled that economic issues affects couples' participation in church activities.

4.6.1 Cultural factors contributing to marital conflicts.

Table 26: Cultural factors contributing to marital conflict as given by respondents

The main aim of the study was to find out the main cultural factors that lead to marital conflicts. Hence, respondents were asked to indicate the cultural factors contributing to marital conflict.

Factor	Frequency	Percent (%)
Dowry demands and payments	26	19.8
Polygamy	18	13.7
FGM	11	8.4
Role conflict	9	6.9
Inheritance of wives and properties	7	5.3
Intermarriages	7	5.3
Marriage interference by in laws	7	5.3
Money issues	4	3.1
Conflicting tribal customs and practices	3	2.3
Different cultural beliefs and background	3	2.3
Ways of dressing	3	2.3
Mistrust	3	2.3
Difference in religious background and beliefs	2	1.5
Gender equality	2	1.5
Incidences of bareness	2	1.5
Incidences of witchcraft	2	1.5
Naming of children	2	1.5
Witchcraft	2	1.5
Others	18	13.7
Total	**131**	**100.0**

Source: Author, 2018

The findings show that the occurrence of dowry payments and demands was registered twenty-six (26) times which represented 19.8% Polygamy registered quite frequently as it occurred eighteen (18) times and it represents 13.7%. The other cultural factor whose occurrence was alarming was the issue of Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) which registered eleven (11) times occurrence and has a proportion of 8.4%, According to the study, conflicts that are attributed to allocation and division of labour occurred nine (9) times and represents 6.9%

Another factor that was registered to occur rather often was property and wife inheritance as it has been recorded seven (7) times representing 5.3%. Intermarriages were mentioned to have occurred seven (7) times also representing 5.3%. The instances of marriage interference by in laws was mentioned to have occurred seven (7) times that is 5.3%, Issues of money were represented four (4) time which is3.1% . An issue of practices and different cultural beliefs and backgrounds and different religious background, Dress code, Mistrust and were recorded to have occurred three (3) and represents 2.3% each.

Incidence of bareness was represented twice (2) representing 1.5%. Conflicts that arise during naming of children was reported to have occurred twice (2) times and it has a proportion of 1.5% respectively. Others as it has been tabulated have a combination of issues like Patriarchal , lack of respect , Domestic violence, character in men where men express by their superiority and the belief that women should not earn more than men among others appears eighteen (18) times representing 13.7%.

Table 27: Cultural factors that cause marital conflict from key respondents

Cultural Factors	Frequency	Percent (%)
Conflicting cultural beliefs and	8	36
Polygamy	4	18
Dowry	3	14
Gender roles	2	9
Conflicting	1	5
Intermarriages	1	5
Role expectations	1	5
Unemployment	1	5
Wife inheritance	1	5
Total	**22**	**100**

Source: Author, 2018

The findings in table 27 indicate the occurrences in which cultural factors have been recorded and its percentages. Conflicting cultural beliefs appears eight (8) times and represents 36%. Polygamy has been found to appear four (4) times which is 18% while dowry payments appeared three (3) times and it's a representation of 14%. Gender roles occur two (2) times which is represented by 9%, intermarriages, conflicting religious decisions, roles, unemployment and wife inheritance appeared once which represents 5% each. Based on the above findings conflicting cultural beliefs and practices has been found to be the major factor cultural factor that causes marital conflicts among couples. Polygamy has also been cited to be among the key cultural factor that causes marital conflicts.

Focused group discussions also dealt with the same question on cultural factors that contributes to marital conflicts and came up with the following findings, For all the FGDS polygamy was found to be the major cultural factor that contributes to marital conflicts whereby members argued that an African men are polygamous by birth. Dowry payments were also cited to be a major factor that leads to marital conflicts. For the members of the groups dowry is not to be termed as a payment but a thanksgiving in return of a wife. Gender roles were also discussed and out of the three groups ten (10) participants were in agreement that gender role among couples. Due to economic hardships which have demanded wives to be on employment men must adjust to the upcoming changes and assist their wives in household chores. Conflicting religious beliefs and practices was also discussed in details citing the fear of taboos. There was a heated arguments concerning this issue because some argued that lack of such practices a person losses a family support system and is regarded as an outcast in the family. Based on the above findings drawn from church leaders, Vicars and FGDS it can be deduced that the dowry payments appear to be the major cultural factor contributing to marital conflicts. Polygamy has emerged to be the second factor that contributes to marital conflicts. Gender roles have also been cited to be the third factor. Intermarriages, in-laws and unemployment were also cited to be among factors that contribute to marital conflicts.

