



A Peer Reviewed International Journal of Asian
Academic Research Associates

AARJMD

**ASIAN ACADEMIC RESEARCH
JOURNAL OF MULTIDISCIPLINARY**



**FATHER ABSENTEEISM ON SOCIAL VULNERABILITY AMONG MODERN FAMILIES
IN KENYAN URBAN HOUSEHOLDS: A CASE STUDY OF KIBRA COUNTY, NAIROBI,
KENYA**

CELINA KAGENDO MUTEGI¹; DR. URBANUS M. NDOLO²; DR. SHEM N. MWALW³A³

¹The Catholic University of Eastern Africa, Nairobi, Kenya

²The Catholic University of Eastern Africa, Nairobi, Kenya

³The Catholic University of Eastern, Africa, Nairobi, Kenya

Abstract

The study set out to investigate the impacts of father absenteeism on social vulnerability among Kenyan modern households in Kibra County. Interviews and observation were predominantly employed in data collection, with questionnaire, key informant's guide and focus group discussion guide were used as the key instruments in the process. The Statistical Package for Social Scientists (SPSS) was used in analysis of quantitative data, while qualitative data was analyzed qualitatively. A variety of data presentation methods were used such as frequency tables, pie charts, bar graphs and histograms among others. The study found that Father Absenteeism has caused social vulnerabilities among modern Kenyan urban household in Kibra, which could be the case in other urban places. Sixty (60%) of the respondents face acute socio-economic deficits due to lack of the father's financial contribution in the families. The phenomenon of irresponsible fatherhood is more prevalent in informal settlements in Kibra slums, just like in other cities in Africa and beyond. Other contributing factors include divorce, separation, and voluntary-neglect, fathers working away from home, death, imprisonment, alcoholism, and having children out of wedlock. It was revealed that 90% of the children developed negative behavior and unwillingness to study. Most girl children were withdrawn in life and were showing an aggressive character. The mothers developed harsh emotions towards males. The study recommends that the helping agencies such as churches, counselling institutions, family units in Governments and NGOs that deal with family issues should establish special counselling units to boost the emotional stability of the children and their mothers. Psychosocial therapeutic programmes could be established to help mentor them towards self esteem. Local leaders should create awareness about father absenteeism; mobilize the community toward minimization of father absenteeism. It is helpful to establish policy framework to guarantee that fathers whether living with the mothers or not, need to maintain direct contact with they children regardless of whether they financially support them or not, in order to boost their self esteem and social trust on other people. Indeed, no child has no father! Fatherhood should be mandatory in a child's birth records, and the father forced by law to maintain good relationship with the child.

Key Words: Kibra, Father Absenteeism, Child Neglect and abuse, Spousal Abandonment, Poverty, Socio-economic insecurity, slum settlement, child low self esteem, low motivation in education.

1.0 Background of the Study

Father absenteeism is a social phenomenon that is affecting many countries worldwide, such as European countries like United State of America, African countries such as South Africa, Kenya among others. Among the African countries, South Africa has an exceptionally high number of absent fathers with approximately half of the children in the country living without daily contact with their fathers. This situation presents social and developmental challenges. Widespread father absence has detrimental consequences for families and for society as a whole. Responsible and engaged fathers, who do their share of parenting work, are beneficial to the development of children and to building families and societies that better reflect gender equity and protect child rights.

Families can be thought of as small organizations, each having their own unique style of interaction. When two or more people are related in any way and are joined in a common purpose, they develop patterns of living and interaction which become ingrained and habitual in their daily lives. The way a family supports and cares for its members establishes roles, communicates, and negotiates decisions, lays down patterns which will affect them for the rest of their lives (Kelvin, Hugh and David, 1988). Sociologists understand families to be social institutions that perform vital functions for their members and societies: They produce, nurture, and socialize children; care for frail and elderly family members; provide the labor needed for the economy; and meet the emotional needs of family members. To describe families as social entities recognizes the fact that they are socially created and defined and vary across cultures; to refer to them as institutions means that they embody a set of interrelated roles and responsibilities. The family consists of husband, wife, and children born in their wedlock, though other relatives may find their place close to this nuclear group; and the group is united by moral, legal, economic, religious, and social rights and obligations (including sexual rights and prohibitions as well as such socially patterned feelings as love, attraction, piety, and awe) (Coser, 2004).

The modern family in Kibera is seen primarily as a nuclear, marriage-based entity in which men provide economically for their families and women perform housework and take care of children. This gender division of family responsibility, described as the doctrine of separate spheres, held that men belong to public arena (or world of work) and women in the

private arena, or the home. Socially defined notions of masculinity and femininity reflect these gendered family roles; for example, men are characterized as being naturally aggressive and rational, traits valuable in the competitive area of work, and women as being essentially submissive, domestic, and nurturing (Dewar, 2000). For example, a recent data suggest that there has been an increase in the number of absent fathers from the end of apartheid to the present day. The proportion of African children under the age of 15 years with absent living fathers increased from 45% to 52% between 1996 and 2009. There has also been an increase of colored children (from 34% to 41%), and of White children (from 13% to 15%). The proportion of children with absent living fathers decreased only among Indians (from 17% to 12%) (Holborn & Eddy, 2011).

The major social problem in our society may be the growing absence of fathers from their homes, because it contributes to so many other social problems. Fatherhood advocates insist that the crisis of fatherless children is the most destructive trend of our generation (Daniel, 1998 pg 135). Virtually major social pathology has been linked to fatherlessness: violent crime, drug and alcohol abuse, truancy, teen pregnancy and suicide. All these vices correlate more strongly to father absenteeism than to any other single factor. The majority of prisoners, juvenile detention inmates, high school dropouts, pregnant teenagers, adolescent murderers, and rapists, come from homes where a father is absent (Daniel, 1998; NFI, 1995). Father absenteeism is a growing problem in Australia and the Western world. Whether caused by divorce and broken families, or by deliberate single parenting, more and more children grow up without fathers. Indeed, 85 per cent of single parent families' fathers are absent (Daniel, 1998). Decline of fatherhood is one of the most basic, unexpected, and extraordinary social trends of our time. Its dimensions can be captured in a single statistic: In just three decades, between 1960 and 1990, the percentage of U.S. children living apart from their biological fathers more than doubled, from 17 percent to 36 percent. By the turn of the century, nearly 50 percent of American children may be going to sleep each evening without being able to say good night to their dads (Blankenhorn and David, 1995).

1.1 Review of Empirical Studies

Literature review is a scholarly work, which includes the current knowledge, findings, as well as theoretical and methodological contributions to a particular topic. Therefore the

[Asian Academic Research Journal of Multidisciplinary](http://www.asianacademicresearch.org)

www.asianacademicresearch.org

main purpose of this chapter is to convey to readers what has been done on father absenteeism and social vulnerability in modern urban households in Kenya, by other scholars and the knowledge and ideas that have already been established on this topic of research. The review in this study was guided by the research questions of the study: Which factors lead to father absenteeism in Kibera?, How does father absenteeism affect urban families' livelihood in Kibera households?, How does father absenteeism affect children's behaviour?, What are social protection mechanisms in father absentee households in Kibera?, What are some of the interventions on father absenteeism in Kenya?. At the end of the chapter the researcher presents the theoretical framework of the study.

In relation to father absenteeism the researcher postulates that family is the first basic social institution where an individual is born and raised up before coming up to interact with other members of the society. It is through the family that a person is taken care of, gets social protection, has social security and develops. A child can grow in terms of cognition and task development through effective interaction from both parents. However, some of the families are lacking this union of parenting and leaving one parent with the burden of bringing up children alone. Eshleman (1991) asserts that more than thirteen and one half million children under the age of eighteen were in homes with a mother only and father-absent situation and the number is increasing yearly. Concurrent with this factor is the widely held view that every child needs a father or his social equivalent. The trend towards absentee fathers is increasing and has become an issue of great concern. The researcher explored the effects of father absenteeism on urban families' livelihood; the researcher determined factors that lead to father absenteeism, determine social protection mechanisms in father absentee households in Kibera, assess the impact of father absenteeism on children's behaviour and finally examine the interventions on father absenteeism

1.2 Factors leading to father absenteeism in urban Modern families

Widespread father absence is often influenced by ideological factors such as materialistic construction of fatherhood and masculinity; socio-economic factors such as poverty and unemployment of fathers; cultural factors such as the cost of customary practices and relationship issues of various kinds. "Father Absence" is defined as a family in which the father does not live in the same household. There are many different reasons why there may

be father absence: birth out-of-wedlock, death of the father and divorce or separation of parents (Mackey and Immerman, 2007). There are two types of father absence: father-preclusion and father-abrasion. Father-preclusion would include out-of-wedlock births because they may prevent fathers from being involved in their children's lives. Father-abrasion would most likely result from divorce or separation of parents (Mackey & Immerman, 2007).

Gillis (2002) asserts that in the mid-nineteenth century in Europe, fathers increasingly moved out of home for economic reasons. Men came to spend less and less time in a parental role as they were seen primarily as economic providers for the family. This shift is a change in roles from being active as a father in a family. Fathers lose their responsibilities of being parents, while children suffer the loss of their fathers. For growth and development of a child's personality there is a great need of both parents. Children emulate the behaviour of the parents they identify with especially of similar gender. For example, role learning for a son will be more difficult if the father is absent from home as well as for the daughter too who learns different experiences from the boy. According to Marsiglio et al (2000), father absence has a direct correlation to the occurrence of economic hardships on the families where the father is absent. These negative effects (economic hardships) have been shown to influence different aspects of a child's wellbeing, including: nutrition, physical health, emotional health, school grades, school drop-out rates, and behavioural problems. Marsiglio et al (2000) further argue that husband role has changed from that of head of the family business to the provider of income earned away from home. The man's most important role is that of breadwinner, provider and influencer of decision making in a family, as well as shaping gender roles in children through socializing especially boys according to the societal norms and practices. While the female's main role is that of homemaking and child rearing which encompasses a lot of movement to ensure that everything in that family is right. She is also responsible for girl child behaviour according to societal expectation. In today's way of life, men have left their responsibilities as men in their home and over burdened their women who have assumed those male roles. The situation here is not bearable to the female, because she is overloaded with her own roles of homemaking and child rearing and those of her husband of providing,

decision making, and discipline of family members, meaning that the female is the head of the family who gets to do all what is expected in a family.

Six out of every 10 Kenyan women are likely to be single mothers by the time they reach 45, one of the highest rates for single-parent families in Africa. In the four other countries in which the survey was conducted, death and divorce rank higher than premarital births as causes of single motherhood. Kenya has roughly equal proportions of women becoming single mothers before marriage as those who become single mothers after marriage, primarily from divorce or separations. Alarmingly, the study found that, compared with children whose mothers were married since their children's birth, children of never-married mothers faced a significantly high rate of mortality in Malawi, Tanzania, and Zimbabwe. While the research offers scientific evidence of this trend, it only confirms a shift that has become more and more visible in recent times. (Catherine, 2010)

The most frequently mentioned cause of paternal absence occurs when a father is away due to career demands, or divorced from the child's mother. For those children who are dealing with a temporary loss, such as one due to career relocation, fewer negative effects have been attributed to father-absence (Horn, 2002). However, in the case of divorce or death, a more serious impact has been found on the child's emotional development (Horn, 2002). Children, who live with only one parent, usually their mothers, are six times as likely to be poor as children who live with both parents (Horn, 2002). In addition, some researchers have found that children of father absentee families are more likely to suffer more emotional, behavioural, and intellectual problems resulting in a higher risk of dropping out of school.

