

The influence of father absence on emotional adjustment of adolescent among secondary school learners in Makueni Sub- County, Kenya

Lucy M. Musembi, Dr. Joel Kiambi Muriithi*, Dr. Florence W. Githuthu*

*Department of Counseling Psychology, Faculty of Arts and Social Science
Affiliation: The Catholic University of Eastern Africa, Nairobi City, Kenya*

**Corresponding authors*

Abstract: Adolescents living without father figures are likely to encounter some psycho-social challenges. Therefore, this study sought to investigate the influence of father absence on emotional adjustment of adolescent among secondary school learners in Makueni-Sub County, Kenya. The study adopted quantitative descriptive survey design a total sample of 344 respondents, all form three students sampled through non-random. Data was collected through questionnaires. Analysis for quantitative data was done using descriptive statistics involving means and frequencies, and inferential statistics involving chi-square and Pearson correlation. This process was aided by use of a computer program, Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) Version 28. The study established a correlation between the availability of father or male figure and adolescents' psychosocial wellbeing. To establish the influence of father absence on emotional adjustment, a regression analysis was conducted, and the findings showed that, and P value was above 0.005 significant level. Therefore, according to the results presented, father-absence did not have significant influence emotional regulation among adolescents. On father absence and social behavior among secondary school learners in Makueni Sub-County, regression analysis findings showed a P value which is less than the 0.005 level of significance. This revealed that the independent variable had an influence on the dependent variable. Thus, father-absence had an influence on social behavior among secondary school learners in Makueni Sub-County, Kenya. The informed conclusions shed light on the complexities of fatherlessness and absent fathers. Multiple stakeholders may benefit from the findings of the study including adolescents, caregivers, psychologists, teachers, policy makers and parents, by knowing the psychological effects of father's absence on the adolescents' development hence adapting appropriate strategies to deal with the challenges.

Key words: Father Absence, Social emotional adjustments, adolescents, secondary schools

I. INTRODUCTION

What an individual acquires is largely dependent on the environment in which they are brought up, the kind of personalities they associate with as well as the culture in which they are brought up in. There is much evidence that support the view that the father is one of those important persons. Thus, when he is absent from the home, it is highly likely that the children will experience some inconveniences. There is also considerable evidence to suggest that children

experience some confusion, if not hardship, as they make a transition from childhood into adolescence and out of it into adulthood. Parental guidance of both mother and father in the home setting is therefore very key during this time of transition, since they each have distinct roles to play in the nurturing of their young ones. The family as a social institution is present in all cultures. It is the basic unit of society, and it introduces children to intimate, personal relationships, and gives them their first experiences of being treated as distinct individuals. The Oxford English dictionary, as cited by Soanes and Stevenson (2009), defines a family as a group consisting of two parents and their children living together as a unit. In most societies, the family is the key institution for the socialization of children, as they grow up, people experience two periods of intense growth, that is, early childhood and adolescence.

Childhood is a stage during which a child understands the world and society from the parents. Children as such undergo different phases of development from infancy through adolescence, and Parents provide a strong base from which the child can venture out to assert their will as well as be encouraged to foster autonomy. One develops courage, independence, a sense of judgment, taking initiative and prepares for good achievement and leadership roles for the future. One may develop destructive or negative behavior because of a sense of frustration for not being able to achieve a goal as planned. As such, the family is considered the primary institution in the society that a child learns all these, especially from the parents, the father being one of them. East, Jackson, and O'Brien (2006) observe that father absence has implications for adolescents. In all societies, adolescence is a time of growing up, of moving from the immaturity of childhood into the maturity of adulthood, of preparation for the future (Steinberg, 2017). In most of our societies, it is characteristic that fathers and mothers tend to have different ways of relating to their children and so they provide different socialization experiences. It therefore follows that the absence of both or one of the parents in turn has lasting effects on the children. All the same, in the contemporary society, the number of single parents has been rising at a higher rate, the incidence of absent fathers is a phenomenon that is influenced by a wide range of factors. Oliner (2011) posits that, the world

began to radically change with the social, economic, and technical advances of the 20th century, and with those changes came a basic change in the structure and function of the family, with a consequent shift in the authority of the father. His influence was increasingly seen as minor, even negligible, and his importance was defined by how well he provided for the family. There is a generalized social view that tend to imply that mother's care and love is of more superior importance than the father's, leading to a lack of attention to father's absence and an overwhelming acknowledgement of maternal impact.