4.6.2 Culture and church participation

Table 28: Explanation on culture as affecting church participation among couples experiencing marital conflict

Explanation	Frequency	Percent (%)
Conflict between cultural and church beliefs, practices and	14	19.7
Feeling morally inadequate, hence discomfort and guilt at church	11	15.5
Fear of being challenged on one's marital situation	7	9.9
No response given	7	9.9
Feeling of inadequate, unaccepted and insecurity at church	7	9.9
Dowry conditions and wedding at church	4	5.6
Poor stewardship among women	3	4.2
Conflict makes partners attend different churches	2	2.8
Creates sense of anger and incompetence hence withdrawal	2	2.8
Doubts on importance of participation	2	2.8
Fear of being treated as unchristian hence feeling insecure	2	2.8
Keeping a safe distance not to expose the conflicts	2	2.8
Misunderstanding and contrasting opinion	2	2.8
Polygamy is against religious teaching	2	2.8
Cooperation or teamwork at home not taken seriously	2	2.8
Conflict affects daily routine	1	1.4
Couple not settled psychologically	1	1.4
Total	**71**	**100.0**

Source: Author, 2018

From the above data in table 28, conflict between cultural practices and church beliefs appear fourteen (14) times and represents 19.7%. Felling morally inadequate appears eleven (11) times which is represented by 15.5%. Fear of being challenged on one's marital situation was recorded seven (7) times which was represented by 9.9%. Feeling of inadequacy, being unaccepted and being insecure in the church appeared seven (7) times representing 9.9%. Dowry conditions and wedding at church was recorded four (4) times and was represented by5.6%. Poor stewardship among women was recorded thrice (3) and was 4.2%. Conflicts make partners attend different churches was recorded twice (2) at 2.8%. Creating sense of anger and incompetence and hence withdrawal was represented twice (2) represented by 2.8%. Doubts on importance of participation, fear of being treated as unchristian hence feeling insecure, keeping a safe distance

so as not to expose the conflicts, misunderstanding and having contrasting opinions were recorded twice (2) and represented by 2.8% respectively. Polygamy is against religious teachings and cooperation or teamwork at home not taken being seriously were recorded twice (2) and represented 2.8% respectively. Conflicts affect daily routine and couple not being settled psychologically were recorded once (1) and represented 1.4% of the respondents.

4.6.3 Extent of agreement that lack of commitment, withdrawal from cell groups, lack of church attendance, are the indicators of decline in church participation.

Table 29: Indicators of decline in Church participation

Scale of agreement	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Strongly agreed	38	53.5
Agreed	28	39.4
I don't know	2	2.8
Disagreed	1	1.4
Strongly disagreed	2	2.8
Total	**71**	**100**

Source Author 2018

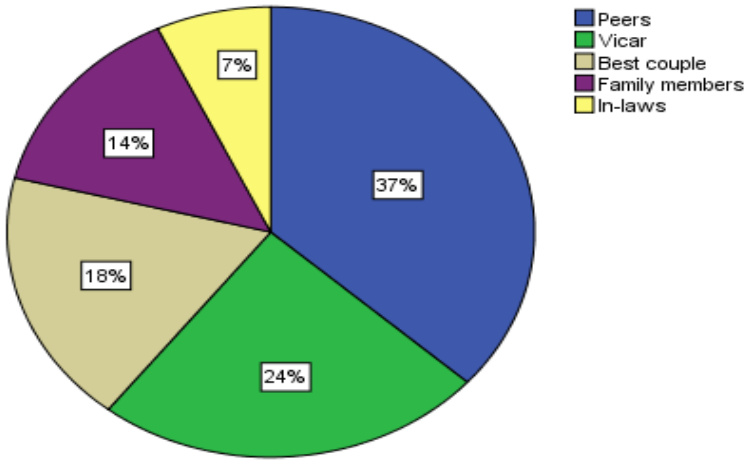
As indicated by table 29, majority of the church leaders 92.9% were in lack of commitment, withdrawal from cell groups and lack of church attendance indicates the decline in church participation among the church leaders. A small number 4.2% were in disagreement while 2.8% had no idea. These findings concurred with Nyomi (2000).

4.7 Pastoral role of the church in enhancing optimal marital relationships

To find out where one was likely to seek help in the face of experiencing marital conflict in their marriage, respondents were asked to indicate who they were likely to go for help. The persons provided were peers, Vicar, Best couple, close family members and in-laws. Figure 4 shows the where church leaders when faced with their own marital conflicts would seek help first.

4.7.1 Where church leaders seek help in face of marital conflict

Figure 4: The probable persons that respondents would seek help in face of marital conflict



Source: Author, 2018

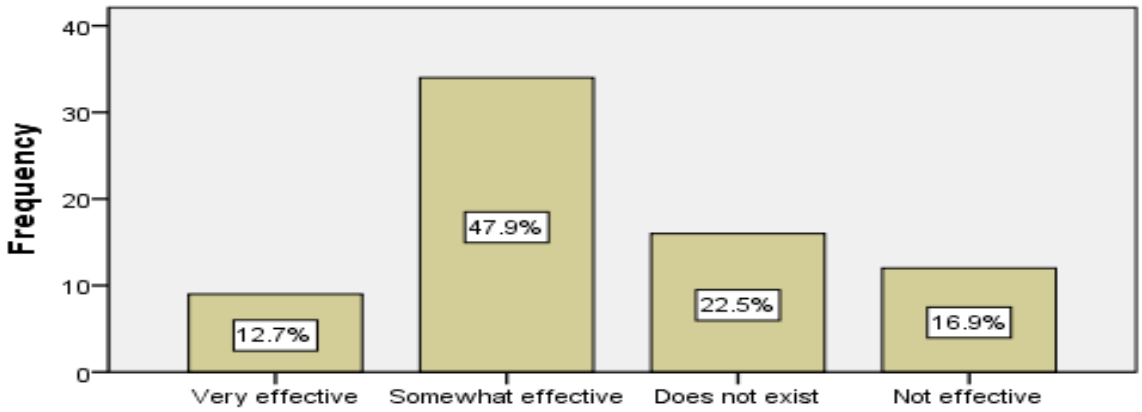
The research findings indicate that; most church leaders 37% indicated that if faced with their own marital conflicts they would seek help first from peers while 24% would seek help from the vicar of the parish, 18% indicated that they would seek help from their best couple first, 14% would seek help from their family members and 7% would prefer the in laws. Thus, it can be deduced that majority of the respondents would seek help from peers.

