

**INFLUENCE OF SELECTED FACTORS ON UNIVERSITY STUDENTS'
PERCEPTION OF MARRIAGE LIFE AT EGERTON UNIVERSITY, NJORO CAMPUS,
KENYA.**

Alice Wairimu Omondi

**A Thesis Submitted to the Graduate School in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for
the Award of the Degree of Master of Education in Guidance and Counselling of Egerton
University.**

EULIB



038 353

EGERTON UNIVERSITY



November, 2009

EGERTON UNIVERSITY LIBRARY

2013/94640

X

DECLARATION AND RECOMMENDATION

Declaration

I declare that this thesis is my original work and has not been presented before for an award of a degree in this or any other university.

Alice Wairimu Omondi

Signature: 

Date: 18.11.09

EM16/1971/03

Recommendation

This thesis has been submitted for examination with our approval as University Supervisors.


Dr. M. C. Chepcheng

Signature: 

Date: 19.11.2009

Department of Psychology, Counselling and Educational Foundations

Dr. D. Odero-Wanga

Signature: 

Date: 18th NOV. 2009

Department of Applied Community Development Studies

2013/94640

COPYRIGHT

© 2009

Alice Wairimu Omondi

All rights reserved. No part of this thesis may be reproduced, stored in any retrieval system or transmitted in any form or by any means including electronic, recording, photocopying or otherwise without the prior written permission of the author or Egerton University on behalf of the author.

DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my husband, Omondi Siwa and children: Brian Siwa, Cynthia Ojow and Steve Waithaka for their continuous inspiration which motivated me to pursue further studies and whose prayers spurred me to carry out this study.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

In the process of writing this thesis I benefited from the inputs of various people. First and foremost, I am indebted to my supervisors, Dr. M.C. Chepchieng and Dr. D. Odero-Wanga who thoroughly guided me during the conceptualization of the research problem and writing up of this entire thesis thereby enabling this work to see the light of day. My appreciation also goes to the lecturers of the Psychology and Educational Foundations, Counselling Department, Egerton University, particularly Prof. A.M. Sindabi, Dr. (Fr) S.N. Mbugua, Dr. B.E.E. Omulema, Dr. M. Kariuki and Mr. C.C. Cheruiyot. The others are Prof. D.K. Nassiuma and Dr. N. Mungai, who gave me insights into research and moral support while pursuing the master's programme.

I am equally indebted to the final year undergraduate students of the faculties of Engineering, Agriculture, Science, Environment and Resources Development, Education and Community Studies, and Arts and Social Sciences, from whom I collected the data without which I could not have completed this study. Finally, to all those whose contributions, in one way or another, made it possible for me to produce this report I say THANK YOU and may the Almighty God bless you all.

Above all, I deeply thank God for His grace that was sufficient throughout my studies. If the Lord God was not on my side I would not have completed this work. Glory be to God.

ABSTRACT

In the traditional African society, marriage was considered a rite of passage. People had high regard for it and therefore had positive perception about it. Divorce and single parenthood were very rare and emergence of social phenomena such as street children was unheard of. This was partly because of the presence of elders who offered marital advise to couples whenever they had problems. Currently, contrary to what used to happen in the past, many people are not enthusiastic to get married and have opted to remain single or get into single parenthood. Even those who get married often experience marital problems such as domestic violence, financial strains, communication problems among others which have led to divorce and separation. This study sought to investigate the influence of selected factors on university students' perception of marriage life. The study was carried out among the final year undergraduate degree students of Egerton University, Njoro Campus. The final year undergraduate degree students were chosen because they were in transition and because of their age, they may have been more concerned about marriage and could have established intimate relationships geared towards marriage. The study adopted a descriptive survey research design. The targeted population was 5,301 undergraduate degree students of whom the accessible population was 764 final year undergraduate degree students. Out of this population, a sample of 254 was selected through stratified random sampling and proportional random sampling. The data was collected using self-scoring questionnaire. The collected data was processed and then analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics with the aid of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 11.5 for windows. The study outcomes revealed that most of the University students had a positive perception toward marriage life. The study also indicated that mass media, students' education aspiration, religious affiliation, family of origin as well as domestic violence influenced university students' perception of marriage life. Recommendations of the study are that parents should solve their differences amicably and not engage in fighting as this influences their children's perception of marriage life negatively. It is also recommended that marriage therapists and religious leaders should take advantage of the media in order to enhance their counselling given that mass media affects their clients' perception of marriage life. The media owners and the government should also regulate programmes that might influence attitudes that are destructive to marriage. The study suggests further research in other public or private universities in Kenya on the university students' perception of marriage life.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