Traditional gender roles and identity tend to view mothers as the main parental figure in child rearing, whereby the mother is seen as the child's main care giver. This tendency spreads the view that the mother is responsible for a child's psychosocial wellbeing, and in addition, the development of maladaptive behaviors. For instance, when a child exhibits habitual unacceptable behavior, the mother is usually criticized for being uncaring and even blamed for not bringing up the child well. On the contrary, when a child turns out fine, many a times the praises and compliments don't go to the child's mother but to the father. This example serves to emphasize the fact that fathers are nonetheless indispensable contributors to important aspects in a child's healthy upbringing. Father absence and fatherlessness is a worldwide phenomenon and a worldwide tendency in communities. Research done in twenty-one countries of the world, that is: America, Russia, South Africa, Brazil, Grenada, Seychelles, Chattanooga among others, revealed that in every country, father absence and fatherlessness was identified as the biggest problem (Freeks, 2013). According to Munroe (2008), the root cause of many socio-economic problems and challenges are the absence of fathers in our world. This is unfortunate for children in many societies today, because these children do not have fathers in their homes, and they do not have the benefit of a father to help cultivate within them the integrity and respect they need for God, parents, people, and society. Hence, the greatest contemporary problems about the maturation of children, is the failure of many fathers to resolve their identity crisis vis-a-vis being a father (Castillo 2010).

In support of the fact that father absence is becoming a global problem, Kwakye (2020) indicate that it is estimated that more than 20 million children live in a home without the physical presence of a father. Millions more have dads who are physically present but emotionally absent, and so these compounds the problem of fatherlessness. Some kids have fathers who are generally present in person but, the responsibilities they must discharge which connect them to their kids are non-existent. This means being a father is not just being available but being involved in a child's upkeep, training, and development. For many African families, usually the father is alleged to be the main economic provider. In some cases, the person recognized as being the head of the household - the father in this case- is not a regular resident member of the household (Nnoko-Mewanu, 2020). In some

instances, the polygamous husband who may be the head of several households, or the husband who has migrated to the city leaving his wife and children behind in the village. In such situations, the father, who is still the main authoritative figure in the home is absent for some proportion of the time. Other fathers may be away from home for different reasons like demise, divorce, or separation. For these reasons, reduced father involvement in adolescent's development is expected to have a disadvantageous implication on their well-being (United Nations, 2011).

According to Pala (2018), in Africa, Kenya has one of the highest levels of children living without their fathers in the home. Munguti and Kamaara (1999) state that the most extensive form of the family in Kenya is the extended family, which, in many precolonial societies, functioned as an informal social insurance system, or mutual support mechanism where members of the family lineage felt strongly obliged to care for one another. This, however, has been changing due to residential patterns and structures springing from the colonial and post-colonial economic systems. The role of the extended family, to some extent, has declined giving way to nuclear families (Eastin, 2003). Economic constraints, with the father generally seen as the primary bread winner, and rural-urban migration have spread the members of the family over large distances, and lack of day-to-day contact has weakened the rights and obligations within the family group (Munguti & Kamaara, 1999). This has led to alterations in society, which in turn, may result to weakened ability of families to successfully care and raise children.

According to Pala (2018), the Kenya Demographic and Health Survey (KDHS) report in 2014 stated that nearly half (45%) of all children in Kenya do not live with both biological parents. The death of father accounts for only 5.3% of households; 22% of children in Kenya live with their mothers while their fathers are alive and live elsewhere. A widely quoted Pan-African study in 2012 by Canadian Sociologists Prof Shelly Clark of McGill University and Dana Hamplova from Prague's Charles University and Institute of Sociology reported a 60% probability of a single motherhood for a Kenyan woman by the age of 45. The factors attributed to birth outside marriage and the breakup of the marriage union (Pala, 2018). Again, despite the alarming statistics on father absence among many Kenyan families, there seem to be no empirical data on the effects of father absence on the adolescent's social and emotional development, even though more children are increasingly growing up without a father figure in their homes. Therefore, this study intends to assess the impact that the absence of the father has on the early adolescents' psychosocial development. It particularly focused on how father absence affects adolescent's emotional development.