The FGDs were engaged in finding out the probable persons that respondents would seek help in the face of marital conflict. From the discussions a large number of the respondents argued that they would seek help from their peers. This is because it is more than likely that their peers are going through the same challenges. The rest of respondents argued that they would seek help from the vicar, best couple and even families.

4.7.2 Effectiveness of couples counseling in church

To find out how effective pastoral counseling is in churches in Thimbigua Archdeaconry, the respondents were asked to indicate how effective the pastoral counseling among couples carried out in their church was. Findings are illustrated in figure 5.

Figure 5: Effectiveness of couples counseling in church

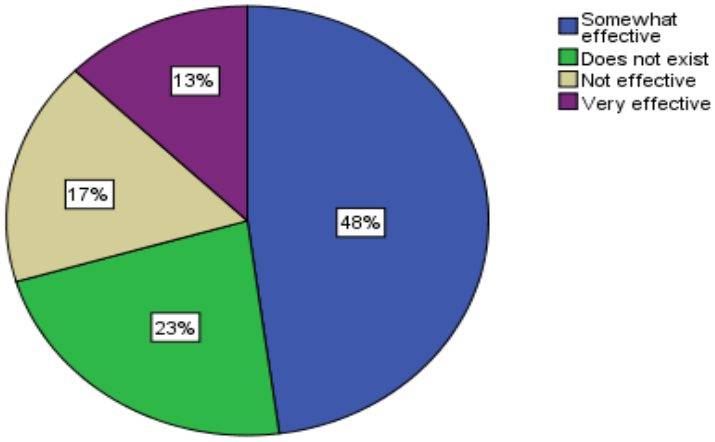


Source: Author, 2018

Majority of the respondents 47.9% indicated that pastoral counseling is somewhat effective, 22.5% indicated that pastoral counseling does not exist, 16.9% pastoral counseling as not effective while 12.7% were of the opinion that pastoral counseling is very effective. From the analysis pastoral counseling in churches must be enhanced.

4.7.3 Effectiveness of pastoral counseling in churches

Figure 6: Effectiveness of pastoral counseling in churches



Source: Author, 2018

Figure 6 presents the proportions of how the church leaders felt about the effectiveness of pastoral counseling in their churches. Most of the church leaders 48% indicated that pastoral counseling in churches was somewhat effective, 23% indicated that pastoral counseling in

churches does not exist. 17% recorded that pastoral counseling in churches is not effective while 13% of the respondents indicated that pastoral counseling in churches was very effective.

4.8 Appropriate strategies used in reducing marital conflicts

4.8.1 Strategies of reducing marital conflicts

Table 30: Ways to reduce marital conflict among couples as proposed by respondents

Ways to reduce marital conflict among couples	Frequency	Percent (%)
Marital counseling and teachings through seminars and retreats	32	41.0
Pastoral visits for counseling and talks to couples	11	14.1
General counseling during church sermons	8	10.3
Premarital teaching, counseling and training	7	9.0
Encourage communication and sharing among couples	6	7.7
Prayers for marital stability at church and cell groups	5	6.4
Marital conflict therapy in groups or by couples	4	5.1
Encouraging self-therapy among couples in conflict	2	2.6
Enhance trust	1	1.3
Fellowship among couples	1	1.3
Seek help from Vicar	1	1.3
Total	**78**	**100.0**

Source: Author, 2018

According to findings in table 30, marital counseling and teachings through seminars and retreats was proposed as the best way of reducing marital conflicts among couples. A pastoral visit for counseling and talks to couples was represented eleven (11) times, recording 14.1%. General counseling during church sermons was recorded eight (8) times, recording 10.3% while premarital teaching, counseling and training appeared seven (7) times, representing 9.0%. Encouraging communication and sharing among couples was recorded six (6) times, representing 7.7%. Prayers for marital stability at church and cell groups appeared five (5) times represented by 6.4%. Marital conflict therapy in groups or by couples and encouraging self- therapy among conflicting couples were among the ways that were suggested by respondents and that were represented four (4) times, 5.1% and two (2) times, 2.6% respectively. Enhancing trust, fellowship among couples and seeking help from the vicar were factors that were recorded once (1) each and representing 1.3% respectively.

Respondents noted that the counseling, teaching and training should emphasize managing marital challenges, group, self and individual couples' therapy, family issues and intimacy. The counseling could be done by grouping couples on age in marriage, with occasional use of guest speakers who are professional in marriage and socio-economic counseling.

