

Paternal Involvement and Perceived Maladaptive Behaviour Of Male Adolescents in the Catholic Archdiocese of Kisumu, Kenya

Susan Maua¹, Elijah Macharia (PhD)², Maria Ntarangwe (PhD)³

^{1,2,3}Department of Counselling Psychology, Catholic University of Eastern Africa, Nairobi, Kenya

ABSTRACT: *Fathers play a crucial role in breadwinning, upbringing and nurturing their children through the developmental life stages. As children transit into adolescence the role of fathers gets more critical in shaping their view about themselves and the world around them. This study examined the relationship between father's involvement and perceived maladaptive behaviour of male adolescents in the Catholic Archdiocese of Kisumu, Kenya. The study adopted the concurrent parallel mixed methods approach. A total of 325 fathers and 336 male adolescents responded to standardized questionnaires while 8 focus group discussions were conducted. The results showed a negative correlation between paternal involvement and maladaptive behaviour ($r = -.183$, $p < 0.05$). The fathers had a moderate level of parental consistency, coercive parenting, positive encouragement and parent-child relationship. In addition, fathers were moderately adjusted to their parenting role, family relationships and parental teamwork. While fathers cannot be entirely blamed for male adolescents maladaptive behaviours, their involvement is a significant factor. Paternal education programs are necessary and can be accomplished efficiently at the church level because families assemble regularly in religious settings throughout the year. In education settings, attention to the male adolescents should transcend beyond academic work to encompass mentorship programs as well as address mental health challenges experienced.*

KEY WORDS: *coercive parenting, maladaptive behaviours, male adolescents, paternal involvement*

I. INTRODUCTION

The family is the natural environment in which children are raised and their behaviour patterns are established. Within the family, fathers play a crucial role in the socialization of children since they are primarily responsible for their care, security, discipline, and financial support (Lamb, 2014). As children enter the turbulent stage of adolescence where they begin to seek autonomy, this role becomes even clearer. Around the world, the development of boys and male adolescents has been a prominent topic in professional and public debates particularly active involvement of fathers in family life and child rearing (van der Gaag et al., 2019). Paternal guidance, rules and boundaries, and activity monitoring are all methods that fathers use to control and manage their children's behaviour in order to help them behave in an acceptable manner to others. However, fathers may seek to manage their children's behaviour and control their ideas, feelings, and emotions by deceptive behaviours such as guilt-tripping, conditional love, and humiliation, which may result in dysfunctional coping strategies (Shek and Zhu, 2019). For instance, Melotti et al. (2018) examined the aspects of control by parents and teenagers' transparency, and their perception of their parents' trust in relation to aggressive and disruptive behaviours in a study including 1,420 Italian teens. The group most likely to act aggressively was the one with the lowest scores on Disclosure, Trust, and Control. The findings demonstrated the negative correlation between aggressive behaviours and paternal trust, control, and teenager's openness. These findings cast doubt on the notion made by other researchers that increased parental supervision can discourage acts of violence in

teenagers (Baig et al., 2021). Instead, it emphasized the importance of effective dialogue in an environment of reciprocated confidence in each other (Saladino et al., 2020).

Conversely, studies show that paternal absence or presence without involvement negatively impacts the male adolescent. Armstrong (2019) found that fathers who support their children with more financial assistance were more likely to see them engage in misbehaviour among Black fathers in the United States. This could be partially explained by the father's sole emphasis on necessities, which results in his absence due to a rigid work schedule and probably lower pay necessitating longer hours worked. In contrast, more father-child contact made him feel closer to their father and allowed them to share their opinions. However, provision alone may not explain the whole range of child misconduct and misbehaviour. Other factors, such as the father's educational level, cultural and spiritual beliefs, may all play a role in the relationship's strength.