II. METHODOLOGY

Research design

The Descriptive survey method for quantitative was used in this study. The method was found very effective to scan

through a large population, and for academic research due to limited time and resources. Descriptive survey aims to establish the range and distribution of social characteristics. This was necessary for this study because it gives a clear explanation of the characteristics of the population under study. This was done through self-rated questionnaires which allowed for anonymous search into the thought processes of large numbers of people simultaneously thus creating an opportunity to describe what is not outwardly observable.

Target Population

The target population for this study was 48 secondary schools in Makueni Sub-County. The secondary schools were targeted because it is where large population of adolescent aged 13- 18 years are found. The Sub-County has five educational zones, namely: Kee, Mukuyuni, Kilala, Wote and Mulaani. According to information obtained from Makueni Sub-County education department office records, the total population of students in the secondary schools is 15,889 (Elimu Centre, 2021). However, for the purpose of this study, only the form three students were involved. The population of the form three students in the entire Sub-County is 2,016 (Elimu Centre, 2021). Form three adolescents were targeted since they are at a transitional stage from childhood to adulthood, during which parental guidance and involvement from both parents is crucial.

Inclusion/Exclusion Criteria

The following was the criteria utilized to select the needed respondents, first, one had to be a secondary school student, secondly, one had to be studying in a school in Makueni Sub-County, third one must have been sampled and lastly, one must have been given informed consent for participation.

Subject Selection

The study focused on a sample drawn from 2,016 students who are in form three. The form three students were targeted since they have been in the school for two years and so they are considered to have settled in their schools as compared to form one and two students, and so are in a better position to respond to items in the questionnaire. Form four students were not involved in the study since they are busy preparing for the National Examination. The sample size of the form three students was obtained using Yamane 2001 formula as follows:

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

Where N = Target Population (2,016)

n = sample size

e = significance level =5%

$$= \frac{2016}{1 + 2016(0.05)^2}$$

$$= \frac{2016}{1 + 2016(0.0025)}$$

$$= 333.8$$

Therefore, n = 334 students.

From Yamane's formula, the sample size for this study was 334 form three students. A non-randomized sampling technique was used to sample 334 students from the ten schools selected for the purpose of the study. This approach was informed by the need of engaging with participants from different types of family structures. Since there are five zones, simple random technique was used to select two schools in each zone and proportionate sampling was used to get the number of students to participate from each school.

Research Instrument

The present study used questionnaire which was prepared by the researcher with the help of research experts. The questionnaire was constructed based on the research objective and was subdivided into four sections. Section A of the questionnaire focused on the demographic information of the respondents; Section B sought information about father absence situation. Section C was seeking information about emotional adjustment of adolescents. Section D focused on social behavior

Validity of Research Instrument

Both content validity and face validity were used to validate the instruments. To ensure content validity, the researcher submitted the questionnaires for scrutiny and review to the research supervisors at CUEA to check on their content and face validity. In addition, a pilot test was undertaken through issuance of the questionnaire to 20 participants who were not part of the actual study. The researcher engaged in various steps to guarantee quality. The collected data was cleaned through a spreadsheet to make sure the responses reflect on the underlying research variables, discerning the psychosocial effects of absent fathers among adolescents. Moreover, principal components analysis (PCA) was used to enable quantification and measurability of the research questions. Hence, the researcher was better positioned to adequately discuss the underlying themes. Internal consistency was established by measuring how the questions addressed the underlying identified factors. The questionnaire validity and accuracy were thus understood through the above identified steps. Moreover, the study's validity was further reinforced through National Longitudinal Survey of Adolescent Health, a standardized questionnaire seeking to discern children's mental health. Thus, the researcher sought to adapt the survey's questions to reflect on the study objectives and goals. Combining these two strategies proved useful in guaranteeing validity and reliability of the collected data.