Krohn and Bogan (2001) assert that globally, one quarter to one third of families are headed by single mothers, calling into question the normativeness of couple headed families. Krohn (2001) further asserts that developed countries are experiencing an increase in single-parent families as divorce becomes more common, unlike in developing countries where divorce is not so common, but desertion, death, and imprisonment produce single-parent families, primarily headed by women, although the rate varies from country to country. The researcher agrees with the above discussion because it is clear that in African countries like Kenya where the development is taking place there is no much divorce instead there is

abandonment of family members by the males because of unbearable poverty. Divorce in Kenya is not so common because it involves a lot and one needs to spend a lot of money to file in the case and process it until the end. For this reason couples opt to separate and one of the partners (in most cases women) lives with children while the man lives elsewhere. Some of the reasons why families find themselves with no father figure in African countries is when the male is deceased, imprisoned, separated, few cases of divorce, and being away due to alcohol. Modernization and urbanization have also contributed to family structure change especially from the traditional way of life to modern way of living. In traditional families, every man of a kinship was responsible for assisting their own kinship families and there was division of labour that reduced too much work for some family individuals such as fathers and mothers in given families as compared to modern families where members of the family live individually rather than in communal way of life as we see from the discussion of Degbey (1980) in the succeeding discourse.

Degbey (1980) argues that rapid demographic and socio-economic changes due mainly to urbanization and modernization have altered the composition and structure of families in modern societies. The concept of the family in an African setting has shrunk to become a nuclear family consisting solely of father, mother and children, thus denying many parents the assistance they once received from extended family support network. As a result, many parents find it difficult to carry out their work as well as family responsibilities. Urbanization and modernization have placed heavy burdens on families by causing influx of people especially men into the cities in search of jobs. As a result, many nuclear families in Africa have absent fathers who go out in search of a better livelihood. Others are caught up in alcoholism, while others engage in extra marital affairs abandoning their families.

1.3 Effects of father absence on urban families' livelihood

Parent absence impacts the child through family economic circumstances; this leads to a decrease in household resources especially if the parent does not have a stable job or earns a meagre salary. Families suffer from lack of financial support and the great risk of material hardship. A child in a financially unstable family may be tempted to engage in deviant behaviour like criminality, prostitution and drug trafficking. Resource deprivation and any resulting instability are detrimental to family and child well-being (Mcloyd, 1998).

There are many negative aspects associated with living apart from a biological father and multiple problems of offspring's wellbeing, including education, mental health, family relationships, and labour market outcomes. Children can benefit from the financial support, care and protection provided by a father. A man can make all the difference to a child's life by preventing or stopping abuse perpetrated by other men. Men need to protect children in their neighbourhood, at school, on public transport systems and in the home. This is more amplified in the presence of supportive fathers. They can give girls self-confidence and help boys develop healthy masculinity and a clear identity. One of the biggest impacts of an involved father is that he gives credibility and encouragement for educational achievement. Children stay longer at school and achieve more if their fathers support them in education (Desmond, 2006). Women who are supported in stable bonds with men experience lower levels of family stress and are less likely to suffer mental health problems. They derive greater satisfaction from their roles as mothers (Richter et al., 2011).

It is a problem that this example is often times set in a household whereby the father is present. Yet this should not be considered an offense to the argument that a two parent household is better than a single parent household. The father figure often leads to a divorce, and this would leave the female as a single-parent abandoned to raise the child(s). Importantly, fathers not only contribute to women's wellbeing and happiness, but have also been found to buffer children against neglectful or harsh parenting by a distant, demoralized or overburdened mother (Martin et al, 2010).

1.4 Impact of Father Absenteeism on children's behaviour

Father absenteeism has a serious consequence on household poverty and poor outcomes for children. Fathers are supposed to connect with and remain connected to their children over the life course because they are critical in all aspects of their lives. Positive father involvement is also beneficial to fathers themselves, as Richter (2006) puts it: "the concept needs to be fostered that increasing men's exposure to children, and encouraging their involvement in the care of children, may facilitate their own growth, bring them happiness and gratification, and foster a more nurturing orientation in general". (Pp 53-69)

Fathers who assume fatherhood are also less likely to engage in high risk behaviour and are more likely to retain steady employment (Magruder, 2010). Children benefit from

having fathers who are not only present, but are also emotionally engaging, affirming and accepting (Lamb, 2001). The most important factor that contributes to positive or negative outcomes for children is the quality of the father-child relationship, rather than just his physical presence, (Lamb, 2001). This quality of relationship “has to do with warmth, supportiveness, comforting, caring, nurturance, affection, or simply love, (Rohner, 2001). According to Barber, (2000) and Horn (2002) the low levels of supervision of adolescents frequently found in father-absent homes contributed more to the cause of delinquency than did poverty. Therefore, the contributions of fathers to a child’s well-being cannot be replaced simply by ensuring better child support enforcement, by designing better income transfer programs, or even by providing well-intentioned mentoring programs. As research confirms, children need their fathers (Horn, 2002).

Fathers highlight the crucial role present fathers could play in making sure that their children know where they come from, and familiarize themselves with their culture, particularly by taking boy children to initiation ceremonies when they reach the relevant age. The role of the father was also perceived to ensure that the child was fully integrated with other members of the extended family and attended family rituals and functions (Rohner, 2001). The researcher agrees with the argument of Rohner, (2001) because it is the role of fathers in many societies to ensure that their children are well informed about their cultures where they are born. Adams and Coltrane (2005) report that in families where the father is absent, the children may want to indulge in delinquent behaviours, such as prostitution for girls in order to get money for use, stealing especially for boys and also running away from home into street life so that they can get what they are lacking when the father is not present. The presence of a father figure will help the children have fear over the father authority and not indulge in delinquent behaviour. This is even worse for the families where the father figure is permanently absent due to death, followed by long term absence situations where the father is away due to job transfer. Finally there is the shorter absence of a father where the father is just away for few hours and back again at home. Single parenthood is a worldwide phenomenon and in some countries it is more pronounced than others. (Catherine, 2010).

According to Adams and Coltrane (2005) the role of fathers in the lives of children and families was and remains important where it is well enacted and performed. Fatherhood is

a highly important and valuable function. Leaving adolescence involves for some men being banished from and returning to family life in some cultures. This process often involves being schooled in male power by same-sex initiation processes in schools and gangs. However it is not the case that all boys have this experience or that this experience trumps all other experiences. Some boys are brought up to care, they are not expelled from the family but remain tied to it, either because their own fathers have died, left or never been present. In some cases they have received affectionate care, been socialized to understand men's roles in an alternative sense or chosen to take on the role of being a father, looking after siblings, parents and/or grandparents (Morrell & Jewkes, 2011). The children receive less supervision and protection from absent fathers because the fathers do not know what really happened when they are away from home. They are also more emotionally deprived, which leaves them vulnerable to sexual abusers who entrap them by offering affection, attention and friendship.

There is strong evidence that father absence negatively affects children's social-emotional development, particularly by increasing externalizing behaviour. These effects may be more pronounced if father absence occurs during early childhood than during middle childhood, and they may be more pronounced for boys than for girls. Father absence increases adolescents' risky behaviour, such as smoking or early childbearing. The evidence of an effect on adolescent cognitive ability continues to be weaker, but we do find strong and consistent negative effects of father absence on high school graduation. The latter finding suggests that the effects on educational attainment operate by increasing problem behaviours rather than by impairing cognitive ability. Ideas about fatherhood are critical for example in South Africa. Fatherhood is most often equated with being a provider (Richter & Morrell, 2006). Research has shown that generally father absence is associated with negative outcomes for children and women as Peacock (2008) refers to studies in Central America and the United States that have found that paternal abandonment or neglect can result in poor educational performance and school dropout (including early entry into the labour market to help families financially), teen pregnancy, and drug and alcohol abuse. Children's psychological, social and cognitive development has also been found to be hampered by paternal abandonment and a lack of emotional and material support.

The role a of father had historically reached beyond that of being simply a provider, decision-maker and disciplinarians even though many African societies have accepted that fathers should be providers and disciplinarian. This is an example of Senegal which is supported by Perry (2009). Perry (2009) argues that harsh disciplinary measures are integral to Wolof conceptions of Child rearing. Wolof people compare children with a pliant piece of green wood that can and should be bent by force, given a shape that it will retain forevermore when it dries. In 1991 Belsky and his associates provided a framework that suggested girls from a stressful environment (father-absent homes) were more likely to experience an early sexual maturation (early onset of puberty/menstruation, early sexual activity) (Belsky, Steinberg, & Draper, 1991). These risk factors could result in the “tendency to engage in short-term romantic relationships, insecure attachment romantic style, and high fertility and reproductive output” (Maestriperi, Roney, DeBias, Durante, & Spaepen, 2004). Several studies have shown that young adolescents, primarily women, raised in single-parent families are 1.5 times more likely to engage in pre-marital sexual behaviour than those adolescents from two-parent families (Davis & Friel, 2001)

There have been several studies that validate the absent father framework, but there has been some debate that early sexual activity is due to the stress from family turbulence, defined as many significant changes in the family members and circumstances, in single-parent families (Wu, 2001). It also appears that early sexual development in single-parent families is usually associated with girls, but not boys (Belsky et al, 2007; Davis & Friel, 2001). Horn (2002) indicated that children who live absent from their biological fathers are, on average, at least two to three times more likely to be poor, to use drugs, to experience educational, health, emotional and behavioural problems, to be victims of child abuse, and to engage in criminal behaviour than those who live with their married, biological (or adoptive) parents. Children from father absent homes are more likely to experience emotional disorders and depression compared to children from father-present households. According to research by the National Fatherhood Initiative, emotional problems are two or three times more common with children who live apart from their biological father than their peers who live with their married, biological or adoptive parents. Horn (2002) postulates that substance abuse and violence are more prevalent with children from father-absent homes. Children, who live

apart from their fathers, are more prone to use illegal substances and commit crimes. A survey conducted by the United States Department of Health and Human Services on child health concluded that fatherless children are at a much greater risk for drug and alcohol abuse (National Center for health and human services).

The familial roles of men have changed substantially over the past forty years. Lamb (2000) state that family structure has been affected by changes in the division of labour and constant adjustments in child support patterns. These changes have contributed to the retreat of many men from their families. Lamb (2002) further says that “There is every reason to believe that children raised in single parent families will be at risk.” The failure of non-custodial fathers to have consistent interactions with their children, as well as provide emotional, financial and spiritual support, leads to multidimensional deprivation.

