

**FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO SUICIDAL ACTS AMONG YOUTHS: A
CASE OF MAKONGENI THIKA- WEST SUB-COUNTY**

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**A RESEARCH PROJECT SUBMITTED TO THE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION IN
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DECLARATIONS

DECLARATIONS

This research project is my original work and has not been presented for award of a degree in any university :


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This proposal has been submitted for conferment of the degree with Mr. Peter Gakwa as the research supervisor.

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DEDICATION

I want to dedicate this research report to my beloved mum Juliah Mbogo for her humble prayers, support and encouragement towards this research proposal. I appreciate the mutual love you offered me especially during the time I was writing this proposal. Next, I want to dedicate this research report to my Uncle Stephen Mwangi and my brother Simon Mbogo for their encouragement.

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ABBREVIATION AND ACRONYMS

1. I.C.U- Intensive care unit.
2. U.S - United states.
3. H.I.V - Human immunodeficiency virus
4. A.I.D.S - Acquired Immune Deficiency Virus
5. S.T.Ds - Sexually transmitted diseases
6. W. H. O- World health organization

OPERATIONAL DEFINITION OF TERMS

1. **Alcoholism-** It refers to the continued excessive or compulsive use of alcoholic drinks .
2. **Land issues-** these are conflicts which usually arise during subdivision of land especially among family members and also when the parents refuse to give land to their children for cultivation or even for sale.
3. **Terminal illnesses-** These are diseases that cannot be cured or adequately treated and is expected to result in death of the patient.
4. **Suicidal acts-** it's any action that could cause a person to die, such as taking poison, crashing a car on purpose.
5. **Suicide-** It refers to an act of intentionally ending one's life.
6. **Suicide attempt-** It is an act in which an individual try to die by suicide but survives.
7. **Suicidal ideation-** it is the thought process of having ideas or ruminations about the possibility of ending one's life.
8. **Youth-** This is a male or female aged between 16 to 34 years.

ABSTRACT

The research sought to investigate factors that influenced suicidal acts among youths in Makongeni Thika west sub- county, Kiambu county. Makongeni town has a population of 75,127 people. Suicidal acts are common in the town. Suicidal acts among youths has become a problem not only to the affected family but also to the entire community due to the serious effects on medical care fee, injuries and death. As a result, the researcher seeks to study the factors influencing suicidal acts among youths in Thika west sub_ county. I was guided by the following objects: To determine the extent to which land issues influence suicidal acts among youths in Thika west sub_ county. Secondly, to find out the extent to which marital factors influence suicidal acts among youths in Thika west sub- county. Thirdly, to examine the extent to which terminal illnesses influence suicidal acts among youths in Thika west sub- county. Forthly, to determine the extent to which alcoholism influence suicidal acts among youths in Makongeni Thika west sub- county. Questionnaires for youths who indulged in suicidal acts to obtain the data for the study. Qualitative and quantitative methods were used to analyze the data. The major method of committing suicide among youths was use of pills or overdose. On land issues, landlessness and disputes over land ownership were the common factors this is because land is a factor of production therefore it has high demand and the size of land ownership was causing land disputes. In marital affairs, relationship break ups was the common factor leading to suicidal acts among youths in Melongenid, Thika west sub county because most of the youths engaged in unhealthy relationship which led to issues such as depression and stress which led to youths committing suicide. On the issue of alcoholism, violence is the major factor leading to suicidal acts among youths in Makongeni, Thika west sub county. Lastly, terminal illnesses were also a major cause of suicidal acts among youths in Makongeni, Thika west sub county which was led by a disease such as HIV\AIDS then cancer and few cases of STD's.

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

This research aimed at determining the factors that influenced suicidal acts among the youths in Makongeni Thika west sub - county, this chapter gave the background of the study, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, research questions, objectives of the study that is the general objectives and specific objectives, the hypothesis, conceptual framework, it also involved the delimitation of the study, limitations of the study and assumptions of the study.

1.2 Background to the study

The word suicide originated from two Latin words *Sui* which means of oneself and *caedere* which means to kill in the 17th century. Therefore, the word *Suicaedere* means to kill oneself. Suicide refers to an act of intentionally ending one's own life. For one to commit suicide they must have had the thought of killing oneself. Suicide acts have been an existing problem in the society yet no full solution has been offered conclusively. The suicidal acts normally occur all over the world using different methods to commit suicide such as taking poison, hanging themselves, taking pills, guns, drowning themselves etc. depending on what is available and around the youth.

Suicide is one of the major and complex health and social challenge with far reaching impacts on individual, their family community and broader society. In Australia 3,046 young people in the age of 15- 44 years have been committing suicide. Due to this the Australian government have made some efforts and investments to help in advanced suicide prevention efforts including the National mental health and suicide prevention plans, but there have not been reduction in suicidal attempts or suicide deaths. In fact, suicide attempts remain prior in the country. Therefore, there is need to come up with better prevention methods which target those more at riseweeks after hospital discharge.

In Africa, around 11 people per 100 000 per year die by suicide which is higher than that of the global average 9 people per 100,000 people due in part to insufficient action to address and prevent the risk factors including mental health conditions which currently affect 116 million people up

from 53 million people in 1990. This shows that in African countries there is a rapid rise in suicidal acts than it was before.

Young people with a personality disorder and from broken homes, who are often homeless or forced to reside in squats, tend to react impulsively with suicidal behavior when overburdened by stress in their environments. Some of these youngsters misuse drugs and lead chaotic lifestyles. They often accumulate financial debts as a result of their addiction, which triggers severe interpersonal conflicts and emotional outbursts that culminate in self-harm. Heroin misuse among young males in urban sub-Saharan settings is on the increase. The risk of suicide among heroin misusers has been estimated to be 20 times that in the general population (Ndosi et al, 2004).