Reliability of the Research Instrument

The researcher used test-retest reliability test to check the reliability of the scale in Makueni County, Kenya. This was done by administering the scale to students in two secondary schools in Makueni County which were not among the sampled schools. The exercise was done at an interval of two weeks. The responses on the two occasions were correlated and obtained internal consistency of 0.83. The reliability was

carried out using SPSS version 28 and was based on Cronbach's alpha analysis of instruments that the alpha of: $\alpha < 0.5$ was considered unacceptable, $0.5 \leq \alpha < 0.6$ was considered poor, $0.6 \leq \alpha < 0.7$ was considered acceptable, $0.7 \leq \alpha < 0.9$ was good, and $\alpha \geq 0.9$ was considered excellent.

Data Collection Procedures

The researcher systematically adhered to the recommended data collection procedures. To begin with, the researcher sought a research authorization letter from CUEA, NACOSTI and Makueni County Education department office prior to the commencement of the data collection exercise. These letters were presented to the principals of the sampled secondary schools to seek their approval to conduct data collection in their institutions. After being granted permission, the researcher visited to the schools to meet the coordinators of this exercise in the schools sampled. On the day of data collection, consent from the participants was sought and they were required to sign on the questionnaire forms to that effect. Those who consented to participate were assured of privacy and confidentiality of the information they would provide. Although the intention was to administer in one day on each of the schools sampled to minimize cases of unanswered or lost questionnaires, adequate time was given for the entire exercise to ensure everyone targeted was able to participate. This was so bearing in mind that the COVID-19 era may not allow for quick data collection.

Methods of Data Analysis

Data analysis refers to the process of examining the collected data with the aim of making deductions and inferences (Kalton, 2021). Data analysis exercise is therefore meant to analyze and interpret data collected from the field to make it more meaningful to a general reader. After the data was cleaned and coded, since it was quantitative data, it was analyzed using descriptive statistics which involved means and frequencies, and inferential statistics mainly chi-square and correlation. This process was aided by a computer program which is the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) Version 28.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Influence of Absent Fathers on Emotional Adjustment of Adolescents

The main purpose of this study was to identify how father absence influence the psychosocial development of the adolescents. In particular, the study sought to establish the influence of father absence on emotional adjustment of adolescent learners in Makueni Sub-County. Emotional adjustment was therefore key indicator in establishing the relationship between the study variables. Parental Status and emotional wellbeing of adolescents was measured using various elements, and the findings were presented and discussed.

Prenatal Status and Unexplained Sadness Distribution

Respondents were requested to state their emotional disposition in terms of how they experienced feelings of sadness with no reason in relation to who they lived with. They did this by indicating their level of agreement using a scale rated as: Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D), Strongly Disagree (SD). This was sought to establish whether the presence of a father figure can influence how someone handled their emotional adjustment of experienced sadness. The findings were rated in two categories of whether they agreed (A) or disagreed (DA) as presented in figure 1.

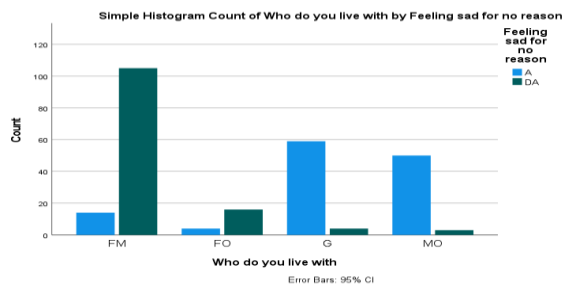


Figure 1: Simple Histogram of who respondents lived with and feelings of sadness for no reason

The histogram on figure 1 establishes a consistent pattern on various aspects related to the research variables. In this context, the chart establishes a correlation between the relationship of feeling sad for no reason and who the participants lived with. Participants with father and mother demonstrated lowest trend of feeling sad for no reason as they disagreed of feeling sad for no reason. In addition, individuals living with fathers only reported low unexplained sadness. Conversely, feelings of sadness for no reason were significantly high among those residing with their mothers only and guardians. Subsequently, the results illustrate relationship between respondent's father resident and feeling sad for no reason.

Gender and Unexplained Sadness Distribution

The researcher sought to establish whether an individual's gender influenced the way one is inclined to feelings of unexplained sadness. This was done by indicating whether one agreed (A) or disagreed (DA) to experiencing feelings of sadness for no reason. Gender distribution and feelings of unexplained sadness is presented in a simple histogram below.