In sub-Saharan Africa, Apeh and Bernice (2020) examined the effect of familial violence on the maladaptive behaviours of 378 teenagers in Kogi State, Nigeria and observed that violence from parents significantly predicted the teens' maladaptive behaviour. The findings imply that, through social learning, even modest levels of familial violence can negatively affect teenage behaviour. Similarly, Rachel et al. (2022) found that absence of paternal supervision has been linked to early teenage alcohol usage in a rural South African study. Within the East African region, Ugandan fathers felt that one of their parenting duties was to teach their children decency as a social ideal. However, the way, where, and when this traditional role was played is changing, and there seemed to be competition from contemporary technology-driven learning platforms (AfriChild Centre, 2021). In addition, Masath et al. (2023) in a Tanzanian study found that 91.0% of children in the study had experienced aggressive discipline at home, and 93.3% of carers admitted using it. The majority of carers were in favour of using emotional and physical abuse as a method of discipline, even though it is hazardous for the mental health of the children. Equally, Mehus et al. (2021) sought to better understand the influence of alcohol addiction on fatherhood through the eyes of 19 fathers in northern Uganda. Fathers who spent their nights out drinking were less capable of determining the appropriate level of discipline for their children. It was believed that excessive alcohol use induced marital violence, which in turn taught children to be aggressive. These studies illuminate the role of fathers in adolescents behaviour formation either by their involvement or non-involvement.

On the other hand, in Kenya negligent parenting practices influenced school discipline management in Meru County's public secondary schools (Mutunga et al., 2023) with both parents reportedly emotionally detached and unaware of what their children did. Likewise, Marango (2021) found that emotional violence had the largest impact on academic achievement, followed by physical violence, neglect, and sexual violence in Kisumu Central sub-county. Consequently, a hostile family situation was likely to result in externalizing and internalizing tendencies among teenagers. This is reflected in subsequent adolescent behaviour witnessed in Kenya which has manifested itself in the form of disruption of the educational system, with male-only schools accounting for the majority of cases (Munyiri, 2021; Nyamai, 2021). Some studies linked this problematic behaviour to substance usage; parenting practices and parents who shirk their responsibilities for discipline. Therefore, there has been hue and cry from church leaders, teachers and parents alike about the increasingly male adolescent problematic behaviour. (Oyunga, (2018); KCPF, (2023); Republic of Kenya, (1991; 2001; 2023). Even as explanations and solutions are sought, little is said about the role of fathers who should be at the forefront to address the male adolescent dilemma. But studies have connected paternal substance addiction to adolescents' own substance use (Chapiai et al., 2021). This study therefore sought to examine the relationship between father's engagement and perceived maladaptive behaviour of the male adolescents in the Catholic Archdiocese of Kisumu, Kenya.

II. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study adopted the concurrent parallel mixed methods approach. Creswell (2018) noted that this method allows the researcher to collect and analyze both quantitative and qualitative data separately but simultaneously. The results are then triangulated for interpretation. Quantitative data was collected using

standardized questionnaires administered through face to face interviews. Qualitative data were collected through semi structured focus group discussion guides.

This study targeted male parents of the Catholic faith and male adolescents aged 13-15 years domiciled in 4 selected parishes in the Catholic Archdiocese of Kisumu. This study included both probability and non-probability sampling procedures. Simple random sampling was used to ensure that every parish, both rural and urban, had an equal chance of being included in the sampling frame. Fathers were purposively sampled using the following selection criteria: fathers who were members of the Catholic Men's Association and had son(s) aged 13 to 15. After obtaining the sample frame, simple random sampling was utilized to determine the proportion of participants in the focus group discussions. The study adopted the infinite population size formula to establish the population size as shown below:

$$n = \frac{z^2 (p) (1-p)}{c^2}$$

Where, at a 95% confidence level,

z = standard normal deviation (standard value 1.96).

Preferred response percentage (p) is 0.5;

confidence interval at 0.05 is represented by

$$c = (1.96)^2 \times 0.5(0.5) / (0.05)^2 = 384.16 \times 0.25 / 0.0025 = 384 \text{ responders}$$

As a result, the sample size for this study was 384 fathers' and 384 sons' respondents for quantitative and qualitative interviews. The study gathered qualitative data from fathers and sons who were selected by random sampling from the above sample size. According to Ahmed (2025), the recommended sample sizes for qualitative research design ranges from 12-20 participants for thematic analysis or 4-12 focus groups. Quantitative data was collected from 325 fathers and 336 male adolescents while 4 focus groups for 38 fathers and 4 focus groups for sons with 42 participants were conducted.