DECLARATION AND RECOMMENDATION.....ii

COPYRIGHT.....iii

DEDICATION.....iv

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....v

ABSTRACT.....vi

TABLE OF CONTENTS.....vii

LIST OF TABLES.....ix

LIST OF FIGURE.....x

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS.....xi

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION..... 1

1.1 Background Information..... 1

1.2 Statement of the Problem..... 3

1.3 Purpose of the Study..... 4

1.4 Objectives of the Study..... 4

1.5 Research Hypotheses of the Study..... 4

1.6 Significance of the Study..... 5

1.7 Scope of the Study..... 5

1.8 Assumptions of the Study..... 6

1.9 Definition of Terms..... 7

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW..... 9

2.1 Introduction..... 9

2.2 Conceptualization of Marriage..... 9

2.3 General Perception of Marriage..... 9

2.4 Young Adults' Perception of Marriage life..... 11

 2.4.1 Religious Affiliation..... 11

 2.4.2 Mass Media..... 12

 2.4.3 Family of Origin..... 13

 2.4.4 Students' Education Aspirations..... 15

 2.4.5 Domestic Violence..... 17

 2.4.6 Gender Differences..... 18

2.5 Marriage Counselling..... 19

2.6 Theoretical Framework..... 20

 2.6.1 Cognitive Theory of Personality..... 20

 2.6.2 Social Learning Theory..... 20

 2.6.3 Information Processing Theory..... 22

2.7 Conceptual Framework..... 23

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	24
3.1 Introduction.....	24
3.2 Research Design	24
3.3 Location of the Study.....	24
3.4 Population of the Study	25
3.5 Sampling Procedure and Sample Size	25
3.6 Instrumentation.....	26
3.6.1 Validity and Reliability of the Instruments	27
3.7 Data Collection Procedures	27
3.8 Data Analysis.....	28
CHAPTER FOUR: RESULTS AND DISCUSSION	30
4.1 Introduction.....	30
4.2 Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents	30
4.3 Respondents' Perception of Marriage Life.....	33
4.3.1 Respondents' Perception on Whether They Wished to Marry	35
4.3.2 Types of Marriages Preferred.....	36
4.3.3 Respondents' Regard for the Institution of Marriage.....	41
4.4 Factors Influencing University Students' Perception of Marriage Life	43
4.4.1 Influence of Religious Affiliation on Students' Perception of Marriage Life.....	44
4.4.2 Influence of Mass Media on Students' Perception of Marriage Life	45
4.4.3 Influence of Family of Origin on Students' Perception of Marriage Life.....	45
4.4.4 Influence of Students' Education Aspiration on Students' Perception of Marriage Life.....	46
4.4.5 Influence of Domestic Violence on Students' Perception of Marriage Life	47
4.5 Gender Difference in Students' Perception of Marriage Life	48
CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....	50
5.1 Introduction.....	50
5.2 Summary of the Findings.....	50
5.3 Conclusions.....	50
5.4 Recommendations.....	51
5.5 Suggestions for Further Research.....	51
REFERENCES	52
APPENDICES.....	56
APPENDIX A: STUDENTS' QUESTIONNAIRE	56
APPENDIX B: TABLE FOR DETERMINING SAMPLE SIZE	63
APPENDIX C: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION	64
APPENDIX D: LETTER OF INTRODUCTION.....	65

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: Population of Final Year Undergraduates per Faculty and Gender	25
Table 2: Distribution of the Sample per Faculty and Gender	26
Table 3: Respondents' Gender and Age	31
Table 4: Respondents' Marital Status and Family of Origin	32
Table 5: Distribution of Respondents by Religious Affiliation	33
Table 6: Respondents' Perception Towards Marriage Life	34
Table 7: Proportion of Respondents wishing to get Married	35
Table 8: Respondents' Reasons for Wanting to Marry	36
Table 9: Respondents' Perception on the Type of Marriage Preferred.....	37
Table 10: Respondents' Preference for Different Types of Marriage	38
Table 11: Respondents' Opinions on the Alternatives to Marriage	40
Table 12: Respondents' Views on Whether Marriage is a Permanent Contract.....	41
Table 13: Respondents' Views on Whether Marriage is Outdated.....	42
Table 14: Respondents' Views on Use of Sexual Devices	43
Table 15: Influence of Religious Affiliation on Respondents' Perception of Marriage	44
Table 16: Influence of Mass Media on Respondents' Perception of Marriage	45
Table 17: Influence of Family of Origin on Respondents' Perception of Marriage	46
Table 18: Influence of Students' Education Aspiration on Respondents' Perception of Marriage Life	46
Table 19: Influence of Domestic Violence on Respondents' Perception of Marriage Life..	47
Table 20: Gender Difference in Students' Perception of Marriage Life.....	48

LIST OF FIGURE

Figure 1: Influence of Selected Factors on University Students' Perception of Marriage Life	23
--	----

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

AIDS:	Acquired Immune Defficiency Syndrome
FIDA:	Federation of Women Lawyers
HIV:	Human Immuno-Defficiency Virus
KBC:	Kenya Broadcasting Corporation
NGO:	Non Governmental Organizations

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background Information

Nicky and Sila (2000) point out that many people in the West view marriage as a temporary contract between couples for as long as their love lasts. They also continue to say that if the relationship is not personally fulfilling, then it is better to get out of it or if there is no more love in a marriage, it is better to end it. For instance, in the US, there has been a decline in marriage and an increase in single hood and cohabiting couples. Oslon and Defrain (2000) reveal that the rate of marriage in the U.S. has declined from as high as 68 % of the population in 1970, 62 % in 1980 to 59 % in 1996, the most affected of the ethnic groups are the Afro-Americans. In addition, there is an increase in divorce rate in UK and U.S. For instance, Stott (1990) and O'Connell (1994) say that in the UK, one in every three marriages breaks up whereas in the US it is more than *one in every two*. The high rate of divorce, domestic violence and other dramatic changes in American families have made people to choose different forms of family life or alternatives to marriage, for example, gay marriages, trial marriages, progressive marriages, single parent families and cohabitation (Tischler, Whitten & Hunter, 1983).

In Kenya, the institution of marriage is undergoing a transition also due to the infiltration of the Western culture. The institution of marriage is in trouble as it is characterized by an increase in domestic violence, divorce rate and single parenthood. In agreement, Otindo (2003) asserts that marriage used to be seen as the prestige of any society but now it has become a pending item for legends and archives in Kenya. Kemunto (2004), in a survey carried out recently, also observes that more than half of the Kenyan women have experienced violence since they were 15 years old. Thus violence against women is not only widespread and highly tolerated but women are battered for flimsy reasons like burning food or asking for money for use at home. Furthermore, the survey showed that violence against women is universal yet it is the most pervasive recognized human rights abuse worldwide. However, there are also cases of men who have been battered by their wives though very few men do report such cases. This contrasts with the view of marriage as place where one is supposed to find peace and tranquility (Cretney, 1997). Mbiti (1969) remarks that marriage in the traditional African society was considered a rite of passage and thus all were expected to marry. Moreover, marriage was and still is a duty and a

requirement because, as Mbiti noted, if one does not participate in marriage, he or she is considered a rebel, a lawbreaker, a curse to the community and abnormal. In addition, Mbiti (1969) observes that failure to get married under normal circumstances means that the person concerned has rejected society and society rejects him or her in return. Marriage in this society was considered a serious contract and so divorce was very rare. However, temporary separations between husband and wife were common. But, contrary to what used to happen in the past, this seems not to be the case today due to infiltration of the Western culture.

Munguti and Kamaraa (1999) observe that there has been an increase in single parenting families in Kenya, which is a change in Kenyan families. This increase has led to females heading majority of these families. However, these female-headed households are disadvantaged as they are associated with low income and poverty. There are certain factors that influence women to remain single parents. Gichuki (2003) indicate that women view single parenthood not to be stressful because one does not have to consult anyone when it comes to decision-making. According to Gichuki (2003), a single mother may choose to be so by choice because of the harsh life others have gone through in their marriages. Further, the reporter says that single parenting is also as a result of divorce where women are left single mothers after a court ruling that leaves children under their custody. The above reporter cites negligence as the other factor where the husband chooses to live differently after cohabiting with a woman for sometime starts a family together and then disowns the first family completely. This eventually leaves the wife to take care of their children single handedly. These kinds of events may affect university students' perception of marriage life.