4.8.2 Most appropriate strategies for resolving marital conflicts

Table 31: Most appropriate ways for resolving marital conflicts

Most appropriate strategies for resolving marital conflicts	Frequency	Percent (%)
Regular couples retreats and seminars for marriage counseling and team building	33	24.1
Sharing and praying together and seeking God's guidance as individual and group couples	18	13.1
Confidentiality in counseling and role modeling to earn trust	12	8.8
Negotiations and open discussion on marital strains amongst couples	11	8.0
Premarital counseling	9	6.6
Sermons and teachings on marriage, gender roles and obligations	15	10.9
Encouraging communication, dialogue and negotiation among couples	7	5.1
Encouraging couples to seek counseling	6	4.4
Family and peer support in resolving conflicts	6	4.4
Involvement in church groups activities	5	3.6
Mainstreaming counseling programs into church calendar	3	2.2
Training church leaders on emerging issues in marriage, family and counseling	7	5.1
Cultivating respect, interpersonal understanding and forgiveness among couples	3	2.2
Economic empowerment programs	2	1.5
Total	**137**	**100.0**

Source: Author, 2018

Findings from table 31 show that the most preferred strategy to resolve marital conflict was a regular couple retreat, seminars for marriage counseling and team building which was recorded thirty three (33) times, representing 24.1%. Sharing, praying together and seeking Gods guidance as an individual and or group couples was recorded eighteen (18) times and resented by 13.1%.Confidentiality in counseling and role modeling to earn trust and negotiations and open discussion on marital strains among couples were among the strategies that were indicated for resolving conflicts that were represented twelve (12) times, 8.8% and eleven (11) times, 8.0% respectively. Premarital counseling was represented nine (9) times, representing 6.6%. Sermons and teachings on marriage, gender roles and obligations were recorded fifteen (15) times and represented 10.9%. Encouraging communication, dialogue and negotiation among couples and encouraging couples to seek counseling were among the strategies that were recorded by respondents were represented seven (7) times, 5.1% and six (6) times, 4.4% respectively.

Family and peer support in resolving conflicts appeared six (6) times representing 4.4%. Involvement in church group activities was recorded five (5) times representing 3.6%. Mainstreaming counseling programs into church calendar appeared three (3) times, representing 2.2%. Training church leaders on emerging issues in marriage, family and counseling as a strategy for resolving marital conflicts was recorded seven (7) times, representing 5.1%. Cultivating respect, interpersonal understanding and forgiveness among couples and economic empowerment programs were strategies that were represented three (3) times, 2.2% and two (2) times, 1.5% respectively.

4.9 Conclusion

The chapter has been able to present all the findings which the study found from the field. All the findings have been presented either in tables, graphs and pie charts. The data analysis has been done and results given. This then forms the backbone of the study.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, DISCUSSION, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter summarizes the findings of the study and represents conclusions, recommendations and suggestions for further studies.

5.2 Summary of the study findings

The finding of this study was carried out in A.C.K Diocese of Mt. Kenya South, Thimbigua Archdeaconry. The purpose of this study was to establish the factors that contribute to marital conflicts, assess the relationship between marital conflicts and church participation asses the pastoral role of the church in enhancing healthy relationships among couples and to identify strategies to reduce marital conflicts. The objective formulated to guide the study sought to establish the factors which contribute to marital conflicts among church leaders.

The target population consisted of 13 Archdeaconries in A.C.K. Diocese of Mt. Kenya South. The sample was made up to 1 Archdeaconry, 2 Rural Deaneries and 10 parishes. in Thimbigua Archdeaconry, 30 lay readers, 30 Mothers Union (M.U) leaders, 30 Kenya Anglican Men Association (K.A.M A) and 10 Parish Vicars.

The study found quite a number of factors that contribute to marital conflicts, these factors includes; Economic issues, Communication breakdown, Mistrust issues, Domestic violence and Cultural factors among others. The study also found that marital conflicts affects church participation and the indicators given by the respondents included lack of commitment, withdrawal of cell groups and church attendance. Based on the finding, it can be deduced that marital conflict has a direct relationship with decline of church participation.

From the field the respondents indicated that pastoral counseling is somewhat effective and this means that the church needs more effective ways of dealing with marital conflicts. The study has recommended effective ways of resolving marital conflicts; for example, couples attending organized seminars, discussions and team building activities, openly discussing their issues with their partners amongst others.

5.3 Discussion of results

The major factors which have been found to be contributing to marital conflicts are presented in (Table 8) given by key respondents and (Table 9) for the key informants revealed that, economic issue which represents 25% and 31% has been indicated to be the major factor. Due to lack of employment some couples are not able to meet their daily upkeeps. This has made both partners to use most of their time working and struggling to meet their economic stabilities. It has been found therefore that due to financial strains, couples spend less time together and thus unable to communicate effectively.

The findings also revealed that communication breakdown which represents 20.6% and 15% respectively emerges the second major factor that contribute to marital conflicts. The process of a couple becoming one is built on mutual love and honor Communication breakdown results to negative feedback causing strained relationship among couples.

Infidelity 11.3% and 23% has also been found to be factor contributing to marital conflicts. Mistrust 8.8% has also been cited to be a factor that contributes to marital conflicts. Drug and substance abuse 8.3% among others has also been indicated.