The study utilized the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ) for male adolescents while the father's questionnaire comprised two scales: The Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ) and the Parenting and Family Adjustment Scales (PAFAS). The SDQ, comprised of 25 items is a brief behavioural screening questionnaire that can be completed by parents and children 11-17 years (Goodman, 1997). It measures emotional symptoms, conduct difficulties, hyperactivity-inattention, peer problems, and pro-social behaviour. Table 1 below shows interpretation of the SDQ values.

Table 1: Interpretation of SDQ scores

| | Normal | Borderline | Abnormal |
|------------------------------------|--------|------------|----------|
| <u>Parent completed SDQ</u> | | | |
| Total difficulties score | 0-13 | 14-16 | 17-40 |
| Emotional problems score | 0-3 | 4 | 5-10 |
| Conduct problems score | 0-2 | 3 | 4-10 |
| Hyperactivity score | 0-5 | 6 | 7-10 |
| Peer problems score | 0-2 | 3 | 4-10 |
| Prosocial score | 6-10 | 5 | 0-4 |
| Impact score | 0 | 1 | 2-10 |
| <u>Son's-completed SDQ</u> | | | |
| Total difficulties score | 0-15 | 16-19 | 20-40 |
| Emotional problems score | 0-5 | 6 | 7-10 |

| | | | |
|----------------------|------|-----|------|
| Conductproblemsscore | 0-3 | 4 | 5-10 |
| Hyperactivityscore | 0-5 | 6 | 7-10 |
| Peerproblemsscore | 0-3 | 4-5 | 6-10 |
| Prosocialscore | 6-10 | 5 | 0-4 |
| Impactscore | 0 | 1 | 2-10 |

Source: Goodman (1997)

On the other hand, PAFAS comprised of 30 items assessed parenting techniques and family dynamics which are recognized risk or protective factors for emotional or behavioural issues in adolescents (Sanders & Morawska, 2010). It measured paternal involvement indicators of accessibility (parent-child relationship and parental adjustment); responsibility (family relationships and parental teamwork); and direct engagement with the adolescent (parental consistency, coercive parenting and positive encouragement). Table 2 below shows interpretation of the PAFAS values.

Table 2: Interpretation of PAFAS values

| Scale | Items | Interpretation | Possible range |
|---------------------------|-------------------------|--|----------------|
| <i>Parenting</i> | | | |
| Parental consistency | 301, 303, 304, 311, 312 | Higher scores indicate lower level of consistency | 0-15 |
| Coercive parenting | 305, 307, 309, 310, 313 | Higher scores indicate more coercive parenting | 0-15 |
| Positive encouragement | 302, 306, 308 | Higher scores indicate lower level of positive encouragement | 0-9 |
| Parent-child relationship | 314, 315, 316, 317, 318 | Higher scores indicate worse parent-child relationship | 0-15 |
| <i>Family adjustment</i> | | | |
| Parental adjustment | 319, 320, 321, 322, 323 | Higher scores indicate worse parent adjustment | 0-15 |
| Family relationships | 324, 325, 326, 327 | Higher scores indicate worse family relationships | 0-12 |
| Parental teamwork | 328, 329, 330 | Higher scores indicate worse parental teamwork | 0-9 |

Source: Sanders and Morawska (2010)

Pearson product moment correlation coefficient was conducted based on the cumulative scores for quantitative data while thematic content analysis was applied for qualitative data. This study obtained ethical approval from the National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation and assigned license NACOSTI/P/24/37102. In addition, father respondents gave consent while the male adolescents assented to voluntarily participate in the study.

III. RESULTS

Paternal demographic characteristics

The response rate from fathers was (325) 96.7% for quantitative interviews and 38 fathers took part in four focus group discussions. Nearly half of the fathers were aged below 40 years. This suggests a relatively young population of fathers with male adolescent children. These are likely to be less settled economically hence spend a lot of time away from home. On the other hand, 24.9% of the fathers were above 50 years.

Majority of fathers had attained secondary school level and above. Less than 10% of the fathers had no formal education or not completed basic primary education. Fathers who complete formal education are more likely to support their own children's education. Majority of fathers were in informal employment with 21.2% in salaried employment. These findings suggest that fathers spend a lot of time away from the home environment to provide for the basic needs of the children.