Further, Gichuki (2003) observes that it has become a tendency for a majority of women not to marry but have children and raise them singly. Most career women who are too engrossed in their professions prefer to remain single and avoid bothering themselves with any commitment. Gichuki (2003) continues to say that single fathers also find themselves in such situations after losing their wives and also after divorce. The student's education aspirations as defined by the students desire to pursue education before settling down to married life is likely to influence the perception of university students towards marriage life. For instance, it is believed that the increased number of educated women threaten the institution of marriage. Otindo (2003)

indicates that most educated women have a craving for independence and freedom. This is partly because of the new age movement that dictates that a woman does not need marriage if she is economically empowered. This kind of view might influence university students' perception of marriage life.

Similarly, the mass media in Kenya may have also been very influential in the university students' perception of marriage life. For example, the famous programme entitled *The Bold and the Beautiful*, a Western soap opera, aired by the Kenya Broadcasting Corporation (KBC) television, portrays marriage as an unstable institution. The programme shows cases of couples making a mockery of marriage by regularly marrying and divorcing. Worse still, a son and a father scramble for and/or share one woman. This scenario may have an adverse effect on university students' perception of marriage life. Melgosa (2000) asserts that the media is very explicit when referring to sexuality and erotism. She further says that the media in most cases use sex as an attraction, for example, through the television programmes so as to keep the consumers attention. This easily influences young people to experiment on what they see. Therefore, the mass media, among other factors, may positively or negatively influence the perception people have toward marriage life. It is against this background that there is need to study the perception of university students toward marriage life.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

In Kenya today, unlike before, there is an increasing rate of single parenthood, cohabitation, separation and divorce. These trends have led to unstable marriages which have led to emergence of other social issues such as street children, delinquency among children, rampant spread of HIV/ AIDS among others. This leaves one wondering whether this could be attributed to the perception that people have towards marriage life. According to Oslon and Defrain (2000), current trends in marriage life include fewer marriages, later age of marriage, fewer children, more divorce and more single parenting families. The above writers further assert that statistics on divorce, domestic violence as well as stories of families in crisis, point a negative picture of marriage life today. Thus, this study sought to provide some insight into perception of marriage life by investigating these perceptions among university students. The study further examined

how selected factors (religious affiliation, mass media, family of origin, students education aspirations and domestic violence) influence university students' perception of marriage life.

1.3 Purpose of the Study

The study sought to investigate the influence of selected factors (religious affiliation, mass media, family of origin, student's education aspirations and domestic violence) on university students' perception of marriage life.

1.4 Objectives of the Study

The following were the specific objectives of this study:

- (i) To determine the university students' perception of marriage life.
- (ii) To establish the influence of the following selected factors on university students' perception of marriage life.
 - a. Religious affiliation
 - b. Mass media
 - c. Family of origin
 - d. Students' education aspirations
 - e. Domestic violence
- (iii) To determine whether gender differences exist in university students' perception of marriage life.

1.5 Research Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were tested:

- Ho₁: There is no significant influence of religious affiliation, mass media, family of origin, students' education aspirations and domestic violence on university students' perception of marriage life.
- Ho₂: There is no significant gender difference existing in university students' perception of marriage life.

1.6 Significance of the Study

It is hoped that the results of the study may assist the Ministry of Home Affairs to spend less money in rehabilitating street children. This is because when families are stable, children are less likely to run away into the streets. Thus, the government's money used in rehabilitating these children can be directed to other activities such as creating more employment opportunities for Kenyans. It is also hoped that the results would assist religious leaders who are involved in teaching, counselling and guiding young adults in colleges and religious settings as they seek to prepare these young people for a stable marriage life. These leaders would be aware of the prevailing perception on marriage life and the dangers of the same thus they would be geared to addressing any negative perception of marriage life with the aim of correcting them. Marriage therapists may use findings on perception in offering premarital and marital counselling to young adults and equip them with skills to help them overcome any negative perception they may have toward marriage life.

The findings may, hopefully, help NGOs like FIDA to come up with more practical strategies in dealing with domestic violence. Once the NGOs deal with the issue of domestic violence, fewer cases of deaths and broken marriages will be reported. Married couples may use the findings to improve on their marriages and also in guiding their children and bringing them up in a better way. Moreover, the findings may be of benefit to other researchers since the findings try to fill a knowledge gap on students' perception of marriage life which this study could not have covered exhaustively. In addition, the study findings may be a very useful reference material to those aspiring to get married since the recommendations may provide useful inputs to them for informed decision making.

1.7 Scope of the Study

Although Egerton University has several constituent colleges/campuses, the study was carried out at the Njoro Campus among 254 undergraduates in their final year of study. This group was chosen because they were assumed to be mature and because of their age, is concerned more about marriage than 1st, 2nd and 3rd year undergraduate degree students. Furthermore, the study confined itself to the influence of selected factors (religious affiliation, mass media, family of origin, student's education aspiration and domestic violence) on the university students'

perception of marriage life even if there could be other factors that may influence their perception toward marriage life.

1.8 Assumptions of the Study

The study was carried out under the following assumptions:

- (i) That the respondents would be willing to readily reveal personal experiences as stipulated in the questionnaire.
- (ii) That the respondents would be honest enough to give adequate and true information about the subject matter.

1.9 Definition of Terms

The following were the operational definitions of terms used in the study:

Alternatives to marriage: This refers to any union that replaces marriage as defined in this document.

Blended family: This is a family formed after remarriage of either spouse and includes children of the previous marriage.

Cohabitation: This is a situation where a man and a woman live together for years without being legally married and are recognized as husband and wife by friends and relatives.

Counselling: This is a person-to-person professional relationship between a trained counsellor and a client designed to help clients understand and clarify their views and learn to reach their self-determined goals through well-informed choices and solve their problems.

Domestic violence: This refers to husband or wife abuse.

Family of origin: This refers to the family where one is coming from which include nuclear, single, polygamous and blended families.

Final year students: These are young adults undertaking their final year undergraduate degree programme in the university.