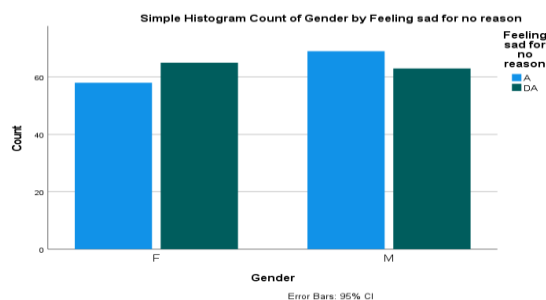


Figure 2: Simple Histogram Count of Gender and Unexplained Feelings of Sadness

From a gender point of view, male respondents reported a relatively high proportion of feeling sad for no reason as demonstrated in figure 6. Nearly half of the male respondents reported to have unexplained sadness. On the other hand, the female respondents reported the lowest trend of not feeling sad for no reason. Thus, gender was identified as a determining factor on whether the participant was inclined to feel unexplained sadness.

Parental Status and Feeling Lonely

The frequency and percentage of feelings of loneliness was analyzed and the findings presented. Table 2 indicate that 52.2% of the respondents affirmed to be feeling lonely while 47.8% disagreed to similar emotions.

Table 1: Feelings of Loneliness among Respondents

Feeling Lonely					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	A	133	52.2	52.2	52.2
	D	122	47.8	47.8	100.0
	Total	255	100.0	100.0	

The use of crosstabulation enabled establishment of detailed correlations between availability of father figures and adolescents’ emotional wellbeing. Table 3 demonstrates that, all 79 participants without male figures at home agreed to feel lonely compared to 20 of the 119 living in intact family setting. In addition, respondents living with their mother and have male figures had lower risk of being lonely. For example, 5 out of the 17 respondents that had male figures disagreed to feeling lonely. The study established that presence of male figures decreased participants inclination to feeling lonely. Such postulation is supportable by the inherent difference among the participants with and without male figures as presented in table 3.

Table 2: Cross Tabulation of Parental Status and Feeling Lonely

Who do you live with * Do you feel lonely * Available male figures at home Crosstabulation					
Count					
Available male figures at home			Do you feel lonely		Total
			Agree	Disagree	
No	Who do you live with	Guardian	43		43
		Mother only	36		36
	Total		79		79
Yes	Who do you live with	Father and mother	20	99	119
		Father only	4	16	20
		Guardian	18	2	20
		Mother only	12	5	17
	Total		54	122	176
Total	Who do you live with	Father and mother	20	99	119
		Father only	4	16	20
		Guardian	61	2	63
		Mother only	48	5	53
	Total		133	122	255

Parental Status and Feeling Shy in Social Environment

Similar social abilities trends are replicated in table 3, demonstrating that male availability influenced respondent’s inclination to feeling shy while in social environment. Respondents from intact families had lower inclination to shyness. Only 32 respondents of the 119 agreed to feeling shy. However, there was unique aspect, father only and father and mother population had a considerable number of the sample agreeing to feeling shy in social environment. Table 4 presents the findings.

Table 3: Cross Tabulation of Parental Status and Feeling Shy in Social Environment

Who do you live with * Feeling shy in social environment * Available male figures at home Crosstabulation						
Count						
Available male figures at home			Feeling shy in social environment			Total
			Agree	Disagree	Strongly Agree	
No	Who do you live with	Guardian	35	8		43
		Mother only	21	15		36
	Total		56	23		79
Yes	Who do you live with	Father and mother	32	80	7	119
		Father only	12	8	0	20
		Guardian	10	10	0	20
		Mother only	8	9	0	17
	Total		62	107	7	176
Total	Who do you live with	Father and mother	32	80	7	119
		Father only	12	8	0	20
		Guardian	45	18	0	63
		Mother only	29	24	0	53
	Total		118	130	7	255