Male adolescents' demographic characteristics

The response rate from male adolescents was (336) 100% for quantitative interviews and 42 adolescents took part in four focus group discussions. There was a fairly equal distribution of respondents in the targeted age group 13 years (30%); 14 years (34%) and 15 years (36%). Majority of the adolescents (27.7%) were in grade 8, while 20.5% and 20.2% were in grade 7 and grade 6 respectively. A further 10.4% were in form 1. Given the transition from 8.4.4 system of education to the Competency Based Curriculum, there was a wide range of levels at which the respondents attended school. The findings also indicated that, 1.5% of the adolescents were not in school due to lack of uniform or school fees, while 1.2% had been expelled or suspended from school. Expulsion or suspension from school is an indicator of maladaptive behaviour which interferes with the everyday life of an adolescent particularly classroom learning.

Relationship between Paternal Involvement and Maladaptive Behaviours among Adolescents

Externalizing behaviours comprised the sum of the conduct problems and hyperactivity behaviour while internalizing behaviours comprised the sum of the emotional and peer problems. The Pearson correlation coefficient findings on the relationship between paternal involvement and adolescents externalizing and internalizing behaviours is presented in Table 3 below:

Table 3: Relationship between Paternal Involvement and Adolescents Maladaptive Behaviour

| | | Maladaptive behaviour |
|----------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|
| Paternal involvement | Pearson Correlation | -.183** |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | .001 |
| | N | 325 |

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

There was a negative correlation between father involvement and maladaptive behaviour ($r = -.183$, $p < 0.05$). This suggests a relationship between lower levels of maladaptive behaviour in male adolescents and higher levels of father involvement. The correlation between paternal involvement and maladaptive behaviour is further highlighted in qualitative findings, as one father (Urban Parent Code 09) noted:

I think as fathers we have also left things to get out of hand, you see we leave in the morning and get back in the evening, you do not know where he has been in the day, you only meet in the evening as you are eating, you know before if the child was not in school the teacher would call you to ask why the child has not been in school. But today's parent you leave everything about the child to the teacher.

This was supported by yet another father respondent (Rural Parent Code 03): "The English say what can be delegated is duty but you do not delegate responsibility. If you are a father you are responsible so anything be it problems or otherwise it starts with you."

Further analysis was done into paternal involvement and the maladaptive behaviours. The Pearson correlation coefficient findings on the relationship between subscales of paternal involvement and subscales of maladaptive adolescents behaviour as presented in Table 4 below:

Table 4: Relationship between Subscales of Paternal Involvement and Subscales of Maladaptive Behaviours

| | | Emotional problems | Conduct problems | Hyperactivity behaviour | Peer problems | Prosocial behaviour |
|---------------------------|---------------------|--------------------|------------------|-------------------------|---------------|---------------------|
| Parental consistency | Pearson Correlation | .005 | -.198** | -.157** | -.116* | .156** |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | .935 | .000 | .005 | .036 | .005 |
| | N | 325 | 325 | 325 | 325 | 325 |
| Coercive parenting | Pearson Correlation | .522** | .244** | .134* | -.105 | .466** |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | .000 | .000 | .015 | .060 | .000 |
| | N | 325 | 325 | 325 | 325 | 325 |
| Positive encouragement | Pearson Correlation | .344** | .012 | -.159** | -.243** | .625** |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | .000 | .823 | .004 | .000 | .000 |
| | N | 325 | 325 | 325 | 325 | 325 |
| Parent-child relationship | Pearson Correlation | .397** | .005 | -.107 | -.304** | .739** |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | .000 | .931 | .054 | .000 | .000 |
| | N | 325 | 325 | 325 | 325 | 325 |
| Parental adjustment | Pearson Correlation | .078 | -.175** | -.302** | -.220** | .500** |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | .159 | .002 | .000 | .000 | .000 |
| | N | 325 | 325 | 325 | 325 | 325 |
| Family relationships | Pearson Correlation | -.038 | -.222** | -.293** | -.203** | .432** |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | .496 | .000 | .000 | .000 | .000 |
| | N | 325 | 325 | 325 | 325 | 325 |
| Parental teamwork | Pearson Correlation | .231** | -.072 | -.169** | -.270** | .563** |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | .000 | .198 | .002 | .000 | .000 |
| | N | 325 | 325 | 325 | 325 | 325 |

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

The findings on Table 4 shows there was a negative relationship between parental consistency with conduct problems, hyperactivity behaviour and peer problems, $r(323) = -.198, p < 0.05$, $r(323) = -.157, p < 0.05$ and $r(323) = -.116, p < 0.05$ respectively. This indicates that higher levels of parental consistency were correlated with normal levels of conduct problems, hyperactivity behaviour and peer problems. The findings further established a positive relationship between parental consistency and prosocial behaviour, $r(323) = .156, p < 0.05$, implying that higher levels of parental consistency were correlated with normal levels of prosocial behaviour.