Terminal illnesses such as HIV/AIDS, diabetes, epilepsy, Hypes and STD's can be fatal if not treated and cared for. When a young person has any of the illness he or she can be secluded and withdrawn from others to avoid discrimination which can lead to loneliness hence depression in turn lead to committing suicide. According to Nilson L et. al (2002) he says that people with epilepsy have ninefold increased risk of death from suicide, is an adult with early early ones of seizures who had underlying depression and possibly limited follow up consultants in neurology.

According to Brizer & Castaneda (2010) suicidal behaviors are more often found on the alcoholic and drug addicts among the youth. Brizer & Castaneda (2010) also observed that substance abuse remains the second major leading cause of suicide after depression it carries six times greater than average risk in America because some of the youth access alcohol and drugs easily which can lead to suicidal behaviors in America. This causes a huge burden not out to the family but also to the whole nation because of losing the most energetic people in the country.

Sometimes some youths who show suicidal acts come from families which are experiencing marital problems such as divorce. For instance, a young people who comes from a family which is has a broken marriage or sometimes when the young person experiences a relationship break up or even experience miscarriage this can lead to suicide due to the mental torture that the person experiences in such a situation. The people may undergo a lot of stress which if not cared for may lead to depression hence suicide. Coon (2006) argues that successful marriages and relationships may be

the best natural prevention against suicide impulse. Among the divorced marriages is where most youth suicides are found followed by the widowed and though undergoing relationship breakups.

1.3 Statement of the problem

Suicide is the third leading cause of death in youth in the U.S. this is according to Dwivedi (2012). About 1600 youths age 15-19 years committed suicide in U.S. In 2001 3.4 million youths in that age group were seriously considering suicide; 1.7 million youths did a suicide attempt and 590, 00 committed suicide and they required medical attention in the hospitals.

According to WHO estimates that in the year 2020 approximately 153 million people particularly the youth were to die from suicide and 10-29 times more people were to attempt suicide in the world this represented that in average one death in every 20 seconds and one attempt every one or two seconds in the world.

In Thika level 5 hospital in Thika west sub- county receives cases of suicidal acts among the youths. Where by some of them have attempted to commit suicide in a serious manner and they end up being admitted to the I.C.U for them to be treated. The common factors affecting self-destructive practices among youths appear to be land issues, marital affairs, alcoholism and terminal illnesses. The specialist will try to comprehend the issue and propose ways to be used to curb the situation.

A country that loses the young people who are considered to be the most energetic people in the communities experience slow in the economic development. The suicidal acts among the young people may seem to be negliable but it has an impact not only to the family but also to the whole nation as well. Thika west sub- county has not been left out on the young people suicidal behaviors and everyday there are cases that are being reported in Thika Level 5 hospital about youth suicide. The researcher will seek to understand the problem in order to suggest possible ways to minimize suicidal acts among youths in Thika west sub - county.

1.4 Purpose of the study.

The purpose of carrying out this study was to establish the factors influencing suicidal acts among youths in Makongeni Thika west subcounty, Kiambu county.

1.5 Research questions.

i)What is the influence of land issues suicidal acts among youths in Makongeni Thika west sub-county, Kiambu county?

ii)In what ways does marital affairs influence suicidal acts among youths in Makongeni Thika west sub- county, Kiambu county?

iii)How does alcoholism influence suicidal acts among youths in Makongeni Thika west sub-county, Kiambu county?

iv) How does terminal illness influence suicidal acts among youths in Makongeni Thika west sub-county, Kiambu county?

1.6 Objectives of the study.

1.6.1 General objectives

To find out the factors contributing to suicidal acts among youths in Makongeni Thika- west sub-county, Kiambu county.

1.6.2 Specific objectives

i.To determine the extent to which land issues influences suicidal acts among youths in Makongeni Thika west sub-county, Kiambu county.

ii.To find out the extent to which marital affairs influence suicidal acts among youths in Makongeni Thika west sub- county, Kiambu county.

iii.To determine the extent to which alcoholism influences suicidal acts among youths in Makongeni Thika west sub-county, Kiambu county.

iv.To determine the extent to which terminal illness influence suicidal acts among youths in Makongeni Thika west sub- county, Kiambu county.

1.7 Hypothesis

- i.**Alcoholism doesn't have an influence on suicidal acts among youths in Makongeni Thika west sub-county, Kiambu county.
- ii.**Marital affairs have no influence bond suicidal acts among youths in Makongeni Thika west sub-county, Kiambu county.
- iii.**There is no influence of land issues on suicidal acts among youths in Makongeni Thika west sub-county, Kiambu county.
- iv.**Terminal illnesses have no influence on suicidal acts among youths in Makongeni Thika west sub-county, Kiambu county.

1.8 Significance of the study

The findings of this research provided information that was utilized by Thika west Sub County leaders, parents and guardians and also spiritual leaders to understand the factors influencing suicidal acts among the youths.

Additionally, effective measures were realized that would help to reduce suicidal acts among the youths in Makongeni Thika west sub- county. This was resourceful in project planning and management especially to the education sector as many students were able to learn the resources and understand what was always affecting the youths that drive them to commit suicide and they were able to avoid that.

The Makongeni Thika west sub- county leaders through this research they were able to come up with strategies to curb these problems hence reducing the rate of suicidal acts among the young people.

1.9 Delimitation of the study (scope of the study)

The study was restricted at Makongeni Thika west sub- county only.

The study was about the factors influencing suicidal acts among the youths in Makongeni Thika west sub- county, Kiambu county. The study focused with the youths only leaving out the adolescent and the aged people who commit suicide.

1.10 Limitations of the study

According to Mugenda, A. and Mugenda, O, 2007 Limitations of the study refers to the aspects of the study which may influence the results but the research has no control over. The study was faced with a few limitations such as:

1. Some respondents did not respond in providing necessary information for the study.
2. There was no adequate assistance that the respondents would return all the questions fully completed.