Parental Status, Gender, and Feeling Shy in Social Environment

The researcher sought to find out whether availability of a father figure and experiencing shyness in social environment had any connection with gender of the respondent. Female respondents with or without a father agreeing to feeling shy in social environment were 78 out of 255, while males were 47 out of 255. However, considering the availability of a father figure, male respondents without a father figure reflected a higher frequency than females without a father figure. Males who admitted to feeling shy had a frequency of 32 out of 56 while females were 24 out of 56. Those with a father figure and admitted to feeling shy were 15 out of 62 while females were 47 out of 62. Therefore, the findings showed that male respondents without a father figure were more prone to feeling shy in social environment than their female counterparts without a father figure. Therefore, the study established that gender was an influential factor in participants’ inclination to feeling shy is social environments. Table 5 illustrates that presence of male figures affected female participants’ disposition to feeling shy in social environment.

Table 4: Cross Tabulation of Parental Status, Gender, and Feelings of Shyness

Gender * Feeling shy in social environment * Available male figures Crosstabulation						
Count						
Available male figures at home		Feeling shy in social environment			Total	
		Agree	Disagree	Strongly Agree		
No	Gender	Female	24	8		32
		Male	32	15		47
	Total		56	23		79
Yes	Gender	Female	47	37	7	91
		Male	15	70	0	85
	Total		62	107	7	176
Total	Gender	Female	71	45	7	123
		Male	47	85	0	132
	Total		118	130	7	255

Parental Status and Anger Management

Table 6 illustrates that family structure influenced the participants' inclination to having difficult in controlling their anger. The trends were high among mother only and guardian cohorts, accounting for a frequency of 116 of the 255 participants.

Table 5: Cross Tabulation of Parental Status and Anger Management

Who do you live with * Difficulty controlling anger Crosstabulation				
Count				
Who do you live with		Difficulty controlling anger		Total
		No	Yes	
Who do you live with	Father and mother	81	38	119
	Father only	16	4	20
	Guardian	9	54	63
	Mother only	27	26	53
Total		133	122	255

In this case, table 7 presents the inferential analysis that demonstrates that the likelihood of participants without fathers of having anger issues was 58%. The leanings were higher among mother only and guardian cohort that did not have male figures. More than 50% of the respondents without male figures agreed to having anger issues. This therefore shows that lack of a father figure has some influence of the participants' ability to manage or deal with anger issues. Table 7 presents these results.

Table 6: Inferential Analysis of Parental Status and Anger Management

Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	54.526 ^a	3	<.001
Likelihood Ratio	58.811	3	<.001
N of Valid Cases	255		

Parental Status and Feeling Abandoned

The frequency of participants living with their father and feeling abandoned is compared in the backdrop of those without fathers. Those living with their father and mother and admitted to feeling abandoned had a frequency of 36 out of 119 participants, while those living with guardians and mother only were 54 out of 63, and 48 out of 53 respectively. The high frequencies recorded by those participants living with guardians and mother only confirmed that lack of a father figure contributed to participants' feelings of being abandoned. Table 8 illustrates that participants living with mother only and guardians were likely to feel abandoned compared to the father only and father and mother.

Table 7: Cross Tabulation of Parental Status and feeling abandoned

Who do you live with * Do you feel abandoned Crosstabulation					
Count					
Who do you live with		Do you feel abandoned			Total
		Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	
Who do you live with	Father and mother	36	83	0	119
	Father only	3	12	5	20
	Guardian	54	9	0	63
	Mother only	48	5	0	53
Total		141	109	5	255

The Pearson Chi-Square in table 9 compares how father absence is a causative factor for feeling abandoned. It compares how father absence and presence leads to presumption of abandonment. In this case, table 9 illustrates that the lack of father increased predisposition to feeling abandoned by 147.98 %, representing a strong relationship (p<.001) between father absence and predisposition to feelings of abandonment.

Table 8: Inferential Analysis of Parental Status and Feeling Abandoned

Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	147.975 ^a	6	<.001
Likelihood Ratio	123.494	6	<.001
N of Valid Cases	255		

Parental Status and Social Relationships

Further, table 10 illustrates that participant residing with guardians and mothers only had difficulties in establishing social relationships compared to those living with fathers. Those residing with guardians and mother only accounted for a frequency of 70 of the total respondents with challenges in developing new relationships, while those with fathers had a frequency of 30 respondents.