1.5 Social protection mechanisms in father absentee households

Child protection measures in Kenya are currently not implemented effectively. Compliance with such legislation would increase if knowledge about the magnitude of the problem and about the factors that put children at risk were available. The Children’s Act has immensely improved the lives of many Kenyan children plagued with high illiteracy levels, frequent rape cases and child labour. It guarantees children the right to health and medical care, provision of which is the responsibility of the parents, the extended family and the government. Nonetheless, there are still a number of problems to surmount. Kenya’s severe economic and social difficulties have prevented the full realization of children’s rights. Child labour which is directly linked to poverty is among the major drawbacks. It has prevented children from developing their potential to earn higher income later in life, and will slacken national economic growth in the long term. Social protection describes all public and private initiatives that provide income or consumption transfers to the poor, protect the vulnerable against livelihood risks, and enhance the social status and rights of the marginalized; with the overall objective of reducing the economic and social vulnerability of poor, vulnerable and marginalized groups (UNICEF, 2003).

According to UNICEF (2003), good urban governance is a critical element to eliminating poverty, social exclusion and hunger. Creating a mechanism or an environment

for the poor to express their concerns is inextricably bound to the capability of securing sustainable livelihoods. Influencing urban policy is directly connected to the ability of citizens to advocate for better policies dealing with housing, health and infrastructure. Improving urban governance also focuses on providing programs and policies that will create jobs and opportunities for the urban poor to be self-reliant. According to UNICEF (2003) urban children are vulnerable to poverty and discrimination because they are not taken seriously and have less access to file grievances. Urban governance and policy should offer a platform to address these issues and a mechanism for youth to improve their hunger and livelihood situations (Women in informal employment globalizing and organization, 2010).

Social protection is a collection of measures to improve or protect human capital, ranging from labour market interventions, publicly mandated unemployment or old-age insurance to targeted income support. Social protection interventions assist individuals, households, and communities to better manage the income risks that leave people vulnerable. World Bank (2006) states that social protection is 'the provision of benefits to households and individuals through public or collective arrangements to protect against low or declining living standards'. International Labour Office (ILO) also asserts that Social protection is defined as 'the set of policies and programs designed to reduce poverty and vulnerability by promoting efficient labour markets, diminishing people's exposure to risks, and enhancing their capacity to protect themselves against hazards and interruption/loss of income' (Asian Development Bank ADB, 2000).

The government and social institutions have come up with programs that help the vulnerable children and mothers who are not able to earn a reasonable income. Those programs include; education and healthcare services among others which are provided by both government and non-government agencies. For example, they provide technical and vocational education and training mothers and youth, which has led to employment and earning of income that is able to sustain their families. Save the Children has improved the lives of the poor people by reducing hunger and improving livelihood in urban areas by focusing on innovative ways to increase access to financial services through cash transfers.

Targeted cash transfers can affect the world's poorest children. A lack of income among poor households is the leading cause of malnutrition in urban areas. Children in urban areas are more likely to be healthier if their families have greater access to financial resources and the necessary support to purchase or grow food. Save the Children hunger and livelihoods programs focus on improving the financial potential of poor urban families through income generating activities like cash transfers and the savings and lending program. Seeking social support from friends, neighbours and the church have been identified as coping strategies employed by grandmothers caring for children (Bohman et al. 2007; Oburu and Palmerus, 2005). However, emerging evidence suggests that support for older caregivers from adult children and the wider social environment is inadequate (Cattell 2008; Nyambedha et al, 2007; Schatz,2007; and Williams, 2003). Beyond family and community, government support is generally unavailable. However, in countries with social pensions for older adults such as South Africa, Namibia, Botswana, Mauritius and Lesotho, pensions are utilized by women to support other family members within their own households as well as non-residents (for example, adult children that are unemployed) (Kimuna and Makiwane, 2007; Schatz and Ogunmefun, 2007).

Female headed households in Zambia, in particular, especially those taking care of children, experience great labour shortage compared to male headed households. The reason underlying this problem is that they have few family members in the economically active age category compared to male headed households. In fact, these households have little resources to even hire labour. The female headed households with children have little productive assets such as land compared to male headed houses, for example, in Namibia. Female households experience a sharp decline in economic assets such as cattle, as a result of sale and property gambling (FAO, 2004). The researcher argues that there is no big difference between Nairobi and Namibia in terms of women owning property such as land, cattle, and goats among others especially in urban areas, which limit them to participate in productive work that can assist them when their husbands are not present.

It is estimated that South Africa has the highest average proportion of female-headed households in the continent. Thirty- five percent of parents of households with children in this sub-region are female-headed with an estimated 90% with social welfare occurring within the

households. In most cases of HIV/AIDS where children are left by their biological parents under care of their relatives like aunties, grandmothers we find that these relatives are overwhelmed by a high task of taking care of the children (Annan, 2005). From the researcher's point of view concerning Annan's argument is that there are many children's homes who take care of these children whose parents are deceased from HIV and AIDS here in Nairobi such as Mama Ngina children homes, Mama Fatuma children's home, Thomas Barnados, among others. Children of the deceased are so vulnerable to crimes, they lack education support, have limited health care services, and lack social protection and some of them try to make ends meet through illegal acts. That is why the social welfare organizations such as Non Governmental or governmental based institutions take a chance of protecting some of them to ensure that they are safe from criminal acts.

Most of the countries are experiencing large increase in the number of families headed by women and grandparents. For example a case of Zambia, literature reveals that households headed by women are more likely to take responsibility for orphans. It further reveals that the majority of single orphans have suffered the death of their fathers while their mothers remain living. Six percent of Zambia's children are single orphans who remain living with their mother after the death of the father. These female-headed households are progressively unable to provide for the children in their care, as the incidences of property grabbing continue, with members of the deceased husband's family taking as much of the family property as they want, including in some instances a house which the widow and children are living in. This state of affairs subjects the widow into a state with no means of living (Government of the republic of Zambia, 2004). In some of the Kenyan societies just like the situation in Zambia, some of the females who head those families of the deceased face challenges from the husband's relatives, such as brothers, uncles and male relatives. Such relatives will always want to grab the property of the deceased brother exposing the widow and the children of the deceased to vulnerable situations of poverty, lack of health care services because they lack materials that they can sell and make use of in paying health services, social insecurity. This situation leads some of the widows to prostitution in order to get something to maintain her family without any property that can help them in terms of family livelihood or development.

1.6 Theoretical Framework

Three theories were applied as the foundation of this study namely systems theory, structural functionalism theory and social exchange theory.

1.6.1 Social exchange theory

Social exchange theory was propounded by Homans George in 1961. The theory focuses on what is given and received in interactions. This theory implies interaction between two or more individuals or groups. Homans says that being married, for example, is a source of rewards in many ways; interaction with one's spouse is pleasurable, there are tangible benefits, and there is the psychological sense of security and comfort that comes with marriage. With some understanding we see that the two persons are in exchange relations when one gives or receive gifts, services from the other. In this regard husband and wife are expected to receive good services from each other. When the services are not rendered appropriately, problems therefore arise in the family (Nock, 1992).

Nock (1992) asserts that the theory is based on the notion that we like those who reward us and dislike those who punish us. Nock further says that social psychologists find that partners who believe they are getting far more in exchange than they give feel insecure and guilty, while those who believe they give more than they get feel angry. In such an explanation we therefore understand that relationships tend to go bad when there is a mismatch between what you want from the other person and what you think you are getting.

1.6.2 General system theory

General systems theory was originally proposed by biologist Ludwig von Bertalanffy in 1928. It is an interdisciplinary theory that attempts to explain the complex systems found in society, science and nature. It can be used to investigate or describe any group of things that work together to produce a result from a single organism to an entire society. Systems theory is a philosophy and worldview arising from the belief that aspects of the world are not independent of each other but interdependent on one another. This approach contends that it is difficult if not impossible to separate components of a question from logically related material.

This theory recognizes that organizations like families do not operate in vacuums and factors in external environment come into play to affect their day to day running. Systems theory in general states that anything affecting one subsystem affects the others and the factors that affect the system can come from within itself or the external environment and alters it. For example if there is failure in the family as a system it will affect all its members who will in turn affect the economic system through decreased productivity at work. This in turn will affect the larger systems in society. It may contribute to street families and even increased crime rates.

The open system approach introduces the environment into the analysis in order to relate it to the problem of the system as a whole. It explains certain behaviours in terms of demands of the environment. Organizations like families depend on its environment for its survival such as providing it with a goal of production of socially responsible individuals. The environment also provides it with resources. Each subsystem of the society must make efficient use of resources given to enable it adapt to the problems created by the nature. The theory has got some strengths and weaknesses. Some of the strengths of systems theory include: system theory is an approach that is used to study a complex phenomenon where there are many unpredictable variables to be studied. It also provides a useful framework in which to study complex variables influencing one another. Systems theory is suitable to describing situations as they exist. In addition, it has the ability of showing the complex network of relationships in operation as a system moves towards its goal or goals. It can also be used to help make meaningful predictions about what can be reasonably expected in the future. Systems theory has also survived the test of time. However, it has been criticized and remained a viable theory used in a cross section of academy.

This theory has some drawbacks. It is a map of reality and not reality itself. In that it is imperfect and exactness is not always to be found in some explanations. The theory attempts to explain too much and finally it gives too much emphasis on the relationship between components of the various subsystems and elements of the larger system.

1.6.3 Structural Functionalism Theory

The study will be guided by Structural functionalism theory by Talcott parsons (1902-1979). The theory holds that a family operates most efficiently with clear-cut sexual divisions of labour. It creates a complementary set of roles that link men and women together. In this perspective, women should carry out expressive roles, providing care and security to children while offering them emotional support. Men, on the other hand, would perform an instrumental role most importantly, being the breadwinner for the family. In other words, women would take the role of managing the household and raising children, while men provide financial support by working outside the home. According to Parsons, this complementary division of labour would ensure stability of the family.

Talcott Parsons (1959) has also written about the functions of the family. In his theory he identifies two functions that he perceives as being 'basic and irreducible'. These functions are: primary socialization of children and stabilization of adult personalities of the population of the society. Primary socialization occurs in early childhood and the family plays an important role at this stage. Later on, other institutions like the school or the peer group, will exercise much influence on the individual and this is what we refer to as secondary socialization. During primary socialization, two important tasks are achieved by the family. Firstly, the family must transmit the culture to the children. The child must not only be able to learn about the norms and values, but should also be able to 'internalize' these norms and values. Thus, it helps in the achievement of the second task, which is shaping the personality of the individual.