1.11 Assumptions of the study

1. Participants in Makongeni Thika west sub - county would be cooperative in providing acc. information.
2. Sample size chosen would enable the research to obtain a valid conclusion concerning the population in Thika west sub- county.
- 3 Targeted respondents will answer honest data and that they will answer questions truthfully without bias.

1.12 Conceptual framework.

Independent variables

Dependent variables

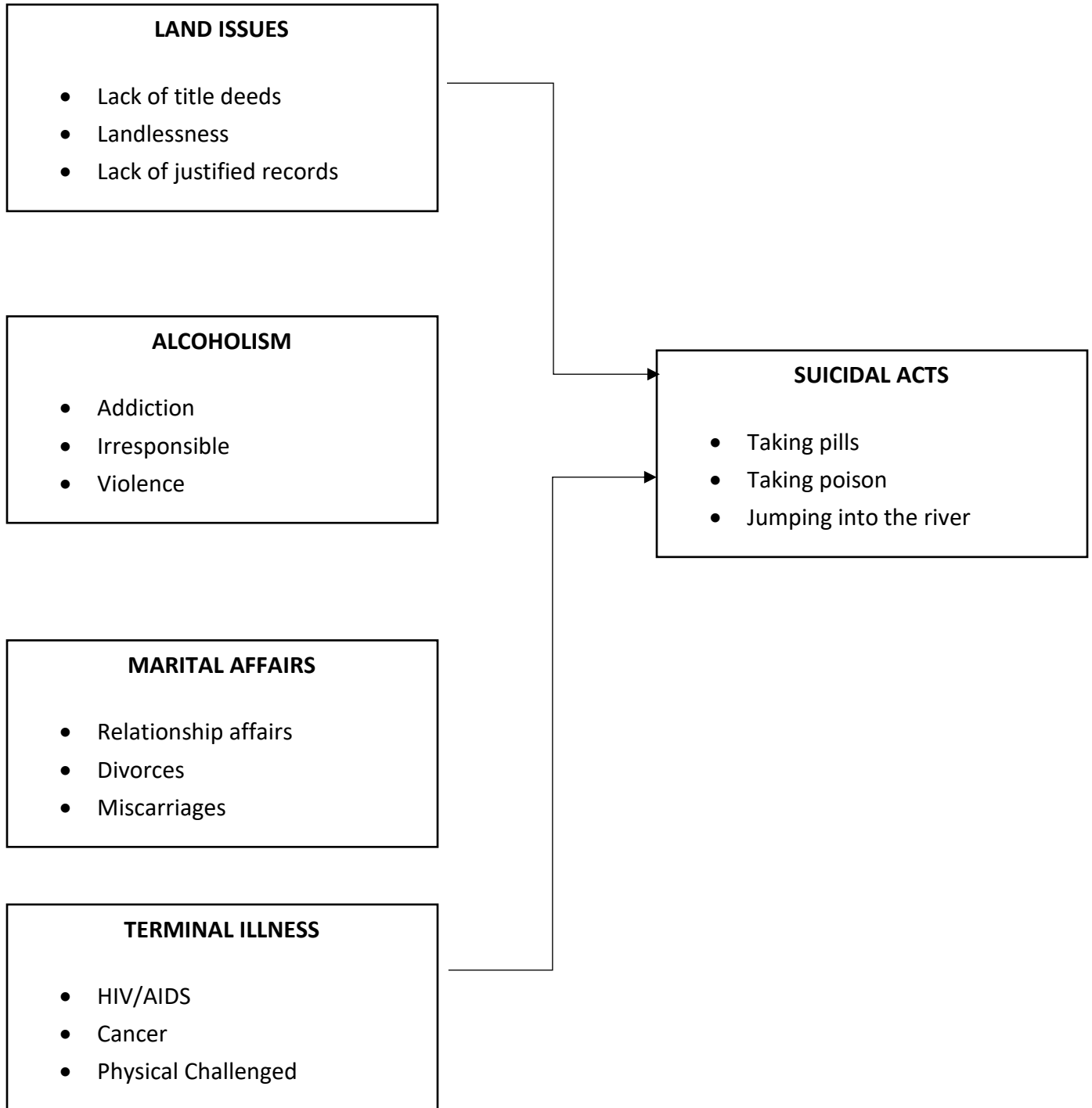


Figure 1 Conceptual framework

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter discussed various relevant literature on factors that influence suicidal acts among youths in Makongeni Thika west sub- county. The review was organized as per objectives of the study under the following sub headings: determine the extent to which alcoholism influence suicidal acts among youths in Makongeni Thika west sub- county, determine extent to which land issues influence suicidal acts among youths in Makongeni Thika west sub- county, examine the extent to which land issues influence suicidal acts among youths in Thika west sub- county, find out the extent to which marital affairs influence suicidal acts among youths in Makongeni Thika west sub- county, it also consists of the theoretical framework and the gaps in the literature reviewed.

2.2. Review of the related literature

Suicidal behaviors include completed suicide, suicide attempts and suicide ideation (Miller et.al, 2007). Coleman et.al (2008) argue that many suicide prevention advocates use of the phrase " completed suicide" to distinguish from attempted suicide.

The Merck Manual (2009) argue that youths who have painful childhood experiences, including cruelty are more likely to attempt suicide.

Depression is a major problem that causes suicide among youths. Alcohol also reduces self - will. About 30% of people who attempt suicide drink alcohol before suicidal attempt. Alcoholism, particularly binge drinking often causes deep feelings of remorse during dry period, alcoholics are suicide prone even when sober. (The Merck Manual,2010)

Other mental illnesses like schizophrenia and other psychotic disorders may lead to suicide among youths this is because they possess hallucinations commanding them to kill themselves. Youths with borderline personality disorder or antisocial personality disorder, especially those with a history of violent behaviors are also at a higher risk of suicide (The Merck Manual, 2010).