This is further supported by the male adolescents (Urban Adolescent Code 09) on modeling negative behaviour thus:

Something you parents, your father or your mother drinks alcohol and your sibling already know because they come home while they are drinking, so you can become sad. Also, all the money they earn they go and drink with so you don't get enough time to spend with your parent.

In retrospect, fathers also strive to be available to promote positive behaviour. For instance, Urban Adolescent Code 01 indicated on availability and consistency:

He is a man who is always out because he works in construction and can be called in for construction far away, when he comes back like the next day, we allow him to rest then talk to him the next day.

The findings also established a positive relationship between coercive parenting and emotional problems, conduct problems, hyperactivity behaviour and prosocial behaviour, $r(323) = .522, p < 0.05$, $r(323) = .244, p < 0.05$, $r(323) = .134, p < 0.05$ and $r(323) = .466, p < 0.05$ respectively. This indicates that higher levels of coercive parenting were correlated with abnormal levels of emotional problems, conduct problems, hyperactivity behaviour and prosocial behaviour. From the qualitative findings, coercive parenting was identified by male adolescents such as Rural Adolescent Code 08: "... If you are found doing something like smoking bhang that one, he will beat you, or punish you or he can guide and counsel you. But if it's something like fighting that one he will beat you."

On the other hand, there was a positive relationship between positive encouragement with emotional problems and prosocial behaviour, $r(323) = .344, p < 0.05$ and $r(323) = .625, p < 0.05$ respectively. This indicates that higher levels of positive encouragement were correlated with abnormal levels of emotional problems and normal levels of prosocial behaviour. The findings further established a negative relationship between positive encouragement with hyperactivity behaviour and peer problems, $r(323) = -.159, p < 0.05$ and $r(323) = -.243, p < 0.05$ respectively, implying that higher levels of positive encouragement were correlated with normal levels of hyperactivity behaviour and peer problems.

The findings further determined a positive relationship between parent-child relationship with emotional problems and prosocial behaviour, $r(323) = .397, p < 0.05$ and $r(323) = .739, p < 0.05$ respectively. This indicates that higher levels of parent-child relationship were correlated with abnormal levels of emotional problems and normal levels of prosocial behaviour. The findings also established a negative relationship between parent-child relationship with peer problems, $r(323) = -.304, p < 0.05$, implying that higher levels of parent-child relationship were correlated with normal levels of peer problems.

From the qualitative findings, parent-child relationships require presence and intentional engagement. That way the father would be able to identify emotional problems and also promote prosocial behaviour. However, most fathers found this challenging as indicated by Urban Parent Code 02:

I will be lying if I say I have done monitoring. Number one is the issue of economy. As for me the last time I checked my children's homework sincerely speaking is a long time. What contributes to this is I rise very early and get back home very late. The biggest issue is to put food on the table for your people to eat.

Urban Parent Code 06 added:

You see a man needs to hustle! my father provided for the family and that is what is important (murmurs of agreement from others) mine is to also go out there and look for food for my family when you return home at least there is something...then you do the same tomorrow.

A negative relationship was established between parental adjustment with conduct problems, hyperactivity behaviour and peer problems, $r(323) = -.175, p < 0.05$, $r(323) = -.302, p < 0.05$ and $r(323) = -.220, p < 0.05$ respectively. This indicates that higher levels of parental adjustment were correlated with normal levels of conduct problems, hyperactivity behaviour and peer problems. The findings further established a positive relationship between parental adjustment and prosocial behaviour, $r(323) = .500, p < 0.05$, implying that higher levels of parental adjustment were correlated with normal levels of prosocial behaviour. Urban Parent Code 06 above also exemplifies multigeneration paternal roles passed down from the respondents' own father.