Parsons (1959) also argues that the family has the function of 'stabilizing the personality' of its adult members. By this, he means that family life provides adults with the emotional security that they need. Parents assume their role also to provide them with opportunities for expressing their childish whims through their children (Haralambos & Holborn, 2000). This theory explains how single mothers are a small component of the household members and how they do not function effectively when the father figure is missing in their families. Absenteeism of fathers should be viewed as a social problem that is increasingly affecting female headed households and the children. The absence of a husband creates a crisis which strains the family especially the female head. Moreover the family is

threatened and disrupted affecting the whole social order in the society The theory Provides a wide-ranging explanation for many social phenomena, has guided a great deal of valuable research, it allows not only for stability, but also for conflict, social change, and power relationships and has contributed useful concepts to the field

1.7 Interventions on father absenteeism

Father absence refers to when children grow up without a father in their lives, particularly in their homes. Recent research shows that children who live without their fathers are more likely to be poor, to use drugs, to experience educational, health, emotional and behavioural problems, to be victims of child abuse, and to engage in criminal behaviour more than their peers who live with their married, biological (or adoptive) parents. The National Responsible Fatherhood Clearinghouse (NRFC, 2008) recognizes that child poverty is among the most pervasive social problems challenging Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) and other poor households due to the combination of children born to single mothers, father absence, and high unemployment. The NRFC, (2008) also recognizes that child poverty can be reduced through supporting and strengthening the role of fathers in needy families by promoting and sustaining healthy marriages through a variety of activities, including programs to teach couples marriage and relationship skills, equipping men to be responsible fathers through skill-based parenting education, assisting men to achieve financial stability in the form of more consistent and higher earnings, and finally supporting incarcerated fathers in the development of healthy marriages and effective fathering skills. (NRFC, 2008)

The need to engage also young fathers is essential, given a high rate of absent fathers in most societies worldwide. (Colman, 1993; Lerman, 1986; Posel & Devey, 2006), and its serious consequences on household poverty and poor outcomes for children (Jaffee et al., 2001), ensuring that fathers are connected to their families. Then, there is a need to employ appropriate strategies and interventions that can facilitate this social problem. An 'epidemic of absence' is bad for children, but also bad for young fathers in many ways. International studies show clearly the links between early fatherhood and life outcomes such as increased poverty and dependence on welfare among young fathers (Mollborn, 2006; O'Connor, 1998); delinquency and repeat offending by young fathers, lower levels of education and diminished

employment opportunities and performance in the work place (Bunting & McAuley,2004; ESRC, 1997; Pirog-Good, 1996); and poorer health, educational and behavioral outcomes for children born to teenage parents (Thornberry et al,1997). These intersecting issues of poverty, unemployment, absent fathers and criminal involvement are especially serious issues amongst young men and their children in societies everywhere. A study done in Cape Town and Durban found that young fathers face multiple challenges to remaining involved in the lives of their children (Swartz & Bhana, 2009). The study highlights the desire of young men to be involved in parenting their children and raises awareness of the barriers presented by cultural traditions, their family and the family of their child's mother. The factors that hinder young men's involvement with their children include the fact that money is equated with responsibility; for example, that the young man's involvement in a child's life is compensated for with so-called "damages" paid to appease the family for impregnating their daughter; young men's view of being able to support the child financially dominating over other aspects of their involvement; frequent rejection by the mother of their child's family because young men cannot provide financially; high unemployment rates leading to an inability to provide financial support with related feelings of shame; and the common geographical and residential separation between a young father and their child.

2.0 Statement of the problem

Father absenteeism is a social phenomenon that changes family structure in societies. The decline of fatherhood is a major force behind many of the most disturbing problems that plague many societies worldwide: crime and juvenile delinquency; premature sexuality and out-of-wedlock births to teenagers; deteriorating educational achievement; depression, substance abuse and alienation among adolescents; and the growing number of women and children in poverty, (Catherine, 2010).

Father absenteeism is all over the world, and it has become a threat to the family members and the society at large. Despite the social welfare services that are provided by social institutions to families to ensure family stability in families such as family counselling, guidance from the church, family programmes, family therapies and group discussion, there is still a high level of father absenteeism producing single parenting in our societies. Kinnear

(1999) reports that developed countries, in particular, are experiencing an increase in single-parent families as divorce becomes more common. In developing countries, such as Kenya, divorce is not as common, but desertion, death, and imprisonment produce father absence families, primarily headed by women. In Kenyan societies and all over the world a family is a great source of pride. However, family and marriage relations in Kenya are gradually changing in response to the changing social and economic environment. Some of the urban families are faced by the father absenteeism due to separation, divorce or other factors that contribute to single parenthood.

Murungi (2003) argues that marriage life is not taken seriously due to lack of proper preparation. The trend today is that young people meet in discos, clubs, and bars, but to mention a few and rush into marriage without any consultation. As a result they discover later that each has different opinions from the other, and fail to have proper dialogue between themselves resulting in family instability. In most cases females who are associated with father absence suffer the consequences of raising children alone and being the head of the family as pointed out by Dobson (2002). Dobson argues that the breakdown of the nuclear family has resulted in an increase in women-headed households, which correlates with absent fathers. According to Gillis (2002), marriage is no longer seen in the same light as years gone by. It has become purely contractual as opposed to covenantal, and is becoming a disregarded social institution, thus divorce is cited as one of the contributing factors to absence of fathers in terms of family patterns. The most common cause of a disruption of family is desertion by the father. This desertion leaves remaining family members with feelings of rejection, financial crisis as well as other social problems.

In contemporary society, traditional norms, values, and beliefs are slowly being eroded, through complete abandonment in modern time where the values, beliefs and traditional practices are abandoned due to civilization in the city and everyone wants to look different from traditional. This situation leads many families to have different shapes in terms of gender roles which can lead to avoidance of duties or responsibilities. For example, it is assumed that when women get jobs and are earning good money, they may have no need to have male figures around them because they can provide. However, despite them having everything in their lives in terms of money and property, they are unhappy because they lack

social security, fatherly love (especially for children), and also companionship of their counterparts. In Kenya, particularly Nairobi slum areas, families are faced by different challenges of socioeconomic life such as poverty, unemployment, marital instability and other social issues that really disturb people, and in an attempt to counter these challenges people find themselves indulging in alcohol and other criminal acts that lead them to imprisonment leaving their families without a male or father figure.

O'Hare (2011) observed that developed countries, in particular, are experiencing an increase in single-parent families as divorce and separation become more common. The United States has the highest percentage of single-parent families (34% in 1998) among developed countries, followed by Canada (22%), Australia (20%), and Denmark (19%). Single parents are on the rise, and more than 1 in 3 children in developed countries are being raised by single parents, a six fold increase from the 1970s. Another research carried out by Kimani (2009) shows challenges facing nuclear families with absent fathers in Gatundu district such as financial instability, children delinquency, poverty among others. As we have observed, scholars have pointed out that single motherhood is on the increase by will or by default, and the implications of this social phenomenon on children and the family at large is not clearly known, which this study intends to empirically investigate.

The overall objective of the study was to explore the impact of father absenteeism on social vulnerability among modern families in Kenyan urban households. This study was guided by the following specific objectives:

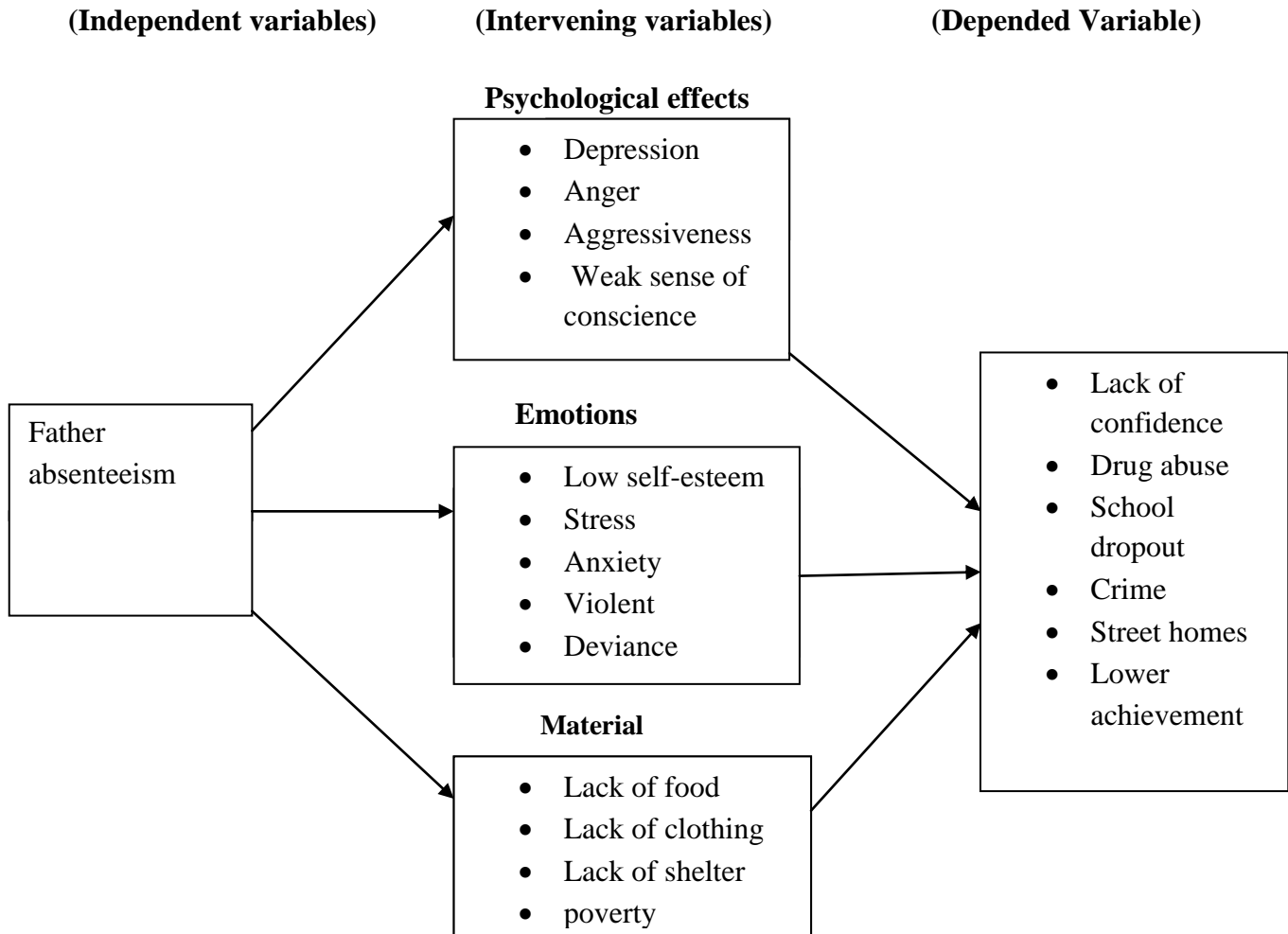
- To determine the factors that lead to father absenteeism in kibra
- To explore the effects of father absenteeism on families livelihood in kibra
- To assess the impact of father absenteeism in children's behaviour in modern families in kibra
- To determine the social protection mechanism in father absentee households in kibra
- To examine how father absenteeism could be controlled

The study was guided by the following research questions:

- Which factors led to father absenteeism in kibra?

- How does father absenteeism affect families' livelihood among kibra households?
- How does father absenteeism affect children's behaviour?
- What are the social protection mechanisms in father absentee households in kibera?
- How can father absenteeism be controlled?

Figure 1: Conceptual framework



3.0 Research Methodology

The chapter discusses the study design, data collection methods, sampling techniques and sample size and how the data were analyzed.