Concerning the methods by which youths with suicidal behaviors use, the methods are usually influenced by cultural factors and availability. They include, jumping from a tall building, ingesting poison or drugs, taking poison, self- shooting, hanging and drowning. (The Merck Manual, 2010).

2.3 Land issues and suicidal acts

Land is a natural resource, is essential for ensuring that women and youths are part of the community. This is because access to land provides physical availability of land parcels for women and youths to use or enjoy the embedded their in. Furthermore, it provides opportunities for them to improve their livelihoods and households. Land is a very important sector in the agricultural zone in production in Kenya. Land cannot be consumed but without land we cannot be able to obtain the production of goods and services especially when we focus with vision 2030. Land issues have gained attention as a potential influence on suicidal acts among youths. Land issues such as land rights, land conflicts, land dispossessions etc influence suicidal acts among youths.

According to the constitution of Kenya (2010), chapter 5 of the constitution deals with the classification of land in Kenya. Article 60 of the Kenyan constitution deals with principles of land policy. Land in Kenya should be held, used and managed in a manner that is equitable, efficient, productive and sustainable according to the following principles: equitable access of land, security of land rights, transparent and cost- effective administration of land, sound conservation and productive management of land resources etc. These principles should be implemented through a national land policy developed and received regularly by the national government of Kenya through legislation.

Onyemelukwe (2005), discusses why in early times land was regarded as a factor of production on the basis of agriculture where by tea factories required it and other associated facilities such as water. The same applies to African communication where agriculture is the backbone of the African people.)

Land has always been a matter of life and death survival or starvation because the growing population requires land as natural resource on which most of the youths are depending on.(Hilhorst et.al, 2001)

If land laws was will be followed accordingly, it will reduce land conflicts which mostly affect the youth in Thika west sub- county and hence promote land sustainable use in all daily life activities.

2.4 Alcoholism and suicidal acts among youths

According to Okungu(2010) he says that many Kenyans have been blinded or killed by illicit brews in recent years. Consumption of cheap local brews make victims financially and sexually less productive. Young women in such areas complain loudly that their men stopped meeting their conjugal rights and marital obligations due to alcohol abuse.

Monica et. al (2010) says alcohol marketing is one of the major risks factors for alcohol use among youths. Exposure to advertising and ownership of alcohol promotions items eg t-shirts with an alcohol brand on it increase the risk of alcohol use among the young people. This makes them to become addicted to alcohol, making them to live a hopeless life hence committing suicide.

In addition, Bamuhigire (2009) argues that alcoholism is considered to be a risk factor for suicidal behaviors among youths. This is because and alcoholic youth can not perform his/ her duties properly especially in the family or the workplace. As a result, conflict can arise which can lead to youths demonstrating suicidal acts.

According to Kendall (1980) he says that the greatest factors to the youths engagement in alcoholism is peer pressure. This is brought about by the number of friends using alcohol one has or the attitude of the friends towards alcohol. This implies that when a person joins a company of beer takers there is a probability of the person to indulge in beer taking.

Robila (2010) indicates youths who are at higher risk of suicidal acts tend to be individuals with alcoholism. Some of them may have been brought up in families who take alcohol and perhaps they begin to take alcohol at an early age therefore alcoholism to direct the youth to hopeless lives which may lead to suicidal acts.

2.5 Terminal illnesses and suicidal acts among youths

Terminal diseases present unique challenges and psychological distress particularly among youths facing life threatening illnesses. The terminal diseases included: HIV/AIDS, Cancer, epilepsy, STD's, diabetes, hypes etc. which can be fatal if not treated and careful for. When a young person suffering from a terminal disease this makes them to be isolated from other people which can lead to depression due to loneliness.

According to Nilson et.al (2002) he says that people suffering from epilepsy have a nine-fold increased risk of death from suicide, is an adult with early ones of seizures who had underlying depression and possibly limited follow up consultants in neurology.

Suicidal behavior and HIV/AIDS are vital public health challenges especially in low- and middle-income countries. Knowledge of factors associated with suicidal ideation in HIV infected people may inform suicide prevention strategies needed to improve quality life.

Nemeiyer et.al (2013) says that terminal illnesses such as HIV also been associated with increased suicidal behaviours especially among the youths. Most of the youths who have HIV/AIDS opt to commit suicide to stay away from stigmatization from other members of the society.

Order et.al (2010) argue that an additional sickness that appears to confer suicide is brain cancer which has a nine-fold increased risk for suicide as compared to the general and four-fold risk as compared to the individuals with other forms of cancer.

Singhal et.al (2003) argue that aids orphans living on their own notably more likely to be psychologically depressed. As a result, depression can influence suicidal acts.

2.6 Marital affairs and suicidal acts among youths

Marital affairs include parental conflicts or separation, victimization as mentally I'll, parents who are not open for friendly conversations, parents addicted to alcohol. Children who experience such may be reported with higher levels of emotional distress, low self-esteem and greater health problems compared to those without such experiences.

Vijayakumar(2003) in a study observes that interpersonal problems among youths which are related to marital problems are significant causes for suicidal behaviors. For instance, a majority of the youth who marry do not pass through premarital counseling which paramour to a successful person.

Tailor (2011) says that among youth suicidal behaviours whereby socially prominent male youth caught on love affairs with more than one woman commit suicide due to resulting marital problems.

Jordan (2011) comments that some of suicidal acts among youth which express loyalty to the family can still be found in Hong Kong due to shame. There have been a few suicidal attempts by women who have marital problems hence premarital and marital counseling would be helpful in dealing with feelings such as shame you reduce suicidal acts among youths.