Gay marriage: It refers to marriage between people of the same sex.

Gender: It refers to being male or female.

Influence: This refers to the effect of the selected factors on university students' perception of marriage life.

Marriage: This refers to the socially recognized, legitimized and supported union of individuals of opposite sex.

Marriage Life: Socially recognized, legitimized and supported union of individuals of opposite sex who together with their children seek to live together in a mutual relationship.

Mass media: These are forms of communication that include both print and electronic media that influence students' perception of marriage life.

Monogamous Marriage: This is a relationship in which a man or a woman has only one mate of opposite sex.

- Perception:** It refers to the way university students view or understand marriage life, which is influenced by the selected factors.
- Polygamous Marriage:** This refers to a marriage in which a man marries more than one wife.
- Progressive marriage:** This refers to people having a series of spouses, one at a time, but without the difficulty of divorce proceedings.
- Religious affiliations:** It means a person's membership or identity with a particular religious group.
- Selected factors:** These are identified aspects that may influence university students' perception of marriage life.
- Single parenthood:** It refers to a family with only one parent and one or more children. The parent may be widowed, divorced or unmarried.
- Students' education aspirations:** In this study, it refers to students desire to pursue education before settling down to married life.
- Swinging marriage:** This is the temporary exchange of marital partners for sexual purposes.
- Trial marriage:** This is a renewable marriage contract for specified period of time in which each partner has the right to sexual and compassionate relationship.
- University students:** These are undergraduate students in the various programmes at Egerton University.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

In this section the researcher reviews the literature related to the concept of marriage, factors underlying the general perception of marriage life, marriage counselling and, finally, the theoretical as well as the conceptual framework of the study.

2.2 Conceptualization of Marriage

Kayongo-Male and Onyango (1984) define marriage as a union between two people of the opposite sex, which is institutionalized by the payment of bride wealth or by religious or civil ceremonies. In addition marriages in the traditional African society were polygamous in nature. Kayongo-Male and Onyango (1984) further say that marriage was primarily for procreation and also to consolidate wealth, create security over property and to provide companionship, which has become a recent major reason for marriage in Africa. Mugambi (1989) asserts that marriage was one of the most important marks of social adulthood. He continues to say that no man or woman was socially recognized as a grown up without being married, no matter the age.

In the traditional African society, a family is viewed as a basis for a life of domestic peace and tranquility within which emotional and sexual needs can be fulfilled and from which the concerns of the outside world can be excluded. It is in the family that emotional, social and financial support is provided as well as instilling values to its members (Cretney, 1997). Thus, the family is a social institution that is responsible for transmitting values and providing support. In contrast the family is also viewed as an instrument of oppression because of spouse and child abuse (Schaefer & Lamm, 1992).

2.3 General Perception of Marriage

In some religious groups like Christianity, the view of marriage as a lifelong commitment or contract is not only now a minority view in the West, but also the religious organizations are in the danger of giving marriage to the world. Even among religious groups like Christians, marriages are no longer stable as they used to be and divorces are becoming a common thing (Stott, 1990).

In the traditional African society, every body was expected to get married and bear children. This was the greatest hope and expectation of the individual for himself and of the community for the individual (Mbiti, 1969). According to Baruth and Huber (1984), people stick to marriage for various reasons like, the domestic comfort it provides, companionship, for social and sexual activities and the fact that people believe marriage may enhance individual's attractiveness to employers who view married people as settled and reliable. Further, the above authors assert that marriage increase the ability to move upward in a career through contacts made by entertaining employers and associates.

According to Grossbard-Shechtman (2003), marriage has been of great interest to policy makers and researchers because of its strong connection to important actions taken by individuals. For example, some people argue that marriage is like an insurance policy as it offers protection against poor health, financial insecurity, and deviant behaviours. He further notes that getting married or remaining unmarried is intertwined with choices such as the number of children to have and whether to work in the labour market. Grossbard-Shechtman adds that there have been dramatic changes in marriage and divorce patterns all over the world for the past fifty years and that men and women in the U.S. spend a smaller proportion of their lives married and a lot more living together outside a formal marriage. This being the case, university students' perception of marriage is likely to be influenced.

The concept of marriage is being challenged today, not only by young people who prefer to live together without taking vows in case things do not work out, but also by sociologists who advance more sophisticated reasons for abandoning the religious concept of marriage (Shaw, 1985). Shaw (1985) continues to say that husband and wife relationship has been subjected to such abuse in our day that people are compelled to ask how long the concept of marriage, as traditionally understood, can continue as an accepted feature of the society to which we belong. On the other hand, the nuclear family seems to be dying which is evidenced by the high divorce rates, runaway children and wives who abandon their husbands and or children, and cohabitation among others (Lauer, 1998). Thus empirical study in the Kenyan situation needs to be conducted to find how students especially in university view marriage life.

The number of unmarried and divorced people have gone up as a result of decreasing number of married persons in U.S. For example, about 26 % of those over 18 years have not married, approximately 34 % of those between ages 25-35 have never been married. Of these, 39 % of African American has never been married as compared to 30 % of Hispanics and 21 % Caucasians. Almost 20 million Americans are currently divorced (Olson & DeFrain, 2000). Thus, the increasing number of divorced people and singles has contributed to the decreasing percentage of married couples today. The current scenario could be attributed to the perception young people have towards marriage life.

According to Munguti and Kamaara (1999), family is viewed as a multifunctional institution that fulfils certain societal needs and in which significant portion of individual's activities takes place. The above authors add that family in Kenya like the rest of the world has undergone a process of change because of improved communication and transport, access to information and formal education. These changes have increased contact with ideas and behavioural norms beyond traditional spheres but they have also exposed families to different social circumstances.

Gethin (2003) observes that in Kenya, the institution of marriage is under threat; its future uncertain and many young people are avoiding getting married and instead seeking to escape from the institution's bondage. He further notes that many people prefer co-habiting than committing themselves in marriage. Thus, the university students' perception of marriage life is likely to be affected.

2.4 Young Adults' Perception of Marriage life

In this study, the factors likely to influence university students' perception of marriage life include religious affiliation, mass media, family of origin, students' education aspirations, domestic violence and gender differences.