The findings also established a negative relationship between family relationships with conduct problems, hyperactivity behaviour and peer problems, $r(323) = -.222, p < 0.05$, $r(323) = -.293, p < 0.05$ and $r(323) = -.203, p < 0.05$ respectively. This indicates that higher levels of family relationships were correlated with normal levels of conduct problems, hyperactivity behaviour and peer problems. The findings further established a positive relationship between family relationships and prosocial behaviour, $r(323) = .432, p < 0.05$, implying that higher levels of family relationships were correlated with normal levels of prosocial behaviour.

There was a positive relationship between Parental teamwork with emotional problems and prosocial behaviour, $r(323) = .231, p < 0.05$ and $r(323) = .563, p < 0.05$ respectively. This indicates that higher levels of parental teamwork were correlated with abnormal levels of emotional problems and normal levels of prosocial behaviour. The findings further established a negative relationship between parental teamwork with hyperactivity behaviour and peer problems, $r(323) = -.169, p < 0.05$ and $r(323) = -.270, p < 0.05$ respectively, implying that higher levels of parental teamwork were correlated with normal levels of hyperactivity behaviour and peer problems.

From the qualitative findings, most fathers expressed conflicts in parenting styles with their partners. For instance, Rural Parent Code 03 said:

The mothers tend to take the male child and tell him your father is bad, you father is a prostitute, he is always out there somewhere. This removes the child away from you. So, I see this as a stressor that hinders male parent as he grows older, the child is removed from you. The mother sits him at night and tells him you are bad; your father has another woman there and these days he has left me just like this. So, you are left alone to suffer and in old age you will suffer with no one to give you even food (murmurs of agreement).

IV. DISCUSSION

Based on the results above, there is a negative connection to conduct problems, hyperactivity behaviour and peer problems. Parental inconsistency breeds insecurities and male adolescents need rules and clear boundaries that are consistently enforced. A mix of parental warmth and authority would be good to a healthy father-son connection. Furthermore, a father would have little influence on his son if they were not connected. This position is supported by other research for example, Melotti et al. (2018) found that disclosure, trust and control were lowest when parental control was inconsistent. Coercive parenting pointedly contributes to emotional problems, conduct problems, hyperactivity behaviour and interferes with prosocial behaviours. Consequently, male adolescents are likely to develop negative coping mechanisms such as substance use and aggression towards peers leading to improper functioning in peer groups. This conclusion is partially corroborated by Masath et al. (2023), who discovered that carers strongly preferred the use of harsh domestic discipline, despite the fact that traumatic early experiences can have such a profound effect on an individual that they develop a pattern of violence as a coping mechanism for handling conflict in future.

Emotional problems were aggravated by positive encouragement and also affected prosocial behaviour. There was a negative relationship between positive encouragement with hyperactivity behaviour and peer problems. This finding clearly demonstrates the aspect of reward and reinforcement. Positive encouragement implied extrinsic motivation, which impedes the inductive reinforcement of positive behaviour. Besides, the praise and rewards may not be commensurate with the effort required for the performance. The adolescent's focus will be constricted, and without the reward, he is unlikely to build long-term abilities and boost self-confidence to handle pressure. This result is reinforced in part by Kurcz (2019) and Schroeder et al. (2022), who discovered that cultural rites of passage to manhood encourage unintended negative behaviours that perpetuate toxic masculinity.

Table 4 shows a positive correlation between parent-child relationships and emotional problems and prosocial behaviour and a negative correlation between parent-child relationships and peer difficulties. The qualitative findings also show a level of detachment of fathers as they focus of provision for basic needs which may stem from societal definitions of fatherhood and passed down from observations of their own fathers. These findings are supported by a number of studies. For example, Martinez et al. (2020) showed that teens' feeling of self-worth and internalization of societal norms were significantly impacted by the affection of their parents. The findings also show that typical levels of conduct problems, hyperactivity behaviour and peer problems were associated with greater levels of parental adjustment. Furthermore, there was a positive correlation between prosocial behaviour and parental adjustment suggesting that prosocial behaviour was typical while emotional difficulties were not. Paternal readiness encompasses emotional, mental, physical and economic aspects of

parenting. The qualitative findings show fathers are mainly focused on the economic aspect while leaving the other aspects to the mothers. For example, (Urban Parent Code 02) exemplifies this: “discipline for my children where my wife fails” to suggest his role is supplementary. This is supported by Cederström, (2019) that shows mothers continue to be main caregivers.