Table 9: Cross Tabulation of Parental Status and Building Relationships

Who do you live with * Difficulties in building relationships Crosstabulation				
Count				
		Difficulties in building relationships		Total
		Agree	Disagree	
Who do you live with	Father and mother	26	93	119
	Father only	4	16	20
	Guardian	44	19	63
	Mother only	26	27	53
Total		100	155	255

The Chi-square results on participants' family status and difficulties in building relationships illustrates that fatherless participants had 46% inclination to facing challenges in building new social interactions. These results demonstrate a strong correlation, ($p < .001$). Therefore, a participant's living environment and family status was a determinant on the onset of developing difficulties in broadening one's social relations. The results therefore indicate that fatherless participants have inclination to facing challenges in building new social relations, confirming a relationship between fathers, role and adolescents' ability to make and maintain social relationships. This relationship is demonstrated in table 11.

Table 10: Relationship Between Parental Status and Social Relationships

Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	45.097 ^a	3	<.001
Likelihood Ratio	45.993	3	<.001
N of Valid Cases	255		

As regards the objective, which was to establish the influence of father absence on emotional adjustment of adolescents, the study findings established that father-absent participants reported low emotional development compared to those with present father. Such conclusion is informed by the evident findings on emotional dynamics. For instance, the feeling of abandonment was highest among participants living with mother only and guardian. The study illustrated, in table 8, that nearly 90% of the mother only respondents reported feeling of abandonment. Subsequently, male figure availability accounted for a reduction on the participants feeling abandoned. For this reason, there is a correlation between the availability of father or male figure and inclination to feeling abandoned. Notably, feeling abandoned is associated with weak sense of identity, often associated with family relation dynamics.

Also, there are common trends on feeling lonely. The study's results section has demonstrated that although loneliness is not confined to father-absent population, lack of male figure was a precursor to the onset of emotional aptitudes. Such

conclusion is supportable by the high rates of mood swings and unexplained sadness among father absent participants. Such findings are also augmented in the literature review. For instance, Sibi (2020) states that a child's ability to resolve these internal conflicts determines their future ability to cope and function as an adult. Hence, the lack of father or male figure to assist a child in understanding their developmental dynamics is expected to result in possible emotional instability. As a result, the affected adolescent is prone to exhibit poor emotion management, such as being overly eager to please their peers or teachers due to lack of proper family support.

The results in table 6 illustrated that participants' parental status directly affected their predisposition to anger management challenges. Anger management issues and whom the respondent's lived with demonstrated a consistent pattern. The father only participants reported the lowest number with anger issues. However, the guardians and mother only individuals affirmed that they experienced aggressiveness and other emotions related to anger. Contrarywise, participants with both father and mother had lowest trends on managing their anger. These conclusions are echoed in the reviewed literature with most authors affirming that absent father was a determinant of emotional stability. For these reasons, the research objective on the absent father affecting adolescent's emotional wellbeing has been validated.

Table 12: Regression analysis of Influence of Father's Absence on Emotional Adjustment

Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	.058	1	.058	.094	.760 ^b
Residual	154.626	251	.616		
Total	154.684	252			
a. Dependent Variable: emotional regulation adjustment					
b. Predictors: (Constant), parental absence					

As indicated in table 12, the findings showed that $F(1, 154.626) = .094$, and $P = .760$, which is above 0.005 significant level. As such, this study found out that the regression model used was not significant in establishing the influence of the predictor on the dependent variable. Therefore, father absence did not have significant influence emotional regulation among adolescents. Pyun (2014), conducted a study on the influence of the father-child relationship on adolescents' mental health in the United State. The study employed a descriptive survey. Involved respondents were 48 adolescents from a youth voice community program, data were collected through questionnaires and analyzed through descriptivism statistics and linear regression. The results showed that the adolescents who had good relationships with their fathers had lower levels of internalizing problems. Old adolescents had more problems, but age was not associated with internalizing

problems. The study thus complements the findings of the current study.