2.4.1 Religious Affiliation

This is an important factor that may influence university students' perception of marriage life. For instance, O'Donovan (1992) asserts that for a marriage to be stable, it would be important for Christians to marry fellow Christians and Muslims to marry Muslims. Grossbard-Shechtman

(2003) concurs with the above by saying that according to studies that have been carried out, partners who differ in religious affiliation have reduced efficiency, more conflict, and a higher likelihood of marriage dissolution. This is because religion influences the education, children rearing practices, allocation of time and money, the cultivation of social relationships and the choice of place of residence. Further, the studies claim that when spouses are affiliated to religions that have highly dissimilar religious beliefs and practices like a Jew and a Christian and when the affiliation of one or both is exclusive in nature, with sharply drawn boundaries and membership criteria like Mormons and fundamentalist Protestants, then the destabilizing effect of *intermarriage* is more pronounced. Thus, university students' *perception of marriage life* may be affected, as many of them may prefer to marry someone of the same religion because they have the most interaction.

A study conducted by the National Survey of Families and Households in 1987-1988 on the effects of religion and marital stability revealed that intermarriages between Catholics and non-Catholics have much higher disruption rates than religiously monogamous marriages. Looking at marriages with Protestant, Catholic, Jewish, Mormon, Buddhist, Hindu, Islamic, or other types of religions, or no religion at all, the study found that the monogamous Mormon marriages were the most stable and those marriages with no religious affiliation were the least stable. The marital stability of marriage composed of different affiliations, (like different Protestant denominations) was not significantly affected while marriages between Protestants and Catholics seemed to be less stable than the other types of marriage. Thus, many young adults may opt to marry people with similar religious values in order to have a happy and a stable marriage (Lehrer & Chiswick, 1993). Religious books such as Quran and Bible may affect how people view issues like divorce and cohabitation. People with such religious inclinations are more likely not to divorce or cohabit.

2.4.2 Mass Media

Kephart and Jedlicka (1988) observe that social commentators have pointed with alarm to the increase in obscenity, pornography and non-marital sex behaviour. The mass media has been flooded with tasteless and unnecessary violence and sex. In the behavioural sphere, it is held that premarital, extramarital, and homosexual activities are so widespread that they are undermining the very structure of marriage life.

Adams (1983) agrees with the above and says that there is a lot of glorification of illegitimate sex and violence in the mass media. He continues to say that people should abandon viewing of certain programmes because of the impact it has on marriage. Television viewing consumes a lot of time that could otherwise be spent talking about issues affecting marriage. The mass media often focuses on the negative aspects of marriage like marital violence; divorce and thus this may affect the way young people perceive marriage life.

Shaffer (1994) holds the same opinion with Adams (1983) and says that viewing television is likely to change children's lifestyle and the character of family life. She adds that according to a survey carried out, the presence of a television at home had the effect of decreased amount of time that parents spent with their youngsters in non-television related leisure activities such as games and family outings. This is likely to affect university students' perception of marriage life, as it may impress in their minds that marriage life does not matter after all.

2.4.3 Family of Origin

Family of origin refers to the family where one is coming from which include nuclear, single parent, polygamous and blended families. Family of origin plays an important role in defining a marital relationship. Baruth and Huber (1984) notes that partners' expectations of their own parents will influence the kind of marriage the partners themselves will have. The author continues to add that most people tend to incorporate from the family of origin what they perceived as positive and eliminate what they saw as negative.

Baruth and Huber (1984) further noted that partners are to a large extent the way they are because of what they learnt from their parents. In most cases, people who have come from polygamous family may shun marriage because of the difficulties they experienced such as unhealthy competition, poverty among others. Thus, depending on the type of family one is coming from, university students' perception of marriage life may be affected. For instance, those from polygamous marriages may have negative picture of polygamous marriage because of the difficulties they may have experienced.

The other issue with regard to the family of origin is that of single parenting. There are a number of causes for this and as Lauer (1998) observed, possible reasons for single parenting include high divorce rate, delayed marriages, out of wedlock births, death, separation and abandonment. Having experienced divorce in the family, one is likely to have both negative attitudes of marriage and positive attitudes about single parenthood. Schaefer (2001) claims that young people especially women choose not to marry because of the growing economic independence. He further notes that singleness is an attraction option form for those who do not want to limit their sexual intimacy to one lifetime partner. Many university students may embrace this perspective thus affecting their perception of marriage life.

Oslon and DeFrain (2000) give other factors contributing to the increase in single hood as: (a) education and career which delay the age at which young people marry, and (b) increasing recognition in our society that single hood can be a legitimate, healthy and a happy alternative to marriage. Although failure to marry is considered undesirable today, single hood is seen as legitimate alternative to marriage. This is because single individuals can transfer to new locations more easily than whole families, have got fewer outside commitment and devote more extra hours to their careers (Oslon & DeFrain, 2000). University students' may be influenced to remain single because single hood seems to offer freedom to them, consequently affecting their perception of marriage life. Further, Schaefer and Lamm (1992) concur with the above as they highlight some of the reasons for remaining single as: (a) the growing independence of young people; (b) the fact that people do not want to limit their sexual intimacy to one lifetime partner; and (c) single hood offers individual and personal self fulfilment in that it can offer certain freedoms that married couples may not enjoy. Schaefer and Lamm (1992) add that both men and women do not want to become highly dependent on anyone and also do not want anybody depending heavily on them. These views may adversely affect university students' perception of marriage life.

When single hood is as a result of divorce, the most affected are the children as they suffer emotionally, physically, psychologically, morally and otherwise. Such children normally develop a wrong view of marriage or become bitter and negative about marriage and may be influenced to repeat the same pattern of immorality and divorce that they saw in their parents or opt not to

get married (O'Donovan, 1992). Thus, whether divorce is instigated by one partner or by mutual consent, both partners and the children have a traumatic experience that may negatively affect their perception of marriage life. However, Lauer (1998) asserts that of the divorced cases, approximately a third of the children benefit from the separation, as there is less exposure to conflict. Parental separation contributes to poverty especially if one of the partners was dependent on the other. According to Otindo (2003), constant divorces are putting off many potential marrying categories away from entering the institution. The increase in divorce cases is likely to devalue marriage thus causing young people to have a negative perception of marriage life.