3.1 Research design

The study adopted a case study design. This perspective allows a researcher to use cases that have the required information with respect to the objectives of the study. It also allows one to get in-depth information from the respondents. Since the study seeks to investigate the impacts of father absenteeism on social vulnerability among modern families in Kenyan urban households, the information will be provided by family members in the households where the father is absent.

3.2 Site description

This study was carried among Kibra families, whose husbands were alive, but had abandoned them and were not in touch with their children any more. Kibra is the biggest slum in Nairobi City. It is situated approximately seven Kilometres from the Nairobi City Centre. Kibra as a whole is an informal settlement comprising ten villages covering approximately 250 hectares of land with an estimated population of about 750,000 people (Census, 2009). That gives an average population density of 2000 people per hectare, although some villages are more crowded than others. The villages are Lindi, Kisumu Ndogo, Soweto, Makina, Kianda, Mashimoni, Siranga, Gatuikira, Laini Saba and the newly founded Raila village. Kibra informal settlement is the largest in size and worst in the living conditions of the residents in the whole of Africa. The settlement is densely populated with 95% of the residents living below the poverty line. Most of them are working in the industrial area of the city as casual labourers with an average income of Kshs 45/= per day. The average family of 7 occupies a small room of 10 by 10 feet. There are no street lights. Most of the houses are made of mud and roofed with either corrugated iron sheets or covered with polythene paper.

Kibra residence comes from different part of the country mainly to occupy the area since the life there is cheap as compared to any other part of Nairobi in terms of paying rent.

Most of the families in Kibera households are headed by female who are single parents while their husbands are living elsewhere. Father absence in Kibera families is so common, and due to this the families are deprived basic needs resulting to social arrangements of children and mothers such as prostitution of girls and mothers in order to attain those needs. The most common economic activities in Kibera are small businesses such as selling of second hand cloths, vegetables, tomatoes, potatoes, fish, shoes and operating salon along the railway line, and paths where there is small spacing

3.3 Target population

A target population is the entire group of individuals that meet the desired set of criteria. According to Mugenda and Mugenda (1999) target population is defined as the population to which a researcher wants to generalize the results of a study. The target population for this research is general, everyone could quality. Essentially these are women driven households in Kibera who are experiencing father absenteeism and can provide relevant information about the phenomenon. These includes: single mothers, children, absentee fathers, and key informants (chief, religious leaders, social service officer) that serve the community. The study used many approaches depending on the study situation, such as non probability and probability.

3.4 Sampling techniques and sample size

Sampling is a process of selecting a number of individuals for a study to represent a larger population from which they are selected. It is the procedure used to select people, places or things to study (Kimalu & Marimba, 2014). The researcher used both probability and non probability sampling methods in the study. Stratified random sampling was used to sample different categories of members of community; cluster random sampling was also used to select the eleven villages in Kibera and a combination of other approaches were used in different instruments that the researcher had which include; purposive sampling technique in selecting the chief, social service officer because they are the only people who could give the information about the families in the community, For purposive technique the researcher ensured that the questions asked to respondents were not leading questions to avoid bias and snowball sampling technique was also used to select single mothers, absentee fathers, and

children. The researcher had identified one respondent of a desired characteristic and this one respondent identified other respondents of the similar characteristic. The researcher had a target sample size of 80 individuals from Kibera, and the researcher managed to receive back 70 questionnaires.

3.4.1 The Sampling Frame

No.	Respondents	Target sample	Accessed Sample	%
1.	General public	35	32	40
2	Single mothers	15	10	12.7
3.	Absentee fathers	10	10	12.7
4.	Children	10	10	12.5
5	Key informants	9	7	8.7
6	Focus group (members)	1(6members)	1	1.3
	Total	80	70	87.5

3.5 Methods of data collection

Structured observation guided by a structures observation guide helped the researchers to observe the behaviour and character of the children in absentee father households. Interviews constituted the bulk of data collection, where self administered questionnaire were predominantly used as the main data collection and recording tool. With the respondent's permission, a video tape was used to record interviews with key informants and those who could not read and write for purposes of clarity during interpretation and analysis.

3.6 Data Analysis Procedures

This research used qualitative (case study) and quantitative data analysis: once a research instrument has been administered the raw data collected was entered into the computer to be coded and organized systematically to facilitate analysis. Qualitative data was obtained from narration from the respondents and their body expression as they were filling in

the questionnaire. The data was entered into the computer and analyzed using SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Scientists) version 16.0. The researcher used frequency tables to analyse data that enabled the researcher to come up with conclusions and recommendations. The purpose of coding is to obtain qualitative data. Non-empirical (quantitative) presentation of the data was in form of descriptive analysis where it provided successful interpretation of the findings, through tables, pie charts and bar charts. The data obtained recorded on video was transcribed and qualitatively interpreted and analysed. All the other qualitative data was analysed qualitatively and the SPSS packaged used in analysing the quantitative data obtained through biographic information.

3.7 Validity

According to Mugenda and Mugenda as cited by Kimalu and Marimba (2014) validity is about result obtained. It is accuracy and meaningfulness of inferences, which are based on research results. Validity is the degree to which results obtained from analysis of the data actually represent the phenomenon under study. To ensure validity in the results, the researcher did pilot testing in the area before collecting data in order to adjust the research instrument; the researcher also had to seek for scientific methods to ensure that the research instruments had valid questions before proceeding to the field for data collection.

Oladipo, Ikamari, Kiplang'at and Barasa (2015) also argue that validity refers to the extent to which an instrument measures what it is intended to measure. It is the extent to which an instrument is suitable or meaningful in measuring what needs to be measured.

3.8 Reliability

Mugenda and Mugenda (2003) as cited by Kimalu and Marimba (2014) argue that reliability is a measure of the degree to which a research instrument yields consistent results after repeated trials. Kothari (2004) supports Mugenda and Mugenda by suggesting that measuring instrument is reliable if it provides consistent results. Kothari continues saying that consistent results imply that the research exercise is repeated several times and the results obtained are the same.

Reliability is the extent to which a measure gives consistent results. When considering reliability, the question to be asked is whether the measurement or observation can be confirmed by repeated measurements or observations. Reliability evaluates the stability of measurement. When repeated measurements are highly consistent or identical, a researcher concludes that the measurement methods or operational definition is highly reliable (Oladipo, Ikamari, Kiplang'at and Barasa, 2015). In order to measure reliability, the researcher did pilot study prior to main study and also used equivalent forms reliability where the researcher had many different questionnaires of different respondents, having different questions but measuring the same measure that was intended to be measured.

3.9 Ethical consideration

Ethical consideration is imperative for the researcher to take into account the wellbeing of the respondents and conduct the data collection in an ethical manner (Oladipo, Ikamari, Kiplang'at and Barasa, 2015). Therefore the researcher sought permission from the University and the Government through the Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Technology to carry out the research. The researcher received a letter from NACOSTI allowing the researcher to carry on the research

The researcher made sure that the purpose of this study was fully explained in advance to the respondents for consent purposes. In cases of children the researcher had to get consent from their parents and the researcher clarified to the parents that their children were free to leave the questionnaire unfinished if they felt like leaving because they do it voluntarily. Confidentiality at all times was upheld, and to safeguard anonymity of the identity of the respondents the researcher applied coding. The researcher was open and honest in dealing with respondents. Respect and dignity for human respondents was upheld. All the information gotten from sources other than the researcher was and is duly acknowledged to avoid plagiarism. Findings of the study were reported with the highest possible objectivity and honesty. Consent from parents and the department of children was sought to interact and interview any person who was below 18 years of age since they were considered to be children.

4.0 Discussion of Findings

4.1 Bio-graphic Information

Table 4.1: Respondent's Age group of Single Mothers

Respondents Age Group		
Age group	Frequency	Percent
21-25 years	3	30
26-30 years	2	20
31-35 years	1	10
36 years and above	4	40
Total	10	100

The table 4.1 above reveals that most of the respondents who participated in the study were of age 36 and above which took 40% of the population, while 30% of the respondents were between age 21-25, whereas 20% of the respondents were between age 26-30, and finally 10% of the respondents were between age 31-35.

The respondents of age 36 and above were available in their homes. While other respondents bellow age 36 and above were busy out doing different kind of jobs. Some were in school; others were operating different businesses outside their homes which made it difficult for the researcher to assess them easily.

Table 4.2: Single Mother's Level of Education

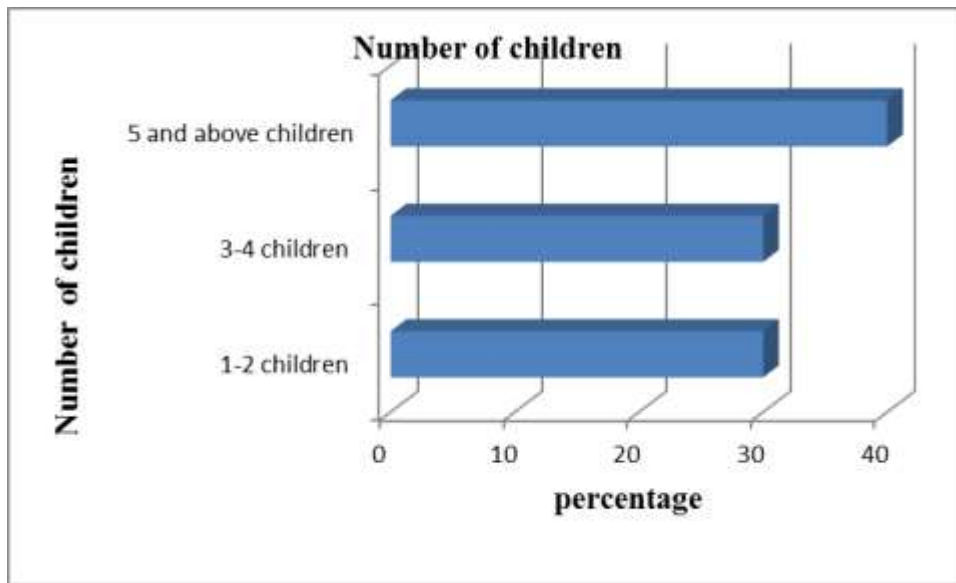
Single Mother's Level of Education		
Level of Education	Frequency	Percent
Primary	3	30
Secondary	3	30
University	1	10
Others	3	30
Specify		
Total	10	100

According to the researcher's findings 30% of the respondents had attained primary education, while 30% of the respondents had attained secondary education, 30% of other respondents had college education and 10% of the remaining population had university education. As per the findings above it clearly shows that the entire population of the respondents was not illiterate at least each of them had some form of education.

Table 4.3: Marital Status of the Single Mothers

Respondent's marital status		
Marital Status	Frequency	Percent
Married	2	20
Single Mother	4	40
Divorced	1	10
Separated	3	30
Total	10	100

The table above 4.3 shows that 40% of the respondents were single mothers, who were single by choice. while 30% of the respondents were separated with their husbands and decided to live without husbands but to live with their children, 10% of the respondents were divorced and the other 20% of the respondents were married after their separation or divorced with their husbands. The findings show that a larger population of Kibra residents live apart from their partners. Because only 20% out of the total the population show that they were married, but for some reason their husbands abandoned them. The researcher asked the respondents similar question on marital status and according to the findings it clearly shows that majority of the respondents were not married, while a small percentage of the respondents said that they were married.