The findings of the current study are in line with the findings of Mutie (2015) who investigated the effects of emotionally absent parents on the behavior of adolescents in Kenya. The study revealed that younger participants in forms one and two were affected by the emotional absence of their parents more than those in forms three and four. Most students who expressed emotional parental neglect also expressed hatred for school rules and elders and reported having engaged in different forms of indiscipline while in school. Further, the study revealed that there was a positive correlation between parental emotional absence and the challenges faced by adolescents.

These findings also challenge the findings of Fu, Xue, Zhou, and Yuan (2017) who carried out a study on how parental absence predicts suicide ideation through emotional disorders in China. The study's objectives were to investigate the association between parental absence and suicide ideation and to examine the roles of emotional disorders in the relationship. The study revealed that the mental stress of father absence had a negative impact on children's mental health. The study unearthed that, children with the absence of both parents were statistically more likely to show suicide ideation. Father absence, mother absence, and both parents' absence was significantly associated with negative emotional outcomes. For instance, Sibi (2020) states that a child's ability to resolve these internal conflicts determines their future ability to cope and function as an adult. Hence, the lack of father or male figure to assist a child in understanding their developmental dynamics is expected to result in possible emotional instability. As a result, the affected adolescent is prone to exhibit poor emotion management, such as concealing their feelings of sadness or anger instead of expressing them in a healthy manner. As regards to this study which was to establish the influence of father absence on emotional adjustment of adolescents, the study findings established that father-absent participants reported low emotional development compared to those with present father. The most prevalent emotional adjustment experience by adolescents with absent fathers was demonstrated by the respondents struggles to express their emotions (mean= 4.695; standard deviation= 1.878). Such conclusion is informed by the evident findings on emotional dynamics. For this reason, there is a correlation between the availability of father or male figure and inclination to experiencing challenges with emotional adjustment.

Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1					
Regression	.053	1	.053	1.997	.159 ^b
Residual	6.680	251	.027		
Total	6.733	252			
a. Dependent Variable: social behavior					
b. Predictors: (Constant), parental absence					

According to the results in table 13, the findings demonstrated that $F(1, 6.680) = 1.997$, and P value = 0.159, which was less than 0.005 level of significant. This revealed that the model was significant in establishing that the independent variable (father absence) had an influence on the dependent variable. Thus, father absence was termed to have influence on social behavior among secondary school learners in Makueni Sub-County, Makueni County.

The findings of the current research are parallel with the findings of Markowitz & Ryan (2016), on father absence and adolescent depression and delinquency in the United States of America. The study established that father departure later in childhood is associated with increased delinquency in adolescence. The study used the National Longitudinal Survey of Youth and the Young Adult survey (NLSY-YA). Data was collected through interviews at different levels and was analyzed through descriptive statistics and linear regression. The study compared the behavior of siblings discordant for age at father departure across two outcomes, depressive symptoms ($N= 5108$) and delinquent behavior ($N= 4882$). The findings of the study revealed that father absence later in childhood was related to increased delinquency in adolescents but was associated with greater depressive symptoms. The study suggested that parental monitoring instead of disrupted socialization may account for links between having a nonresident father and adolescent delinquency.

These findings are also in line with the findings of Njeru (2017), who conducted a study on the effects of parental divorce on adolescents: The dimensions of the wellness model in Nairobi County, Kenya. The study employed a descriptive survey that involved 100 adolescents aged 12-18 years who were purposively selected. The data was collected using questionnaires. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics and inferential statistics mainly Pearson correlation. The findings showed that there was a positive relationship between parents' divorce and the social, emotional, and academic performance of the adolescents.

IV. CONCLUSION

Respondents without fathers or male figures were inclined to poor emotional development characterized by various aspects. For example, the findings established that these participants were unable to manage their anger. In addition, the same population were unable to navigate within social realm, characterized by feeling shy. Moreover, majority affirmed to feeling sad for no reason as well as being lonely. Conversely, participants with fathers were likely to have stable emotions in different capacities. For example, they were likely to better manage their emotions through their high aptitude to control anger. In addition, they were less inclined to feeling lonely. However, male figures among the absent father cohort reduced their predisposition to the adverse emotional development aspects. For these reasons, it is apparent that father presence was a determining factor on the onset of participants' incapacity to manage their emotive faculties,

though there was no significant relationship between the variable.

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