2.4.4 Students' Education Aspirations

At times education can cause people to delay in getting married or marrying. Some people would prefer gaining education before settling down to married life. For instance, Dr Mwetii, now aged 54, had to put his wedding on hold for 18 years in order to obtain his PhD degree (Mutua, 2004). Shaffer (1994) concurs with the above by saying that many young singles are postponing marriage to pursue educational and career goals. In effect, highly educated and achievement oriented people prefer to remain unmarried (Oslon & DeFrain, 2000). This is because they believe they are independent and do not need outside help. University students are likely to fall victim of this and postpone marriage for a later date in order to pursue education or not marry at all once they achieve their education goals.

Educational attainment has an impact on a wide range of activities in which husband and wife are jointly involved. Some of these include daily communication and interactions within a marriage, decisions regarding child rearing approaches, the level of human investments in children and the allocation of time to home production and leisure activities (Grossbard-Shechtman, 2003). He also asserts that research has shown that high levels of the husband and wife's education have a stabilizing effect on marriage. Thus, educational attainment is likely to influence university students' perception of marriage life in a positive way.

A research finding reveals that a relationship exists between socio-economic and family discord and marital disruption or family disability. This is because the lower the status, the greater the

proportion of divorce or desertion. Lower class families experience greater economic and job insecurity and thus divorce is likely to take place. In U.S.A, there is greater emphasis on success and achievement and thus lower class people in particular men tend to define themselves and be perceived by others in the society as failures. Such belief hinders rather than help a marriage relationship (Eitzen, 1985). This being the case, socio economic status is likely to influence university students' perception of marriage life.

Nock (1992) concurs with Eitzen (1985) on how socio-economic status may affect young adults' perception of marriage life. Nock (1992) claims that divorces are more likely among those with lower education, lower income and lower status occupations. This is because people of lower status occupations produce less occupational satisfaction, less income, frustrations and discontent that may be expressed in marriage. He further notes that those in low status occupations have less stable and predictable incomes due to the nature of their jobs and lack of work skills. On the other hand, people with high status jobs and at upper incomes may have invested large sums in property and other financial investments such that financial interests in both parties may thus act as a barrier to divorce. According to the same author, those with low incomes are more likely to face problems of housing, health and job security, which may strain a marriage beyond its breaking point.

Grossbard-Shechtman (2003) concurs with Eitzen (1985) by saying that more resources in a household means the standard of living goes high and may alleviate sources of marital tension associated with economic difficulties. Grossbard-Shechtman (2003) claims that individuals raised in broken homes tend to have a higher risk of divorce because they begin their unions with an economic disadvantage and do so at an early age. Grossbard-Shechtman further notes that gains from marriage are lower as they have had fewer opportunities to learn interpersonal skills necessary for successful unions. Probably what makes them not to have interpersonal skills for these unions is because they are always looking for means to earn a living and are left with no time to relax with their families. The same author argues that people brought up in non-intact families have a lower perceived cost of a marital break-up as they see divorce as a viable solution to an unhappy marital situation. These kinds of views can affect university students' perception of marriage life.

2.4.5 Domestic Violence

In Kenya, the family has been witnessing increasing cases of domestic violence. Traditionally, wife beating was not wrong as it was considered a disciplinary measure. It has been reported that about half of the Kenyan population attribute poverty and disagreement about money, as the main cause of domestic violence and more than one-fifth see unfaithfulness in marriage as another cause. 73.8 % of the Kenyan population knows of people who beat their husbands and wives (Nations Reporter, 2004). The same reporter claims that statistics show that more men than women complain of domestic violence and that 44.1 % of women polled admitted that men were indeed the victims of violence in the home.

Various views have been put forward concerning domestic violence. Domestic violence has been attributed to alcohol drinking and drug abuse while the Nation survey carried out in 2004 accredited it to poverty. This is because 48.8 % of the people in the survey cited poverty as one of the main cause of domestic violence, 14.2 % attributed it to peer pressure, 13.8 % attributed it to a cultural norm, (wife beating is culturally accepted as a way of disciplining wives), while 8.4 % blamed it on the current women liberation.

Moreover, domestic violence is said to increase with age and decrease with education according to the above nation reporter. The survey report indicates that 53.4 % of uneducated people admit beating their partners whereas those with university education, only 24.3 % made the admission. Also, on the report's analysis on gender and domestic violence, 32.7 % of men and 27.3 % of women complain being victims of domestic violence. Such statistics are likely to affect university students' perception of marriage life. Pala (2003) observes that men beat their wives because of flimsy reasons like cold food presented to them, man wanting to reassert himself at home because this may be the only place he can do it, suspect phone calls and when his premier side team loses.

Interestingly, those abused or in violent marriages and families do not quit. According to Lamanna (1988), women put up with abuse because legally there has been little protection for battered women until recently. He continues to say that women tolerate abuse not because they enjoy being battered but because economic hardships may result if they leave and also because

she may damage her husband's reputation if they are summoned by the police. Furthermore, culturally it is their responsibility to keep their marriage from failing through divorce. The author continues to say that women tolerate abuse because of childhood experience. This is because people who experience violence in their parents' home while growing up may have an increased tolerance for violence and may regard beatings as part of married life. Domestic violence affects young children who may be physically and psychologically hurt. This may in future affect university students' perception of marriage life and may not be enthusiastic to establish intimate relationships geared to marriage.

Kroeger and Nason-Clark (2001) give reasons as to why women remain with partners who abuse them. A battered wife, for instance, fears for her future, fears further violence and fears for the lives of her children, thus remains in an abusive marriage. Also, women would rather lie about the reality of the abuse than try to escape. In addition, Kroeger and Nason-Clark (2001) noted the other reasons why women remain in abusive marriages: (a) economic dependency coupled with the fact that they might not have been employed in the labor market and (b) the fact that some women keep hoping that someday violence will cease.

2.4.6 Gender Differences

According to Otieno (2002), gender roles and responsibilities have been culturally defined by society for men and women to conform to. These roles have been defined in a way that oppresses women and denies them human rights. Otieno (2002) outlines examples of gender oppression as follows:

i) Bride price- Bride price was intended to seal relations between families and clans. However, today it has entrenched male dominance over women. Women become not only subordinate to their husbands but also all the men in the family. Thus, the fact that women almost have no say in marriage matters once bride price has been paid is likely on the road to influence young females to have negative perceptions of marriage and family life. On the other hand, very high bride price makes the young men feel that marriage is too much a burden for them consequently affecting their perception of marriage life.

ii) Wife inheritance is referred to as “tero” among the Luo, and is a requirement that widows remarry within the family. Women are regarded as family property that must be inherited. Owing to the fact that the African culture endorses gender bias when it comes to death of a spouse, young females may negatively be influenced in their perception of marriage life.

iii) Barrenness- scientifically, man and woman can be responsible for failure to have babies. Society and in-laws are quick to blame the woman for a marriage that does not yield offspring. For instance, among the Ameru of Kenya, a man is often warned against a barren woman. To make it worse, the Meru men keep off women whose mothers or sisters had difficulties conceiving. Such a belief is likely to create a negative perception of marriage life among young females.