Figure 4.1: Number of Children in a Household

According to the findings most of the respondents who were interviewed had 5 and above children living without their fathers 40%. while 30% of the respondent had 3-4 children, and 30% of the respondents were having 1-2 children. This is a clear indication that most of the single mothers had more than 1 child in kibera area and living single life. This is because some of fathers were absent either because of death, separation, work related, or due to marriage dissolution. The researcher asked the respondents to state where their husbands were born. According to the findings, half that is 50% of the respondents reported that their husbands were born in an urban area, while 50% of the other respondents stated that their husbands were born in rural areas. The researcher asked this question in mind that the place of birth could lead to father absenteeism in homes. As from the findings in figure 4.1 it clearly shows that the place of birth has nothing to do with father absenteeism in families since those who were born in an urban area and rural areas share the same percentage which is 50%.

The researcher asked the respondents to state whether they were single by choice and majority 90% of the respondents reported that circumstances of different nature lead them to be single. They gave the following factors such as divorce, separation, infidelity of their

husbands, having child out of wedlock and witchcraft which made them feel that they should not live together with their husbands.

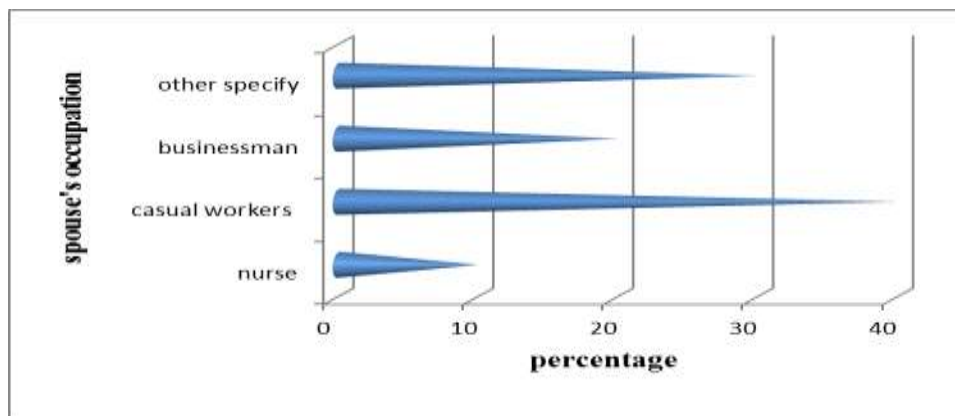
Table 4.4: Respondent's Occupation

Single mother's occupation		
Occupation	Frequency	Percent
Teacher	4	40
Community social Workers	1	10
Casual workers	3	30
Others specify	2	20
Total	10	100

The table shows different occupations of the respondents who participated in this study. Most of the respondents 40% were teachers, while 30% of the respondents were casual workers, 20% of the respondents had a combination of occupation such as operating salons, selling of cloths, selling of fruits and cereals, and house helping, finally 10% of the respondents were community social workers.

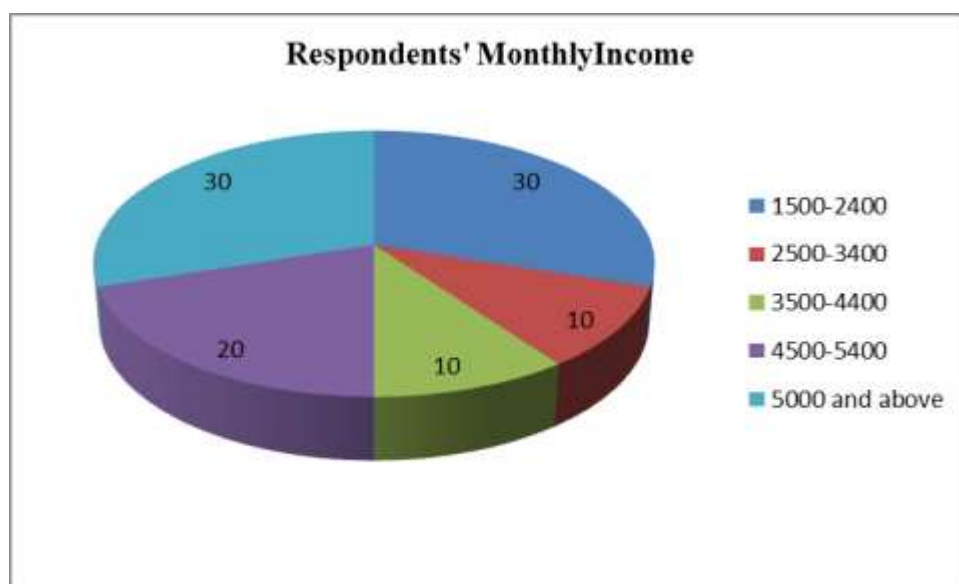
Teachers turned to take larger part of population because the four of them were employed by so called "organization" of orphan children in Kibra and the "organization" needed some teachers to take care of children. Otherwise the most of the respondents were working as casual workers in industrial area to earn their daily living. Followed by other respondents who were doing different kinds of businesses within and elsewhere.

Figure 4.2: Spouse's Occupation

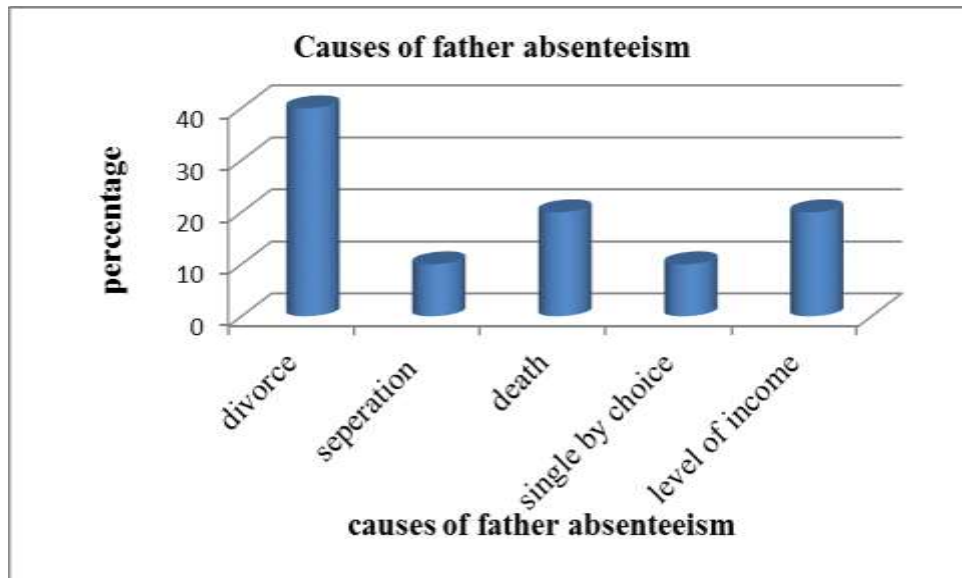


According to the findings about the absentee father occupation, 40% of the respondents reported that their husbands worked as casual workers, while 30% of the respondents were from others specify (jobless). Some of the others respondents 20% were business men, and 10% of the respondents were nurses respectively. This is because most of the Kibra residents have no secure jobs or permanents jobs and most of them work as casual workers such as “*kazi ya mjengo*” others in industries and this is the reason as to why their living conditions are wanting due to lack of enough salaries that can cater for their needs.

Figure 4.3: Respondent’s Monthly Income



As per the monthly income, the researcher found that 30% of the respondents reported that they earned Kshs. 5500 and above per month, 30% of the respondent also stated that they earned between Kshs. 1500-2400 per month, while 20% of the respondents earn between Kshs. 4500-5400 per month, whereas 10% of the respondents earned between Ksh2500-3400 per month, and the remaining 10% of the respondents also earned Kshs. 3500-4400 per month. The respondents said that the income earned each month is not enough to cater for family needs in a household. This is because there is a higher demand of basic needs such as food, health care services, and education for their children, clothing, shelter, security and safe drinking water.

Figure 4.4: The key factors leading to father absenteeism

According to the findings on the key factors leading to father absenteeism, 40% of the respondents reported that divorce is the key factor that leads to father absenteeism, while 20% of the respondent said that death also caused father absenteeism, followed by the level of income which is 20%, whereas 10% of the respondent reported that separation caused father absenteeism, and finally 10% of the respondents stated that the level of income could cause father absenteeism.

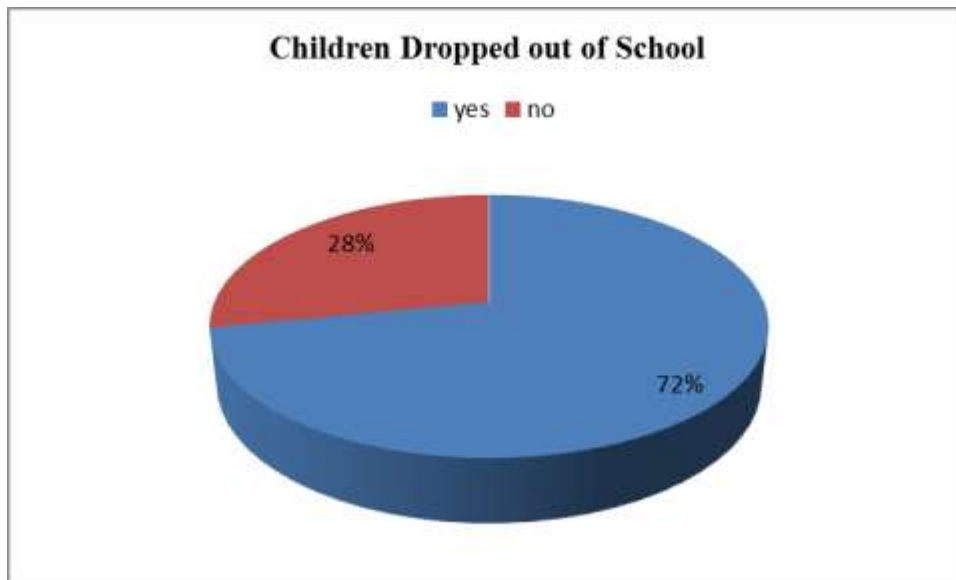
Table 4.5: Ranking factors in order of contribution

Ranking factors towards father absenteeism		
Factors	Frequency	Percent
Death	6	60.
Divorce	3	30
Level of income	1	10
Total	10	100

The researcher asked the respondents to rank the factors in order of contribution to father absenteeism, and according to the findings from the respondents, death is the first

ranking factor that leads to father absenteeism taking 60% of the population. Divorce is in the second position in terms of ranking which took 30% of the population, while level of income is the least factor that took 10% of the remaining percentage. The researcher had listed all the factors that could cause father absenteeism and asked the respondent to rank them in order of severity. The respondents indicated that the most factor of father absenteeism in their families was death. In respect to occupation of the respondents who were single mothers concerning father absenteeism, 70% of the respondents reported that their occupation could not lead to father absenteeism, while 30% of the respondents said that their occupation could lead to father absenteeism. The researcher asked the respondents to explain their answers about their occupation in regard to father absenteeism. Some of those single mothers said that their occupation could lead to father absenteeism. This is because their husbands could not be happy if their wives participated in unethical jobs such as sexual commercial worker which could lead to deadly diseases such as HIV and AIDs. Other respondents reported that their husbands could also be absent if their wife were earning more money than him and the wife does not give him his due respect.