.

Cultural factors presented in (Table 26) for the key respondents and (Table 27) for the key informants' shows those dowry payments representing 19.8% while conflicting issues 36% as indicated by key informants were found to be the major cultural issues. Polygamy 13.7% and 18% emerges to be the second factor which contributes to marital conflicts. Focused group discussion concurred with the above findings arguing that; money issues, communication breakdown among others contribute greatly to marital conflicts.

Based on the findings on the relationship of church participation and marital conflict it has been found that; lack of commitment, withdrawal from cell groups, church attendance are some of the indicators of decline in church participation. This proves that when church leaders experience marital conflict then their church participation is affected.

5.4 Conclusion

The study concluded that based on the above findings, it is evident that communication breakdown, economic issues, mistrust and drug and substance abuse contributes to marital conflicts. However, there are other emerging issues that could also be attributed to marital conflicts for instance, sexual issues, beliefs. Gender roles and intermarriages have also been cited as the most recurrent cause of marital conflicts. The study concluded that Cultural issues such as polygamy, gender and dowry payments have been revealed to be the main cultural factors that contribute to marital conflicts. Gender bias issues and men patriarchy as indicated can also be attributed to marital conflicts.

The study also concludes that when the church leaders are faced with their own marital conflicts, they tend to seek help from their peers more than they would the vicar of the parish. From the study, the age bracket that is prone to marital conflict is between 16 – 20 years of marriage. This is because, at this time, the couples are very active in order to sustain their families where in most cases children are in school. With such busy schedules, couples lack time together to plan for their future hence causing strained marital relationships.

Based on the findings from the field the church must work on issues of confidentiality embrace, more training on integration of counseling psychology and pastoral counseling. This would help the vicars and the people concerned with pastoral counseling to be able to learn more effective ways in dealing with marital conflicts.

5.5 Recommendations of the study

Based on the above findings the study has a number of recommendations;

1) Communication skills such as listening skills, giving feedback and skills on verbal and non- verbal communication must be taught in order to help couples to enhance in their marital relationships. Short courses in line with financial management is crucial in that economic factor has emerged to be the major contributor to marital conflicts.

2) A.C.K Thimbigua Archdeaconry has an additional role to play. The church must embrace new ways of interventions in order to meet the needs couples in distress. This can be done by empowering Parish vicars with counseling courses for them to learn new ways of helping.

3) The parish councils must identify secure offices set aside for the purposes of counseling. The Parish vicar should set a different day during the week apart from the official one in order to have counseling sessions without interference.
4) The church should empower couples through regular seminars on how to manage their conflicts in a healthy way. Couples must be taught communication skills, how to keep their emotions on check, embrace positive feedback and learn to appreciate one another in order to enhance healthy relationships.
5) Spiritual principles must be emphasized to empower couples in being honest, trustworthy in their relationships. Couples must be encouraged to have a balance between church activities and family responsibilities.

5.6 Suggestions for further research

The study on marital conflicts among couples and their impact on church participation have succeeded in attaining its objective. Such research can be of much help to other Archdeaconries which were not sampled in order to help the churches in reducing marital conflicts.

Since the study was done in A.C.K Diocese of Mt Kenya South it cannot be generalized to the whole province. A study covering the whole province is necessary so as to arrive at findings that cover a wider area and come up with more findings in order to empower pastoral counselors. This would motivate the church leaders by empowering their marriage partners to be able to support their spouses while in service of the work of God.

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APPENDIX I: QUESTIONNARE FOR MOTHER'S UNION AND KENYA ANGLICAN MEN'S ASSOCIATION CHAIRPERSONS RESPECTIVELY

INTRODUCTION

I am a student at St. Paul's university undertaking a Master Degree in Theology (Counseling option). As a partial fulfillment of the degree, I am carrying out a study on "Marital conflicts among church leaders and its impact on church participation in A.C.K Thimbigua Archdeaconry."

I invite you to participate in answering the following questionnaire items as a respondent in my research. Your acceptance to participate will be taken as consent in itself. I assure you that the information you provide will strictly be used for the purpose of this academic study only. Your identity will be kept confidential.

This questionnaire is divided into 5 sections. Kindly respond by ticking the appropriate box where alternative responses are provided and write your responses where space is provided.

SECTION ONE: BACKGROUND INFORMATION OF RESPONDENTS.

1. What is your age?
   a) Below 31 years [1]
   b) 31 – 35 years [2]
   c) 36 -40 years [3]
   d) 41 -45 years [4]
   e) 46 – 50 years [5]
   f) 51 and above [6]

2. What is your gender?
   a) Male [1]
   b) Female [2]

3. Which is your area of residence? (Indicate Village or Estate)

……..……...

4. Where is your church located?

……..……

5. Which is your Archdeaconry?

……..……..…….

6. Which is your highest level of education?

a) Primary level of education [1]
b) Secondary school level of education [2]
c) Diploma/ Tertiary level [3]
d) Bachelor's degree [4]
e) Master's level [5]
f) PhD level [6]

7. What is your current occupation?

……
……

SECTION TWO: FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO MARITAL CONFLICT.