2.5 Marriage Counselling

Marriage relationship is very fundamental and this makes marriage counselling necessary. Premarital counselling is necessary to prepare young people and assist in dealing with perception of marriage life. Collins (1980) says that premarital counselling allows couples to express, discuss and realistically modify their expectations for marriage. As such, conflicting expectations can be seen and hopefully resolved. He continues to say that it enables couples to be able to uncover and discuss self centred tendencies which might bring about stress in marriage as they are taught to resolve differences, develop an appreciation for each other’s needs and individually. It also gives an opportunity to discuss their views and expectations about male and female roles in marriage which if not addressed can bring confusion. They learn to accept their different abilities and decide on areas of responsibility.

In some cases, there will be need for family counselling especially in cases where perception has its roots in an existing family (Worthington, 1989). The same author asserts that marriage counselling is important as it addresses spiritual, cognitive, environmental and behavioural aspect of the individual while working to improve marriage. The same author adds that marriage counsellor’s task is to help the couple reunite and induce behaviour changes that are permanent structures of their lives and relationship.

2.6 Theoretical Framework

The study was based on the Cognitive theory of personality, Social learning and Information processing theories.

2.6.1 Cognitive Theory of Personality

This theory was developed by George Kelly. According to Chauhan (1978), the basic assumption of this theory is that man's behaviour is influenced by thinking, judging and anticipating rather than instincts, drives among other motivating forces. He continues to add that personal constructs determine ones behaviour. According to Sdorow (1995), personal construct involve two opposite extremes. For instance, if one holds that marriage is good, then he or she will have a positive perception of marriage while if one has a misconception of marriage, then one is likely to have a negative perception of marriage.

Chauhan (1978) asserts that individuals interpret events or situations depending on their past experiences. He further notes that personal constructs develop depending on the relationship of the person in their lives. For instance, a person's perception of marriage life is determined by their past experiences and they anticipate a repeat of their experiences depending on the relationship of the person with significant persons in their life. Students who have been brought up in an intact family will interpret marriage as being good while those from disintegrated families will perceive marriage as being a bad encounter. Therefore, the significant others help to determine ones present and future behaviour. This means that if one perceives marriage as bad, then in future they may opt not to get married and if they do, they will always hope for the worst and therefore form an opinion or perception about marriage.

2.6.2 Social Learning Theory

One of the most prominent advocates of this theory is Albert Bandura. According to Papalia and Olds (1992), the theory holds that children learn by observing and imitating models like their parents. The above authors further claim that social learning theorists hold that children learn from watching their parents and other adults what it means to be male or female and what kinds of behaviour are right and proper. This concurs with Bandura (1982) who asserts that children will always imitate both what a model does and says whether the behaviour is prosocial or

antisocial. Therefore, parents should ensure that they set good examples to their children. This will cause their children to imitate good characteristics from them as they grow up. Sroufe, Cooper and DeHart (1992) add that children and adults tend to repeat behaviour for which they have been rewarded in the past and avoid behaviour for which they have been punished.

The above theory asserts that family members provide initial exposure to the basic living skills and social behaviours since learning takes place in the family environment (Baruth & Huber, 1984). Therefore, learning in this theory takes place through direct observation and imitation from those in the home environment like parents, sisters, grandparents, peers and the significant others in our lives. For instance, by observing what others are experiencing, one is likely to acquire either good or bad behaviour. For example, students who have grown up in an abusive family and watched their parents fighting on several occasions before they broke may end up being abusers themselves (Bee, 1985). Oslon and Defrain (2000) hold the same opinion with Baruth and Huber (1984) and say that when one is beaten when they are small, then when they are big, they repeat what they learnt. Further, Oslon and Defrain (2000) add that female children typically learn to be victims in their family of origin and are likely to become victims again in their marriage. However, the above writers are quick to add that growing up in a home where spouse abuse occurs does not guarantee that one will become a victim or victimiser as an adult.

The theory is concerned with change in an individual's behaviour that is manifested depending on the rewards given. At times problems may arise in marriage simply because the negative behaviour was rewarded and positive behaviour not rewarded (Anthony, 1996). Only positive behaviour should be reinforced and the undesirable behaviour ignored because paying attention to it just reinforces its occurrence. Carlson and Buskist (1997) say that humans have the ability to learn without directly experiencing an event. People can imitate the behaviour of other people by watching what they do and if the conditions are appropriate, they perform the same behaviour. Likewise, if one observes their models remain single or practicing single parenting, they are likely to copy the behaviour and especially if the behaviour is positively reinforced. The mass media may play an important role in influencing university students' perception of marriage life. For instance, films and plays on divorce aired on our televisions today can easily affect university students' perception of marriage life as they are likely to imitate what they watch.

2.6.3 Information Processing Theory

Atkinson and Shiffrin are among the proponents of this theory. The two view information as being held in three parts of the system for processing namely, the sensory register, short-term memory and long-term memory. According to Berk (1997), the basic principle of this theory is an approach that views the human mind as a symbol manipulating system through which information flows, operating much like a digital computer and that regards cognitive development as a continuous process. Hetherington and Parke (1999) concur with Berk by saying that information-processing theory is a perspective on cognition and cognitive development in which the human mind is likened to a computer processing information from the environment through perception and attention, encoding it in memory, and applying information to the solution of problems.

Feldman (1996) concurs with the above authors by saying that information processing is the way in which people take in, use and store information. According to this approach, quantitative changes occur in children's ability to organize and manipulate information. For instance, the speed of processing increases with age as some abilities become more automatic. With increasing age, children can pay more attention to stimuli longer, can discriminate between different stimuli more readily, and are less easily distracted. Memory also improves drastically with age. Thus, people's perception is influenced by the information given which may be through the mass media or is verbal.