Perez (2005) says that the most frequent reasons given for suicidal acts among youths included family conflicts especially when a youth despair on life issues such as marital relationship which is commonly seen when a youth is being refused by the parent to marry his or her choice. If proper counseling is not done appropriately relational conflicts can lead to suicidal behaviours among youths.

Dinesh (2007) argues that the Natural and gender differences of suicidal behaviours and violence are culturally determined he says that marital conflicts and relationship problems with in laws are among common causes of marital issues which sometimes leads to suicidal behaviors.

2.7 Theoretical framework

2.7.1 Interpersonal - psychological theory of suicide by Thomas Joiner

The theory was proposed by Thomas Joiner in 2005. It was one of the prominent theories that helps to understand suicidal acts among youths. This theory positions three factors that are necessary for someone to engage in suicidal behaviours. The factors include:

1. Perceived burdensomeness- This refers to the belief that an individual is a burden to others in their life such as family and friends. They may feel that their presence or actions are causing distress or harm to those they care about.

2. Thwarted belongingness- This refers to the perception of social disconnection or feeling alienated from others. The individual may experience a lack of meaningful relationship, support, belongingness leading to feelings of isolation and loneliness.

3. Acquired capability for suicide- it involves the development of tolerance for pain, fearlessness and increased likelihood for self-harm. Overtime through repeated exposure to painful events or through habituation to physical harm an individual may fear and aversion to self- inflicted violence may decrease increasing their willingness to engage in suicidal acts.

According to this theory when individuals experience high levels of perceived burdensomeness and thwarted belongingness and they have acquired the capability for suicide they are at elevated risk of engaging in suicidal behaviour.

2.7.2 The three steps theory(3ST) of suicide by E. David Klonsky and Alex M. May

The theory gives separate explanation of the development of suicidal ideations and the sequence from suicidal ideation to attempts. It also explains suicide ideation and attempts in four factors which are: pain, helplessness, connectedness and suicide capacity. Klonsky and May (2014) inspired by Joiner's work proposed that an ideation to action framework should guide all the suicide theories and research as explained in the theory.

Step 1: Development of suicidal ideation.

The development of suicidal ideation begins with pain. If someone's life experience is characterized with pain that person is basically being punished for living which may reduce their desire to live and in turn bring about the thoughts of suicide. However, pain alone is not enough to produce suicidal ideation. If the individual undergoing pain has hope then they can improve and instead of thinking about deliberately ending their life they can decide in getting hold of future reduced pain. Hence making hopelessness a factor required for development of suicide ideation. According to May and Klonsky (2014) pain and hopelessness are key motivation of suicide acts and combination of two being about suicide ideation.

Step 2: Strong versus moderate ideation

It refers to connectedness to other people or an individual attachment to a job, project, role or interest. Connectedness is also a factor since even if one lives in pain and helpless if they consider suicide the ideation will remain moderate as long as individual's connectedness to life is greater than his or her pain. If both pain and hopelessness are present in one's life therefore connectedness is absent the individual will have a strong suicidal ideation and an active desire to end their life.

Step 3: Progressive from ideation to attempts

Once an individual have developed a desire to end their life. It is expected that they act on that desire and try. As stated by Joiner (2005) the main determinant is whether that person has ability to make a suicidal attempt. The theory states that according to Joiner people are biologically and evolutionary wired to avoid pain, injury and death therefore it is very difficult for them to attempt suicide even if they are under the pressure of a very strong suicidal ideation.

2.8 Gaps in the literature review

Limited research had been conducted on how social media platforms may mitigate youth suicidal acts. Therefore, there is need to carry out a review of how online interactions, cyberbullying, exposure to harmful content or the influence of online communities contribute to suicidal ideation or suicidal attempts among youths. The research data may help in adding knowledge about suicidal acts so that we can have a suitable livelihood in the community

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter gave the methodology which the researcher used in the study. The chapter includes: The research design, the study area, the target population, the sample and samples selection, data collection, instruments for collecting data, instrument validity and reliability, data collection procedure, data analysis technique that the researcher used and ethics considerations.

3.2 Research design

The researcher used a descriptive research survey design. The design intended to present facts about the position of the circumstances, the design provided and analysis and an explanation of the opinions concerning suicidal acts among youths in Thika west sub- county.

The respondents were expected to fill in questionnaires which are both quantitative and qualitative in nature. The quantitative section of the questionnaire enabled the researcher to link attitudes to behaviors and bench marks for understanding how to make the facts simpler and easier to understand.

3.3 Study area

The study was carried out in Makongeni Thika west sub- county, Kiambu county. It is a place where many people engage businesses. Due to the increased number of educational centers there was a large population of youths in the town. Suicidal acts was a common issue among youths in Makongeni town. Most of the youths in Makongeni town engaged in unhealthy relationship which led them to committing suicide, becoming drug addicts and also led to depression. Death of the young people in Makongeni town has become a problem not only to the affected family but also to the whole community.

3.4 Target population

According to Cox (2013) target population in a study is the entire set of units for which the study data are to be used to make inferences. Mugenda, A. & Mugenda, O. (2003) says that target

population is a collection of animals or human beings or elements depicting a single or more common features and are preferred as a focus for a research. In Makongeni town there are many cases of suicidal acts among youths. The area was chosen by the researcher because suicidal behaviors among youth were commonly found and it had a referral hospital (Thika Level 5) where the suicidal victims were taken. According to the area chief the number of youths who had been reported attempting suicidal acts were 100 youths. Therefore, the target population was 100 youths who had gone through suicidal behaviors in Makongeni Thika-west sub-county.

3.5 The sampling technique

This is the act of selecting a suitable sample or a representative part of a population for the purpose of determining characteristic of the whole population (Frankel & Wallen, 2008). Simple random sampling was used in selecting the youths in Makongeni Thika west sub-county. In this study 80 youths were selected using simple random sampling and their responses were used to represent the general view regarding factors that influence suicidal acts among youths in Makongeni Thika west sub county.