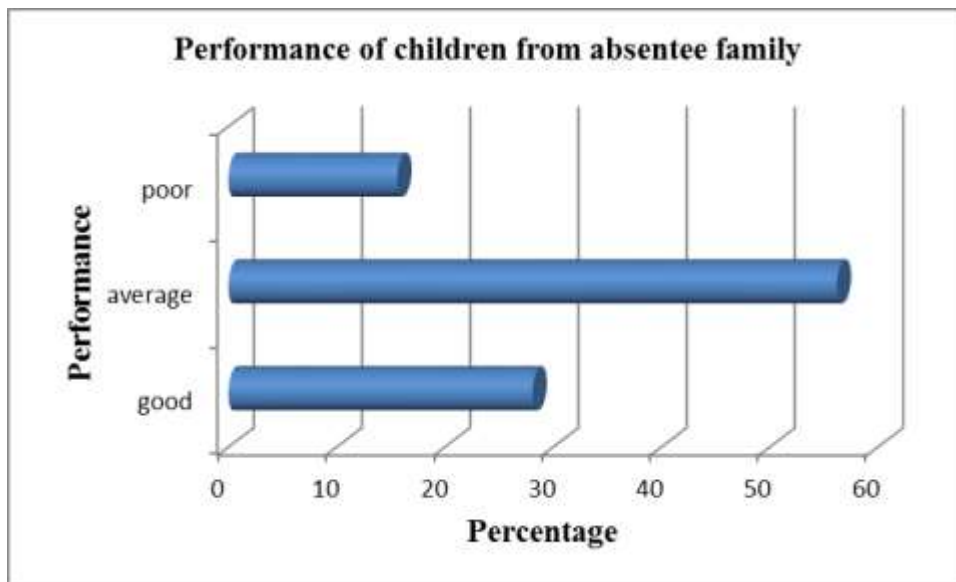
Figure4.6. Children who Dropout out of school



The respondents were asked to state whether there were children who dropped out of school from father absentee families. Majority of the respondents 72% reported that there were children who had dropped out of school from father absenteeism homes. While other

29% of the respondents said that there were no children who dropped out of school from father absentee families. The researcher asked the respondents to briefly explain their answers. Those who said children dropped out of school said that the children lack school fees; some were hungry and could not concentrate any more in class. Other respondents reported that children opt to drop and join street children so that they could secure food. Other respondents said that some children deviant and become criminals and decide to stay at home idle. Some others argued that the family becomes poor and children were not able to stay in school any longer. Finally, other respondents reported that children who were in school from father absenteeism families were sponsored by NGOs. Others given bursary by government, others got school fees from CDF, and others were helped by their able relatives such as uncles, and aunts.

Figure 4.7: Children's Performance



Majority of the respondents 56.2% reported that the performance of the children from father absenteeism was average, and the other 28.1% respondents said that children from father absentee families have good performance in school, and 15.6% of the respondents said that the children from absentee father family performed poorly. Children from absentee families were able to perform well because of the problems they faced having their mother alone who could provide for them. Due to this kind of situation, the children work more hard

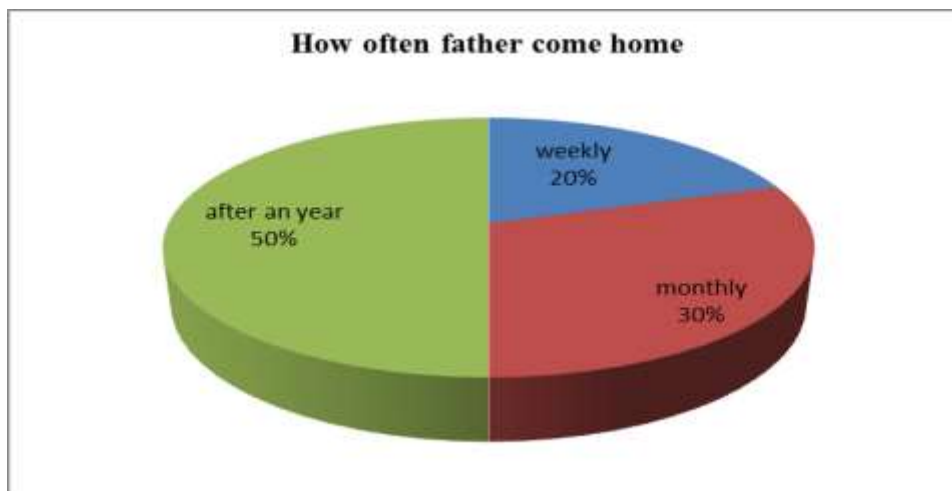
so that they could attain good grade that enables them get somewhere and help their single mother.

Table 4.6 Child's Effects on Performance

Father Absenteeism and Affect on Child's Performance		
Response	Frequency	Percent
Yes	23	71.9
No	9	28.1
Total	32	100.0

The researcher asked the respondents to state whether they think father absenteeism had an effect on child's performance. According to the researcher's findings, the table 4.15 above shows that majority of respondents 71.9% said that they think father absenteeism had an effect on children in terms of performance in school. Out of 32 respondents 28.1% of the respondents said that they do not think that father absenteeism can have effects of children's performance. The researcher asked the respondents to say how children's performance can be affected by father absenteeism. Some of the respondents said that the children have nobody to guide them in school assignments; other children could not concentrate in class due to the situations at home, and other respondents said that the children had no school fees since the fathers were not at home.

Figure 4.8: Frequency of father at home



Five of the respondents out of 10 reported that fathers come home after a year, while 30% of the respondents said that fathers went after a monthly and lastly 20% of the respondents said that fathers went home on weekly basis. This means that most of fathers went home after a long period of time. This information is supported by the children who reported that they have never seen their fathers at home. The researcher was interested to know how close the respondents were to their wives, and all the respondents reported that they were in distant relationship with their wives.

Table 4.7 The Effects of Spouse's Distance Relationship on Marriage

Effects of Distance Relationship on Marriage		
Response	Frequency	Percent
Yes	8	80
No	2	20
Total	10	100

The researcher asked the respondents to state whether distant relationship could have effects on marriage and 80% of the respondents confirmed that having distant relationship in marriage effects families. While other remaining 20% of the respondents said that the distance relationship in marriage cannot have effect on families.

Table4.8 Children's Cause Father Absenteeism

Children's Cause Father Absenteeism		
Response	Frequency	Percent
Yes	6	60
No	4	40
Total	10	100

More than a half 60% of the respondents confirmed that children can cause father absenteeism and 40% of the other remaining respondents said that children cannot cause father absenteeism.

The researchers were interested in understanding how children could cause father absenteeism. The respondents who said children could cause father absenteeism gave reasons such as; if the children were many and they all need basic needs. Whereby the father was not able or has the ability to provide them. Then, the father disappeared from home. Other respondents said that if the father earns little money and the demand at home is so high, then the father tends to leave the family and go out to rejoice with other women outside marriage who never had demanding children.

Table 4.9: Income and Father Absenteeism

Income and Father Absenteeism		
Response	Frequency	Percent
Yes	8	80.0
No	2	20.0
Total	10	100.0

Some of the respondents 80% said that income could cause father absenteeism, whereas 20% of the respondent denied that income could not cause father absenteeism.

5.0 Summary, Conclusion and Recommendations

5.1 Summary of the findings

The summary is based on chapter four; it gives the insight of the results based on the theory the study used.

5.1.1 Causes of father absenteeism

From the findings of the study, it has resulted out that there are several factors that causes father absenteeism in Kibra families. The most mentioned ones in the study include death, divorce, separation, infidelity, wedlock, alcoholism and work related issue. The findings show that death is the major cause of father absenteeism in Kibra due to deadly diseases such as HIV and AIDS. All the respondents said that they would recommend awareness of father absenteeism in the community, mobilize community members and sensitize them about the effect of father absenteeism in the community. The respondents also recommended that children department to keep families in order, to apprehend irresponsible parents, to plan

marriages properly, parents should learn how to dialogue with their partners and couples should use family planning in order to avoid unplanned pregnancies that lead to many children. They said that the listed above interventions can prevent father absenteeism in families.

5.1.2 The effects of father absenteeism on family

Father absenteeism has negative effects towards family livelihood. The effects touches on decrease in household resources, family suffer from lack of financial support and risk of material hardship. Father absenteeism leads to deviant behaviour on children such as prostitution, drug trafficking, resource deprivation resulting to family instability. The findings shows that families do not have basic needs due to low income that does not cater for all their needs, which result to mother change of roles, mothers engage in unhealthy activities in aid of earning some money that can sustain her family. The respondents also said that the father absenteeism causes poverty in homes. For the family to function effectively there should be involvement of each member to ensure the structural functioning as the theory explains. Although father absenteeism has negative effects towards the family such as deprivation of resources, there are other family members such as mothers who work and earn reasonable amount of money that can help the families.

5.1.3 The impacts of father absenteeism on children behaviour

Father absenteeism has a serious consequence on household poverty and poor outcomes for children. Fathers are supposed to connect with and remain connected to their children over the life course because they are critical in all aspects of their lives. The respondents said that father absenteeism causes children delinquency, engage in drug abuse become gang stars, and become street children. The findings shows that there is a higher number of children from father absenteeism who dropped out of school, the study also reveals that father absenteeism children perform poorly in school, others have average performance. The study also shows that children from the father absenteeism face challenges such as lack of school fees, lack of clothing, and lack of basic needs in general. Other respondents said that the children have bad attitudes towards males since the father is also a male. There is a great need to create

awareness about the impacts of father absenteeism on children to enhance well being of children in homes.

5.1.4 Social Protection Mechanism in Father Absentee Households

Child protection measures in Kenya are currently not implemented effectively. Children acts have immensely improved the lives of many Kenyan children who are vulnerable. The children Act guarantee children the right to health and medical care provision of which is the responsibility of the parents, extended family and the government.

Social protection describes all public and private initiatives that provide income or consumption transfers to the poor, protect the vulnerable against livelihood risks, and enhance the social status and rights of the marginalized; with the overall objective of reducing the economic and social vulnerability of poor people, vulnerable and marginalized groups (UNICEF, 2003). Findings show that social welfare services that are available in Kibera are not effective. The findings show that there are few absentee families that receive social welfare services while other respondents reported that they do not receive social welfare nor do they know about it. The respondent said that some receive social services in form of money or material goods such as children uniform, and food for children who are schooling. Therefore, agencies involved with social welfare services such as NGOs, CDF officers, WHO and UNICEF should create awareness in the community about the services they offer to communities to avoid biasness among vulnerable families.