1. How long have you been married?
   a) Below 6 years [1]
   b) 6 -10 years [2]
   c) 11 - 15 years [3]
   d) 16 - 20 years [4]
   e) Above 20 years [5]

2. What are the main factors leading towards marital conflicts? Specify.

……
……
……
……

3. To what extent would you agree or disagree that the above factors are likely to lead to a decline in couple's participation in church activities?

Strongly Agree	Agree	I don't know	Disagreed	Strongly Disagreed
[1]	[2]	[3]	[4]	[5]

4. In your opinion to what extent would you agree or disagree that the following factors are likely to contribute to marital conflict?

	Strongly Agree	Agree	I don't know	Disagreed	Strongly Disagreed
a) Communication breakdown	[1]	[2]	[3]	[4]	[5]
b) Drug and substance abuse	[1]	[2]	[3]	[4]	[5]
c) Domestic violence	[1]	[2]	[3]	[4]	[5]
d) Mistrust	[1]	[2]	[3]	[4]	[5]
e) Economic issues	[1]	[2]	[3]	[4]	[5]

5. To what extent would you agree or disagree that the following factors are likely to lead to a decline in church participation?

	Strongly Agree	Agree	I don't know	Disagreed	Strongly Disagreed
a) Communication breakdown	[1]	[2]	[3]	[4]	[5]
b) Drug and substance abuse	[1]	[2]	[3]	[4]	[5]
c) Domestic violence	[1]	[2]	[3]	[4]	[5]
d) Mistrust	[1]	[2]	[3]	[4]	[5]
e) Economic issues	[1]	[2]	[3]	[4]	[5]

5. CULTURAL FACTORS THAT CONTRIBUTE MARITAL CONFLICTS.

1. Please specify 3 main cultural issues that lead to marital conflict.

……
……
……

2. Do you think that the above factors affect church participation? Explain your answer.

……
……
……

SECTION THREE: RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN MARITAL CONFLICTS AND CHURCH PARTICIPATION

1. To what extent would you agree or disagree that lack of commitment, lack church attendance and withdrawal from cell groups indicates the decline of church participation among church leaders.

……
……

SECTION FOUR: PASTORAL COUNSELING

1. If faced with your own marital conflict, where are you most likely to seek help first?
   a) In-laws [1]
   b) Family members [2]
   c) Peers (close friends) [3]
   d) Best couple [4]
   e) Vicar [5]
   f) Others (Specify) _____

2. How effective is the pastoral counseling in your church among couples?
   a) Very effective [1]
   b) Somewhat effective [2]
   c) Not effective [3]
   d) Does not exist [4]

SECTION FIVE: INTERVENTIONS TO MARITAL CONFLICTS

1. In your opinion in what ways can marital conflicts among church going couples be reduced?

……
……
……

2. In your opinion, what would be the most appropriate strategy for resolving marital conflicts among church going couples?

……
……
……
……

APPENDIX II: VICAR'S QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Which of the following group would you say has the highest chance of experiencing marital conflict?
   a) Those in marriage for less than 6 years [1]
   b) Those in marriage for 6 -10 years [2]
   c) Those in marriage for 11 - 15 years [3]
   d) Those in marriage for 16 - 20 years [4]
   e) Those in marriage for more than 20 years [5]

2. In your opinion, what factors contribute to marital conflict?

……
……
……

3. What are the cultural issues that lead to marital conflicts among married couples?

……
……
……

4. In your opinion to what extent would you agree or disagree that the following factors are likely to contribute to marital conflict?

	Strongly Agree	Agree	I don't know	Disagreed	Strongly Disagreed
a) Communication breakdown	[1]	[2]	[3]	[4]	[5]
b) Drug and substance abuse	[1]	[2]	[3]	[4]	[5]
c) Domestic violence	[1]	[2]	[3]	[4]	[5]
d) Mistrust	[1]	[2]	[3]	[4]	[5]
e) Economic issues	[1]	[2]	[3]	[4]	[5]

5. To what extent would you agree or disagree that the following factors are likely to lead to a decline in church participation?

	Strongly Agree	Agree	I don't know	Disagreed	Strongly Disagreed
a) Communication breakdown	[1]	[2]	[3]	[4]	[5]
b) Drug and substance abuse	[1]	[2]	[3]	[4]	[5]
c) Domestic violence	[1]	[2]	[3]	[4]	[5]
d) Mistrust	[1]	[2]	[3]	[4]	[5]
e) Economic issues	[1]	[2]	[3]	[4]	[5]

6. In your own opinion, which measures can the church put in place to reduce marital conflict?

……
……
……
……

APPENDIX III: SCHEDULE FOR INTERVIEW GUIDE

1. Demographic information such as;
   i) Gender
   ii) Area of residence
   iii) Location of your church
   iv) Which is your Archdeaconry
2. Factors contributing to marital conflicts

   ……
   ……
3. In your own opinion does communication breakdown, economic issues, mistrust, domestic violence, substance abuse and culture contribute to marital conflict?

   ……
   ……
4. Do you think that such factors lead to decline in church participation?

   ……
   ……
5. Do you think that lack of commitment, withdrawal from cell groups and lack of church attendance indicates a decline in church participation?