Parental teamwork negatively impacted peer problems and hyperactivity behaviour and positively impacted emotional problems and prosocial behaviour. This stance was reinforced by focus group conversations, which revealed that mothers continue to have a larger role in the monitoring and supervision of adolescents, while fathers believe a "kitchen parliament" has been developed in the process which alienates them. This might not encourage cooperation among parents. Instead, a better-adjusted male adolescent would come from mutual support, responsibility sharing, and good communication.

V. CONCLUSION

The fathers had a moderate level of parental consistency, coercive parenting, positive encouragement and parent-child relationship. In addition, fathers were moderately adjusted to their parenting role, family relationships and parental teamwork. Higher degrees of father engagement were associated with typical levels of externalizing conduct in male adolescents. Normal levels of prosocial behaviour and abnormal levels of emotional difficulties in teenagers were linked to higher degrees of father engagement. While fathers cannot be entirely blamed for male adolescents maladaptive behaviours, their involvement is a significant factor. There is more to paternal participation than just responsibility; direct communication and accessibility are essential. A father's involvement in his adolescent son's life is so important that it cannot be outsourced, and a father has no impact without a connection between them. Furthermore, connections take time regardless of the age of the child, so fathers should be proactive about direct interaction. Male adolescents need to see their fathers in action to develop their masculinity appropriately.

Recommendations

In light of the findings in this study, the parents must agree on behavioural expectations for the male adolescent in order to avoid confrontations in which one parent's actions contradict the other. Adolescents' healthy development requires a combination of warmth and strictness. The church ought to develop programs that target fathers and sons to complement the role of Catholic Men's Association and similar ones in promoting family life. Paternal education programs can be accomplished efficiently at the church level because families assemble regularly in religious settings throughout the year. In education settings, attention to the male adolescents should transcend beyond academic work to encompass mentorship programs as well as address mental health challenges experienced.

REFERENCES

- [1] Lamb, M. E. (2014). The history of research on father involvement: An overview. *Fatherhood*, 23-42.
- [2] van der Gaag, N., Heilman, B., Gupta, T., Nembhard, C., and Barker, G. (2019). *State of the World's Fathers: Unlocking the Power of Men's Care*. Washington, DC: Promundo-US.
- [3] Shek, D. T. L., & Zhu, X. (2019). Paternal and Maternal Influence on Delinquency among Early Adolescents in Hong Kong. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 16(8). <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph16081338>
- [4] Melotti, G., Potì, S., Giancesini, G., & Brighi, A. (2018). Adolescents at Risk of Delinquency. The Role of Parental Control, Trust, and Disclosure. *Deviant Behaviour*, 39(3), 347–362. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01639625.2017.1286172>
- [5] Baig, T., Ganesan, G. S., Ibrahim, H., Yousuf, W., & Mahfoud, Z. R. (2021). The association of parental involvement with adolescents' well-being in Oman: evidence from the 2015 Global School Health Survey. *BMC psychology*, 9(1), 1-9.