5.1.5 Intervention on father absenteeism

It is very important to have father absenteeism interventions to reduce or curb down the impact of it in families. Some of the respondents said that there should be available and affordable counselling centres within the area to give services such as counselling services to father absenteeism members who are affected. The children departments should come up with manageable programmes such as African father initiatives. This is a programme that impact fathers with knowledge and skills about fatherhood and engaging them in improvement and outcome of children. Fatherhood institutions this another programmes that enables fathers to improve children's chances of interacting with, and getting to know their fathers and the

father figure in their lives. Activity based programme is a programme enables fathers and the child to come together to interact socially and play together. Finally early identification of paternity is also a programme that helps the fathers to identify their roles as fathers as early as possible and involve both parents to ensure that their children are safe in all aspect. The programme encourages father and child interactions and getting fathers involved through educational activities and encourages shared work.

5.2 Conclusions

Despite guidance, counselling, therapies provided by social institutions such as churches and social welfare agencies. There are a large number of Kibra residents with cases of father absenteeism. This is because of divorce, death out of HIV and AIDs, separation, infidelity among the men, relocation of jobs, and children out of wedlock. Even though there are counselling centres and social welfare services in Kibra, They are not helpful to Kibra residence due to the facts that they are not well known by the community members and the residence are not aware of them and how to receive these services.

In as much as the social welfare agencies offers social services to Kibra members, that take care of social problems in vulnerable families such as offering school fees for children, providing school uniform for children, offering food for children. It is important for children department and family welfare agencies to chip in and ensure that all the parents have full responsibilities towards their family especially on children to enhance proper functioning in families.

The researcher concludes that there is a need for family welfare agencies dealing with welfare of families, to come up with family programmes such as early identification of paternity that helps the fathers to identify their roles as fathers as early as possible. Activity based programme that enable father and child to come together to interact and play. Fatherhood institution programme which help children to have a chance of interacting with and getting to know their father and the father figure in their lives. African fathers initiative that impacts father with knowledge and skills about fatherhood and engage them in improving maternal health and outcome of children

5.4 Recommendation

Drawing from the research findings, the study recommend on the following:

First, family welfare agencies should create different family programmes in Kibra and other areas that experience the father absenteeism programme that will involve all the fathers in aid of enhancing family functioning. The social welfare agencies, NGOs, and the CDF officials should ensure that the entire community members are aware of the services that they offer to community to avoid bias when offering those services.

The researcher recommends the local leaders such as chief, county representatives to mobilize community members and create awareness about the impacts of father absenteeism in families and especially on children. Apart from mobilizing and sensitizing community members, local leaders should apprehend irresponsible fathers and come up with appropriate policies towards those fathers to minimize father absenteeism. The study recommends both parents to have a proper dialogue on family issues such as conflicts before it reach it a crisis.

References

- Adams, M. & Coltrane, S. (2005). Boys and men in families: The domestic production of gender, power and privilege. In M. Kimmel, J. Hearn & R. Connell (Eds), *Handbook of studies on men and masculinities* (pp. 230-248). London: Thousand Oaks.
- African Fathers. African Fathers Initiative, Be involved from the start. Available on http://www.africanfathers.org.zw/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=339:beinvolved-from-the-start&catid=139:be-involved-from-the-start&Itemid=159 (Accessed on 1 August 2012).
- Annan, Kofi (2005) inequality puts women at risk. www.sahims.net/archive/brief-cases/2005/reg_brief_case_069.htm
- Asian Development Bank (ADB) (2000). Women in Pakistan: Country Briefing Paper (Manila: ADB Programs Department [West] and Office of Environment and Social Development).
- Barrow. C. (1996). *Family in the Caribbean*. Kingston: Ian Randle publishers
- Barber, N. (2000). *Why parents matter: Parental investment and child outcomes*. Westport, CT: Bergin & Garvey.
- Belsky, J., Steinberg, L. D., Houts, R. M., Friedman, S. L., DeHart, G., Cauffman, E., et al. (2007). Family Rearing Antecedents of Pubertal Timing. *Child Development*, 78(4), 1302-1321.
- Belsky, J., Steinberg, L. D., & Draper, P. (1991). Childhood experience, interpersonal development, and reproductive strategy: An evolutionary theory of socialization. *Child Development*, 62(4), 647-670.
- Bertalanffy, V.L. (1968). *General Systems Theory*. New York: Braziller
- Bohman, D. M., Vasuthevan, S., van Wyk, N. C., & Ekman, S. L. (2007). 'We clean our houses, prepare for weddings and go to funerals:' daily lives of elderly Africans in Majaneng, South Africa. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Gerontology*, 22, 323-337.
- Blackenhorn, David. (1995) *Fatherless America: Confronting our Most Urgent Social Problem*. New York: Basic Books,
- Blumberg, G. (2000). "the Financial Incidents of Family dissolution." in cross-currents: familylaw and policy in the U.S. and England, ed. s. Katz, j. Eekelaar, and m. Maclean. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.
- Bunting, L., & McAuley, C. (2004). Research review: Teenage pregnancy and parenthood: the role of fathers. *Child & Family Social Work*, 9, 295-303.
- Cattell, M. G. (2008). Aging and Social Change Among Abaluyia in Western Kenya: anthropological and historical perspectives. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Gerontology*, 23, 181-197.
- Catherine, R (3/10/2010). "Single Parents, Around the World". *The New York Times*.
- Colman, A. (1993). Teenage fathers tend to vanish. *Youth Studies Australia*, 12, 12.
- Coser, R. L. (2004). *The family: its structure and functions*. New York: St Martins press. Cw
- Cunha, F and Heckman, J. J. (2006). "Investing in Our Young People," Unpublished manuscript, University of Chicago, Department of Economics.
- Daniels, C, ed. (1998). *Lost Fathers: The Politics of Fatherlessness in America*. New York: St. Martin's Press.
- Davis, E. C., & Friel, L. V. (2001). Adolescent sexuality: Disentangling the effects of family structure

- and family context. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 63(3), 669-681
- Degbey, J. Lawson. (1980) *Africa Family Structure*. www.jicef
- Desmond, C. and Desmond C. (2006). HIV/AIDS and the crisis of care for children. In Richter R. & Morrell R. (Eds.), *Baba: Men and Fatherhood in South Africa*. 226 - 236. Cape Town: HSRC Press.
- Dewar, J. 2000. "Family Law and its Discontents," *International Journal of Law, Policy, and the Family* 14 (April).
- Dobson, J. (2002) *.Bringing up Boys*. Cape Town: paar print
- Dubowitz, H. M., Black, M., Kerr, M. A., Starr, R. H. & Harrington, D. (2004). Fathers and Child neglect. *Archives of Pediatrics and Adolescent Medicine*, 154, 56-70.
- Doherty, W. J., Erickson, M. F. & LaRossa, R. (2006). An intervention to increase father involvement and skills
- Eccles, J., and Gootman, J. (2002). *Community programs to promote youth development*. Committee On Community-Level Programs for Youth. Board on Children, Youth, and Families, Commission on Behavioral and Social Sciences Education, National Research Council and Institute of Medicine. Washington, DC: Sage Publications.
- ESRC. (1997). *Twenty-something in the 1990s: Getting on, getting by, getting nowhere*. Swindon: Economic and Social Research Council. With infants during the transition to fatherhood. *Journal of family psychology*, 20, 438-447.
- Eshleman, J. R (1991) *The Family*. 6th Edition. Allyn and Bacon, USA
- FAO, (2004) Integrated Support to Suitable Development and Food Security Programme. www.fao.org/sd/lp/activities/hivaids/impact_agriculture.htm updated September, 2003.
- Fatherhood Institute. Fatherhood Institute research summary: Young fathers. Available on <http://www.fatherhoodinstitute.org/2010/fatherhood-institute-research-summary-youngfathers/> . (Accessed on 1 August 2012).
- Gillis, S.R. (2002). Marginalization of Fathers in Western Society. *Childhood: a Global Journal of Child Research*, 7.
- International Labour Organisation (ILO) (1996) 'All Women are Working Women: The Feminisation of Poverty' (Geneva: ILO) (<http://www.ilo-mirror.cornell.edu>).
- Haralambos and Holborn. (2000). *Sociology: Themes and Perspectives*, 5th edition.
- Hoffman, J. (2011). *Father factors: what social research tells us about fathers and how to work with them*. Research report for practitioners. Peterborough, Canada: Father Involvement Research Alliance. Available on <http://www.fira.ca/cms/documents/211/FatherFactorsFinal.pdf> .(Accessed on 1 August 2012).
- Horn, W. F. (2002). *Father facts*. Washington, DC: National Fatherhood Initiative.
- Holborn, L. and Eddy, G.(2011). *First Steps into Healing the South African Family*. Johannesburg: South African Institute of Race Relations.
- Hunter, M. (2006). Fathers Without Amandla: Zulu-speaking men and fatherhood. In Richter L. & Morell R. (Eds.). *Baba: Men and Fatherhood in South Africa*. Cape Town: HSRC Press, 99-107.
- Jaffee, S. R., Caspi, A., Moffitt, T. E., Taylor, A. & Dickson, N. (2001). Predicting early fatherhood and whether young fathers live with their children: Prospective findings and policy reconsiderations. *Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry*, 42, 803-815
- Kathori.C.R. (2004) research methodology;methods and techniques, NewDelhi; new age

international publisher.

- Kalil, A., Ziol-Guest, K. M., & Coley, R. L. (2005) Perceptions of Father Involvement Patterns in Teenage-Mother Families: Predictors and Links to Mothers' Psychological Adjustment. *Family Relations*, 54,197-211.
- Kelvin. H, Hugh. D, David.H, (1988). *Family matters: a guide to family life*. England: stanborough press limited.
- Kimani,E., & Kombo,K., (2010). The African Symposium: An online Journal of Educational Research Network. Volume 10, No 2, December (2010) 342-323
- Krohn, F.B. and Bogan, Z. (2001) *The Effects absent Fathers have on Female Development and College Attendance*.
- Kimalu.P.K. & Marimba.K. (2014). *Research Methods Monitoring and Evaluation*. Kanya: Kamumi Enterprises Limited.
- Kimuna, S. R., & Makiwane, M. (2007). Older people as resources in South Africa: Mpumalanga households.*Journal of Aging & Social Policy*, 19(1), 97–114.
- Kiselica, M. S. & Andronico, M. P. (1996). *Parenting skills training with teenage fathers. Men in groups: Insights, interventions, and psychoeducational work*. Washington, D.C:American Psychological Association
- Kinnear, K. I. (1999). *Single Parents: A reference Handbook*. Santa Barbara, CA : ABC-Clio.
- Lindegger, G. (2006). The father in the mind. In L. Richter & R. Morrell (Eds.), *Baba: Men and fatherhood in South Africa* (pp. 121-131). Cape Town: HSRC Press.
- Mackey, W. C., & Immerman, R. S. (2007). Fatherlessness by divorce contrasted to fatherlessness by non-marital births: A distinction with a difference for the community. *Journal of Divorce & Remarriage*, 47(1-2), 111-134.
- Maestriperi, D., Roney, J. R., DeBias, N., Durante, K. M., & Spaepen, G. M. (2004). Father absence, menarche and interest in infants among adolescent girls. *Developmental Science*, 7(5), 560-566.