   ……
   ……
   ……
6. In your own opinion give more indicators of decline in church participation.

   ……
   ……
   ……
7. If faced with your own marital conflict where are you likely to seek help?

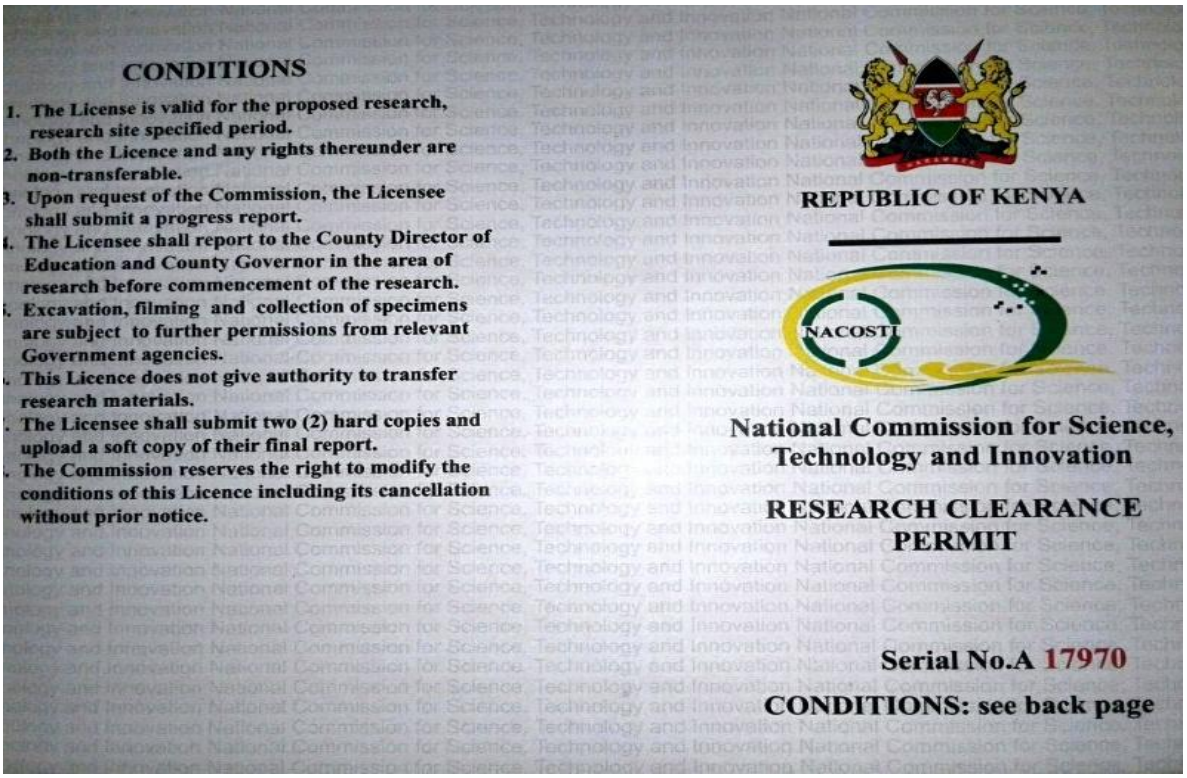
   ……
   ……
   ……..,……..
8. How effective is pastoral counselling in your church?

   ……
   ……
9. In your own opinion which ways can marital conflicts be reduced among church leaders.

   ……
   ……
10. In your own opinion which measures can the church put in place to reduce marital conflicts?

    ……
    …….

APPENDIX IV: RESEARCH CLEARANCE PERMIT



CONDITIONS

1. The License is valid for the proposed research, research site specified period.
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.

REPUBLIC OF KENYA

NACOSTI

National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation

RESEARCH CLEARANCE PERMIT

Serial No.A 17970

CONDITIONS: see back page



THIS IS TO CERTIFY THAT:
MS. TABITHA WANJA MBURU
of ST PAUL UNIVERSITY, 0-217
Limuru,has been permitted to conduct
research in *Kiambu County*

on the topic: *DISCONNECTED RELATIONSHIPS AMONG MARRIED COUPLES AND THEIR IMPACT ON CHURCH PARTICIPATION IN A.C.K DIOCESE OF MT.KENYA SOUTH*