-
- [6] Saladino, V., Mosca, O., Lauriola, M., Hoelzlhammer, L., Cabras, C., & Verrastro, V. (2020). Is family structure associated with deviance propensity during adolescence? The role of family climate and anger dysregulation. *International journal of environmental research and public health*, 17(24), 9257.
- [7] Armstrong, J. C. (2019). *Re-defining Fatherhood: Examining the Multidimensionality of Black Fatherhood and its Association to Child Misconduct and Father-Child Relationship Quality* (Doctoral dissertation, The Florida State University).
- [8] Apeh, H. A., & Bernice, E. (2020). Influence of family violence on the maladaptive behaviours of secondary school students in Kogi State, Nigeria. *International Journal of Psychology and Counselling*, 12(4), 124-130.
- [9] Rachel, C., Roman, N. V., & Donga, G. T. (2022). The contribution of parental factors to adolescents' deviant behaviour in South Africa: Evidence from three rural communities in South Africa. *Social Sciences*, 11(4), 152.
- [10] The AfriChild Centre. (2021). State of Uganda's Fathers Report: A Scoping Review. Kampala, Uganda. © The AfriChild Centre, 2021.
- [11] Masath, F. B., Nkuba, M., & Hecker, T. (2023). Prevalence of and factors contributing to violent discipline in families and its association with violent discipline by teachers and peer violence. *Child Abuse Review*, 32(4), e2799.
- [12] Mehus, C. J., Wieling, E., Thomas Oloya, O., Laura, A., & Ertl, V. (2021). The impact of alcohol misuse on fathering in Northern Uganda: An ethnographic study of fathers. *Transcultural psychiatry*, 58(1), 14-26.
- [13] Mutunga, B., Guantai, H., & Mbirirhi, D. M. (2023). Influence of Negligent Parenting on the Management of Students' Discipline in Public Secondary Schools in Meru County, Kenya. *Journal of Education*, 3(2), 30-46.
- [14] Marango, M. A. (2020). *Influence of Parental Violence and Coping Strategies on Academic Achievement Among Public Secondary School Students in Kisumu Central Sub-County, Kenya* (Master's Thesis, Maseno University).
- [15] Munyiri, S. (2021, November 3). School Unrest: students charged over alleged fire plot. The Daily Nation. Nation Media Group.
- [16] Nyamai, F. (2021, November 21). 302 students held over school fires this year. The Daily Nation. Nation Media Group.
- [17] Oyunga, P. (2018, December 28). The Making of a Fatherless Nation. The Elephant. <https://www.theelephant.info/reflections/2018/12/28/the-making-of-fatherless-nation/>
- [18] KCPF. (2023). The State of Life Family and Faith in Kenya. Kenya Christian Professionals Forum.
- [19] Republic of Kenya, (1991). *Report of the Presidential Committee on Student Unrest and Indiscipline in Kenya Secondary Schools*. MoEST.
- [20] Republic of Kenya, (2001). *A Report on Student Discipline and Unrest in Secondary Schools*. MoEST.
- [21] Republic of Kenya, (2023). *A Report of the Presidential Working Part on Education Reform: Transforming Education, training and Research for Sustainable Development in Kenya*. Ministry of Education.
- [22] Chapiyai, M. N., Kimani, M., & Rop, N. (2021). Parental Influence on Drug and Substance Abuse Among Secondary School Students in Kinango Sub-County, Kenya. *European Journal of Education Studies*, 10(8)
- [23] Creswell, J. W. (2018). *Research Design* (5th ed.). SAGE Publications.
- [24] Ahmed, S. K. (2025). Sample size for saturation in qualitative research: Debates, definitions, and strategies. *Journal of Medicine, Surgery, and Public Health*, 5, 100171.
- [25] Goodman, R. (1997). The Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire: a research note. *Journal of child psychology and psychiatry*, 38(5), 581-586.
- [26] Sanders, M. R., & Morawska, A. (2010). *Parenting and Family Adjustment Scales (PAFAS)*. Brisbane: Parenting and Family Support Centre, The University of Queensland.
-

- [27] Kurcz, M. (2019). Doing Fatherhood in the Middle Nile. Fatherhood, Masculinity and Change in Rural Northern Sudan. *PraceEtnograficzne*, 47(3), 127-142.
- [28] Schroeder, E., Tallarico, R., & Bakaroudis, M. (2022). The impact of adolescent initiation rites in East and Southern Africa: Implications for policies and practices. *International Journal of Adolescence and Youth*, 27(1), 181-192.
- [29] Martinez, I., Garcia, F., Veiga, F., Garcia, O. F., Rodrigues, Y., & Serra, E. (2020). Parenting styles, internalization of values and self-esteem: A cross-cultural study in Spain, Portugal and Brazil. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 17(7), 2370.
- [30] Cederström, C. (2019). *State of Nordic fathers*. Nordic Council of Ministers.
- [31] Garcia, I. L., Fernald, L. C. H., Aboud, F. E., Otieno, R., Alu, E., & Luoto, J. E. (2022). Father involvement and early child development in a low-resource setting. *Social Science & Medicine*, 302, 114933. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.socscimed.2022.114933>