3.6 The sample size

Sample size refers to the number of individuals included in a research study to represent a population. Kothari (2004) says that a sample size is a sub set of the total population that is used to give the general view of the target population. Yamane formula of 1967 was used to calculate the sample size.

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

Where n = sample size, N=population size, e= margin of error

The target population was 100 youths who had indulged into suicidal acts therefore,

$$n = \frac{100}{1 + 100(0.05)^2}$$

$$100 \sqrt{1 + 100(0.0025)}$$

$$100/1+0.25$$

$$100/1.25 = 80$$

Hence, the sample size was 80 youths.

3.7 Measurement of variables

Objective	Variable	Measurement	Measurement scale	Question Number
To find out the extent to which land issues influence suicidal behaviors among youths.	Landlessness Lack of justified title deeds	Number of acres which youths can access	Ordinal	
To find the extent to which marital factors influence suicidal acts among youths	Relationship breakups Divorces Miscarriages	Number of youths who have been divorced, miscarriage and those who have undergone relationship breakups.	Ordinal	

To find out the extent to which alcoholism influences suicidal acts among youths	Addiction Violence Irresponsible	Number of youths who are addicted to alcohol	Ordinal	
To find out the extent to which terminal illness	HIV/AIDS Cancer STD's	Number of youths living with HIV/AIDS, cancer and	Ordinal	
influence suicidal acts among youths		STD's		

Table 1 Measurement of variables

3.8 Data collection instruments

Creswell (2003) indicates that research instruments are tools used in the collection of data on the phenomena of the study. In order to collect data for the study, I will questionnaires to get information from the selected youths in Makongeni Thika west sub-county, Kiambu county. According to Mugenda and Mugenda (2003) a questionnaire is a list of standard questions prepared to fit a certain inquiry. The questionnaires used contained both open -ended and close- ended questions.

3.9 Research instruments

The main research instrument in the study was the questionnaires which were both open ended and closed ended which were specifically prepared for sample in Makongeni Thika west sub-county and were to seek whether land issues, marital affairs, alcoholism and terminal illnesses influence suicidal acts among youths in Makongeni Thika west sub- county.

3.10 Validity of measurements

Validity is the capability of a tool to measure what it purports to measure (Orodho, 2004). It is the level of correctness of the implications whose ground is on the study outcomes. Since the instrument of the questionnaires used were adopted in our country, validity of the instrument was tested to determine its suitability.

3.11 Reliability of measurements

Mugenda, A & Mugenda, O, (2003) indicates reliability as the measure of the extent to which study instruments gives constituency on results in two or more trials. To test the reliability of the questionnaire, a pilot study was carried out using selected respondents in Makongeni. It aimed at achieving expected reliability of the questionnaire. The selected respondents were required to fill the questionnaire so as to determine the reliability of the questionnaire. The aim of giving the questionnaire were collected so as to carry out a reliability test.

3.12 Data analysis

Data was analyzed using qualitative methods. Quantative data analysis involves the we organize and manipulate data to assessment our hypothesis (Treiman,2009). The questionnaires administered to the target population in Thika west sub county were both qualitative and quantative in nature. Quantative data of the questionnaire were analyzed using descriptive statistics where measures like frequency and percentage and relevant implications of those values were indicated. The qualitative data of the questionnaire were analyzed using descriptive statistics to analyze the data which was obtained. It analyzed interrelationship among a large number of variables and explain these variables in terms of their common underlying factors.

3.13 Logical and ethical consideration

When conducting the study, ethical issues considered included confidentiality of the participants who were involved in the study. In addition, I considered the privacy of the questionnaires in all the respondents who participated in and where research did piloting in Makongeni Thika west sub-county.

CHAPTER FOUR: FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

4.1: introduction

This chapter consisted of response rate of the respondents, data analysis, presentation and interpretation of the study.

4.2: An overview of the respondent rate

The researcher was able to note that all of the respondents in the study were able to quantitatively answer the questionnaires. Out of the 80 questionnaires issued to the sampled respondents, 80 were filled and returned successfully. The response rate of the total issued questionnaires stood at 100%.

Description	Frequency	Percentage
Questionnaires for the youths	80	100

Table 2 Respondent rate

The researcher administered questionnaires to 80 youths and were returned successfully, 100% as presented above.

4.3: Distribution of respondents by gender

The researcher study identified that majority of the respondents were males and the rest were females. Quantitatively, the researcher observed that 50 were males and 30 were females.

Table 4.2: Distribution of youth by gender

Description	Frequency	Percentage
Male	50	62.5

Female	30	37.5
Total	80	100

Table 3 Distribution of youth gender

There were more male youth participants (62.5%) than females (37.5%).

4.3.1: distribution of return rate by age

The researcher identified three age brackets that had co – existed in terms of analyzing the qualitative data of the research study. The existing age brackets that were discovered include age bracket (16-21yrs), (22-27yrs) and (28-35yrs).

Table 4.3: distribution of return rate by age

Description	Frequency	Percentage
16-21yrs	13	16.25
22-27yrs	49	61.25
28-35yrs	18	22.50
Total	80	100

Table 4 Distribution of return rate by age

Age between 22-27yrs were the highest participants by 61.25% followed by 28-35yrs by 22.5% and then 16-21 yrs by 16.25%.

4.3.2: distribution of return rate by highest level of education

The following was the presentation of distribution of return by highest level of education in the table 4.4 which the researcher found out in the study.

Table 4.4: distribution of return rate by highest level of education

Description	Frequency	Percentage
None	0	0.0
Primary	6	7.5
Secondary	15	18.75
Middle level college	41	51.25
University	18	22.5
Total	80	100

Table 5 Distribution of return rate

Middle level college was the highest by 51.25% followed by university by 22.5% then secondary by 18.75% primary level and those who did not go to school were the lowest presented by 7.5% and 0.0% respectively.