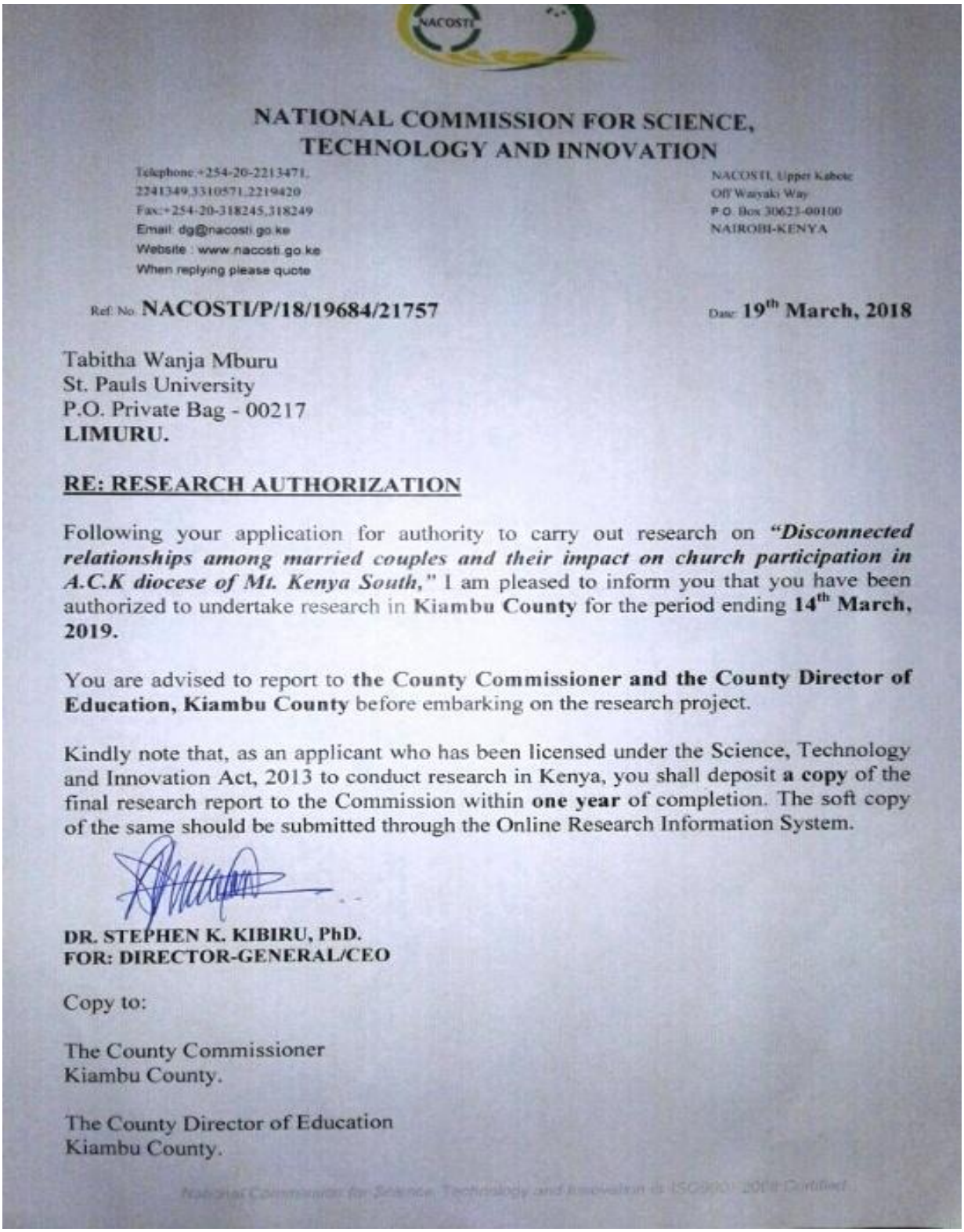
for the period ending:
14th March,2019

.....
Applicant's Signature

Permit No : NACOSTI/P/18/19684/21757
Date Of Issue : 19th March,2018
Fee Recieved :Ksh 1000

.....
Director General
National Commission for Science, Technology & Innovation

APPENDIX V: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION LETTER



NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR SCIENCE,
TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION

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

NACOSTI, Upper Kabete
Off Waiyaki Way
P.O. Box 30623-00100
NAIROBI-KENYA

Ref. No. **NACOSTI/P/18/19684/21757**

Date: **19th March, 2018**

Tabitha Wanja Mburu
St. Pauls University
P.O. Private Bag - 00217
LIMURU.

RE: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION

Following your application for authority to carry out research on ***"Disconnected relationships among married couples and their impact on church participation in A.C.K diocese of Mt. Kenya South,"*** I am pleased to inform you that you have been authorized to undertake research in **Kiambu County** for the period ending **14th March, 2019.**

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.

DR. STEPHEN K. KIBIRU, PhD.
FOR: DIRECTOR-GENERAL/CEO

Copy to:

The County Commissioner
Kiambu County.

The County Director of Education
Kiambu County.

National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation is ISO9001: 2008 Certified

APPENDIX VI: PERMIT TO CONDUCT RESEARCH STUDY

A.C.K DIOCESE OF MT KENYA SOUTH
THIMBIGUA ARCHDECONRY

Archdeacon
VEN. RUFUS GITHAIGA

CELL: +254720030086
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rufus_ githaiga@yahoo.com

St Stephen's Thimbigua
Located between Muchatha and Banana Town.
along Limuru rd
P.O. Box 40 Karuri.

21ST MARCH 2018

TO: ALL VICARS

RE: PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH STUDY

Receive Christian greetings in Jesus Name.

I am writing to request you to allow **Tabitha Mburu** to undertake a research on Disconnected Relationships among Couples and their Impact on Church Participation.

In connection with this, I would like to ask you to help her to provide the necessary data for her research.

Thank you for your consideration.

Yours in Christ Vineyard,

VEN.RUFUS GITHAIGA

ARCHDEACON THIMBIGUA ARCHDEACONRY.