4.3.3: distribution by marital status

The researcher wanted to understand the distribution of return rate by marital status and the results were presented in the table 4.5.

Table 4.5: distribution by marital status

Description	Frequency	Percentage
Single	30	37.5

Married	45	56.25
Widowed	1	1.25
Separated	4	5.0
Divorced	0	0.0
Total	80	100

Table 6 Distribution of marital status

The majority of the youths who participated were married 56.25% followed by single 37.5% and then separated 5.0%. lastly, widowed 1.25% and none were divorced.

4.4.2: Land issues and suicidal acts

The respondents were asked to indicate how they rate the influence of land issues on suicidal acts among youths in Makongeni Thika west sub county. Among issues of the land, disputes over ownership seemed to be more common concern leading to suicidal acts among youths in Makongeni followed by landlessness then lack of tittle deeds or records. The response was as shown in the table 4.7

Description	Frequency	Percentage	
Landlessness among youths causes suicidal acts	Very high	15	18.75
	High	29	36.25
	Low	21	26.25
	Very low	15	18.75

Land dispute ownership among youths causes suicidal acts	Very high	20	25
	High	30	37.5
	Low	22	27.5
	Very low	8	10
Lack of land titles/records among youth causes suicidal acts	Very high	6	7.5
	High	18	22.5
	Low	30	37.5
	Very low	26	32.5

Table 7 land issues and suicidal acts

In the issue of landlessness, the highest response rate of participants rated at 36.25% high, followed by 26.25% low and 18.75% in both very high and very low. Concerning land dispute ownership, the highest response rate of participant rated 37.5% high followed by 27.5% low then 25.0% very high and 10% very low. On the issue of lack of title deeds/ records the highest response rate of participant rated at 37.5% low followed by 32.5% very low then 22.5% high and 7.5% very high.

4.4.3: Alcoholism and suicidal acts

The respondents were asked to indicate how they rate the influence of alcoholism on suicidal acts among youths in Makongeni, Thika west sub county. Violence (as a result of alcohol) in the family seemed to be a significant factor influencing suicidal acts in Makongeni followed by issues of addiction and then irresponsible behaviors in the family.

Description	Frequency	Percentage
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Addiction among youths influence suicidal acts among youths	Very high	31	38.75
	High	25	31.25
	Very low	15	18.75
	Low	9	11.25
Irresponsible alcohol taking influence suicidal acts among youths	Very high	18	22.5
	High	32	40.0
	Very low	23	28.75
	Low	7	8.75
Violence when drunk influence suicidal acts among youths	Very high	28	35.0
	High	32	40.0
	Very low	13	16.25
	Low	7	8.75

Table 8 alcoholism and suicidal acts

The participants rated on the issue of addiction among youths as follows: 38.75% very high, 31.25% high, 18.75% very low, 11.25% low, followed by irresponsible alcohol taking among youths as follows 22.5% very high, 40.0% high, 28.75% very low and 8.75% low and then violence when drunk among youths as follows 35.0% very high, 40.0% high, 16.25% very low and 8.75% low.

4.4.4: Marital affairs and suicidal acts

The respondents were asked to rate how marital affairs influence suicidal acts among youths in Makongeni Thika west sub county. Relationship break ups seemed to be the significant factor

influencing suicidal acts among youths followed by divorce in a family then miscarriage in a family. The following was their response as indicated in table 4.9

Description	Frequency	Percentage
Divorce in a family influence suicidal acts among youths	Very high	19 23.75
	High	23 28.75
	Very low	33 41.25
	Low	5 6.25
Relationship break ups influence suicidal acts among youths	Very high	33 41.25
	High	25 31.25
	Very low	16 20.0
	Low	6 7.5
Miscarriage in a family influence suicidal acts among youths	Very high	8 10
	High	10 12.5
	Very low	27 33.75
	Low	35 43.75

Table 9 Marital affairs and suicidal acts

The issue of divorce in a family influence suicidal acts among youths as follows: 23.75% very high, 28.75% high, 41.25% very low and 6.25% low followed by relationship break ups influence on suicidal acts among youths as follows: 41.25% very high, 31.25% high, 20.0% very low and 7.5% low. Then miscarriage in a family influence on suicidal acts among youths as follows: 10% very high, 13.5% high, 33.75% very low and 43.75% low.

4.4.5: Terminal illness and suicidal acts

Respondents were asked to show how they rate the influence of terminal illness on suicidal acts among youths in Makongeni Thika west sub county. Comparing the responses that were given HIV/AIDS is the most common factor leading to suicidal acts among youths followed by cancer and then STD's. They responded as shown in table 4.10

Description	Frequency	Percentage
Infection of HIV/AIDS among youths influence suicidal acts	Very high	26 32.5
	High	30 37.5
	Very low	20 25.0
	Low	4 5.0
Cancer influence suicidal acts among youths	Very high	13 16.25
	High	25 31.25
	Very low	30 37.5
	Low	12 15.0
STD's influence suicidal acts among youths	Very high	6 7.5
	High	15 18.75
	Very low	24 30.0
	Low	35 43.75

Table 10 Terminal illness and suicidal acts

The participants reported the issue of HIV/AIDS influence on suicidal acts as follows: 32.5% very high, 37.5% high, 25.0% very low and then 5.0% low followed by cancer influence on suicidal acts among youths as follows: 16.25% very high, 31.25% high, 37.5% very low and 15.0% low then STD's among youths influence on suicidal acts as follows: 7.5% very high, 18.75% high, 30.0% very low and 43.75% low.

4.5: Interpretation based on study findings

According to the data obtained from the youths in Makongeni, Thika west sub county the researcher was to conclude that land issues, alcoholism, marital affairs and terminal illnesses were major factors that contributed to suicidal acts among youths.

**CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS, DISCUSSION, CONCLUSIONS,
RECOMMEDATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY**

5.1: Introduction

This chapter consisted of the summary of findings, discussions, conclusions and recommendation of the study.

5.2: Summary of the findings

Objectives	Summary of the findings
Rate the methods of suicidal acts in Makongeni, Thika west sub- county.	Most common response among participants presented very high youths who use pills. Then followed by very high hanging themselves and very high those who jump into the river.
Do land issues influence suicidal acts among youths in Makongeni, Thika west sub-county.	Most common responses were presented high, high (37.5%) land disputes, followed by high (36.25%) landlessness and 37.5% low on lack of tittle deeds.
Do marital affairs influence suicidal acts in Makongeni, Thika west sub- county.	Relationship break- ups seemed to be the significant factor with a very high 41.25% followed by divorce high 41.25% and then miscarriage with a low of 43.75%
Does alcoholism influence suicidal acts among youths in Makongeni, Thika west sub- county.	Violence in the family seemed to be the significant factor with high 40.0% followed by addiction very high 38.75% then irresponsible alcohol taking.

Does terminal illness influence suicidal acts among youths in Makongeni, Thika west sub-county.	HIV/AIDS is the most common factor very high 32.5% followed by cancer high 31.25% then STD's low 43.75%
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Table 11 summary of the findings.

5.3 Discussion

The purpose of the study was to determine factors influencing suicidal acts among youths in Makongeni Thika west sub county. The major method of committing suicide among youths was use of pills or overdose. On land issues, landlessness and disputes over land ownership were the common factors this is because land is a factor of production therefore it has high demand and the size of land ownership was causing land disputes. In marital affairs, relationship break ups was the common factor leading to suicidal acts among youths in Makongeni, Thika west sub county because most of the youths engaged in unhealthy relationship which led to issues such as depression and stress which led to youths committing suicide. On the issue of alcoholism, violence is the major factor leading to suicidal acts among youths in Makongeni, Thika west sub county. Lastly, terminal illnesses were also a major cause of suicidal acts among youths in Makongeni, Thika west sub county which was led by a disease such as HIV/AIDS then cancer and few cases of STD's.

5.4: Conclusion of the findings

The research study concluded that: the use of pills/ overdose by youths was the common method of youths committing suicide in Makongeni, Thika west sub county. Land disputes and ownership among youths seemed to be the leading factor on land issues and landlessness was the main factor which the youths were committing suicide. In addition, relationship break- ups led to youths in Makongeni committing suicide followed by divorces among young families. Alcoholism was a major factor causing suicidal acts among youths. Major problems the youths who were committing suicide were facing were: addiction, irresponsible alcohol taking and violence due to the influence of taking alcohol. More so, HIV/AIDS was the greatest terminal illness leading to suicidal acts among youths followed by cancer and then STD's.

5.4: Recommendations of the study

There were several recommendations made to minimize suicidal acts among youths in Makongeni, Thika west sub county.

- a) The government should try and intervene in taking necessary actions against youths who take alcohol and offer guidance and counseling sessions to those youths who are alcohol addicts.
- b) Land policy programs should at least make relevant information to minimize land disputes among youths.
- c) Establishment of policies of poison Management so as to regulate how to handle and keep the dangerous ones away from the youths.

5.5: Suggestions for further study

- a) To determine effects of suicidal acts on social economic in Makongeni, Thika west sub county.
- b) To determine the influence of technology on suicidal acts among youths in Makongeni, Thika west sub county.
- c) To determine cultural and personal perception on suicidal acts in Makongeni, Thika west sub county.
- d) To determine the influence of social media on mitigating suicidal acts among youths in Makongeni, Thika west sub county.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Questionnaires for the youths.

The information in this questionnaire is meant for research only. The sources will be kept confidential. **Do not write your name.** The question has nineteen main questions.

Please tick appropriately using a tick (√) on the respective area:

1. What is your gender? Male female

2. What is your age group?

a) 16-21 years?

b) 22- 27 years?

c) 28-35 years?

3. What is your highest level of education?

a) None

b) Primary

c) Secondary

d) College

e) University

4. What is your marital status?

a) Married

b) Single

c) Widowed

d) Separated

e) Divorced

5. Specify how you can rate the methods of suicidal behavior in Thika west sub-county.

Number		Very high	High	Low	Very low
5	Youth hang themselves using a rope when committing suicide				
6	Youths throw themselves in boreholes when attempting to commit suicide				
7	Youths take pill/ overdose when attempting to				
	commit suicide				
8	Youths jump into a river when attempting to				

	commit suicide				
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In your own perception, rate the influence of land issues on suicidal acts among youths in Thika west sub county.

Number		Very high	High	Low	Very low
9	Landlessness among youths influence suicidal acts				
10	Lack of justified/ land tittle deeds influence suicidal acts				

Indicate how you rate influence of alcoholism on suicidal acts among youths in Thika west sub county.

Number		Very high	High	Low	Very low
11	Addiction among youths influence suicidal acts				
12	Irresponsible alcohol taking influence suicidal				

	acts among youths				
13	Violence when drunk influence suicidal acts among youths				

Point out how you rate the influence of marital factors on suicidal acts among youths in Thika west sub county.

Number		Very high	High	Low	Very low
14	Divorce in a family influence suicidal acts among youths				
15	Relationship breakups influence suicidal acts among youths				
16	Miscarriage in a family influence suicidal				

	acts among youths				
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Show how you rate the influence of terminal illnesses on suicidal acts among youths in Thika west sub county.

Number		Very high	High	Low	Very low
17	Infection of HIV/AIDS among youths influence suicidal acts				
18	Cancer influence suicidal acts among youths				
19	STD's influence suicidal acts among youths				