Usually, televisions, textbooks, internet, newspapers and magazines are important sources of information. What people read on newspapers and see on the mass media can affect their perception on marriage life. For example, cases of domestic violence that often appear on daily newspapers and magazines are likely to affect university students' perception of marriage life. This coupled with the television programmes that air marriages that have gone sour may influence university students' perception of marriage life as they portray marriage as an unstable institution.

2.7 Conceptual Framework

A conceptual model showing how selected factors influencing students' perception of marriage life interact with other factors in influencing university students' perception of marriage is presented in figure 1.

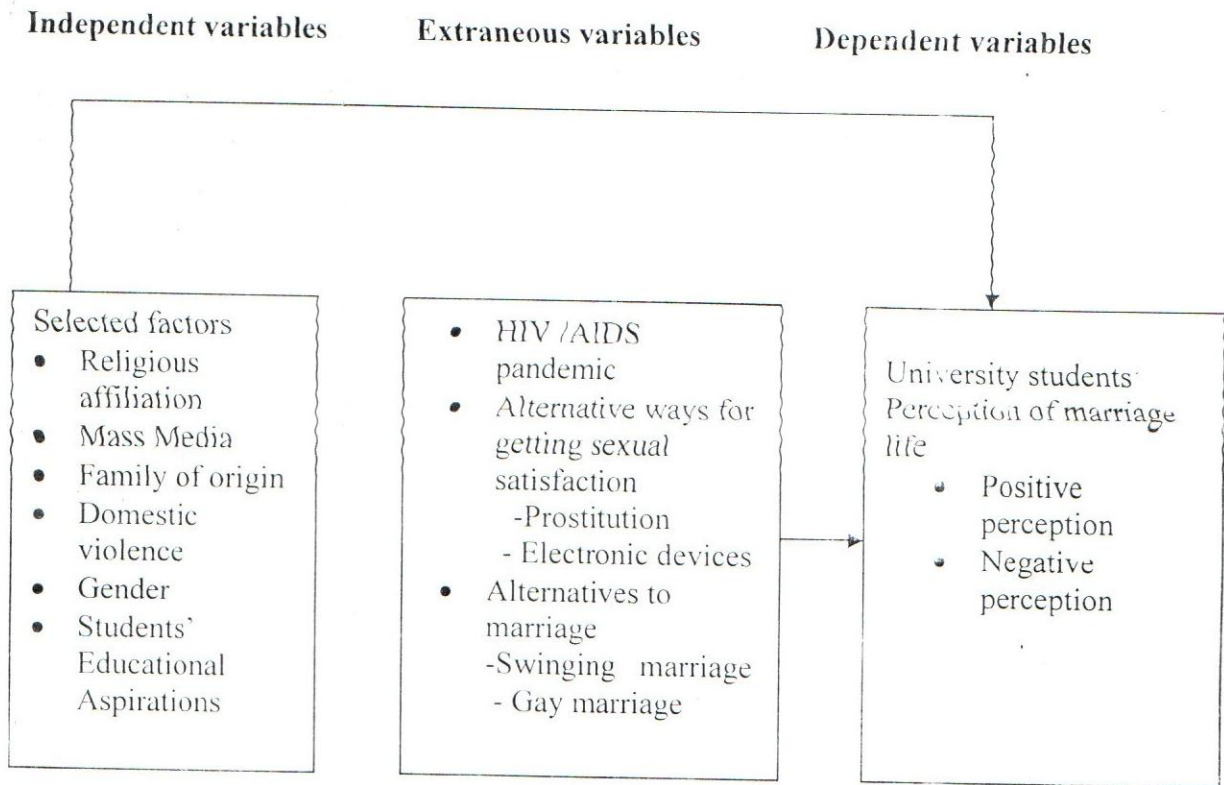


Figure 1: Influence of Selected Factors on University Students' Perception of Marriage Life

In this model, religious affiliation, mass media, family of origin, students' education aspiration, domestic violence and gender, which form the independent variables, are likely to cause a change on the dependent variable (university students' perception of marriage life). For instance, cases of domestic violence that often appear on daily newspapers and magazines are likely to affect university students' perception of marriage life. The extraneous variables which include HIV/AIDS pandemic, alternative ways for getting sexual satisfaction and alternatives to marriage may also have an effect on university students' perception of marriage life. The extraneous variables in this study were controlled by studying them alongside the independent variables.

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter outlines the research methods that were employed in this study that include the research design, location of the study, population of the study, sample and sampling procedures, instrumentation, data collection procedures and data analysis.

3.2 Research Design

This research design adopted for this study was causal-comparative, which employed descriptive survey with the aim of investigating the influence of selected factors on university students' perception of marriage life. Kothari (2004) asserts that in a descriptive survey, the researcher describes the state of affairs as it exists at present. The author further states that the researcher does not manipulate the variables or arrange for events to happen and that they are concerned with opinions that are held. No treatment was given to the respondents before the study was conducted and thus the researcher did not have direct control of independent variables as the variable to be studied had already occurred (Kerlinger, 1973; Kathuri & Pals, 1993). In this case, the researcher did not have direct control over the selected factors (independent variables) as the variables to be studied had already occurred and that students' perception of marriage life had been formed and could not be manipulated.

3.3 Location of the Study

This study was carried out at Njoro Campus of Egerton University, situated along the Njoro-Mau Narok road, 5 kilometres from Njoro Town in Nakuru District of the Rift Valley Province, Kenya. Njoro Campus, being one of the campuses of Egerton University, has the largest student population of all the campuses.

This Campus was purposively chosen for study because Egerton University, being a public university, has students selected from all parts of the country. This reflects a representation of more than half of the ethnic communities in Kenya and therefore students are of diverse socio-cultural, educational and religious backgrounds. The location was also found to be convenient for the researcher due to ease of access to respondents during data collection.

3.4 Population of the Study

The target population for this study was 5,301 undergraduate degree students of Egerton University, Njoro Campus. However, the accessible population was 764 final year undergraduate degree students as indicated in Table 1. Final year undergraduate degree students were considered because they were assumed to be mature and perhaps because of their age, are concerned more about marriage than first, second and third year undergraduates. Also, taking into consideration that they were almost leaving campus, they may have established intimate relationships that are geared toward marriage. Therefore, the researcher was of the opinion that this population of respondents would give the relevant information required by the study.

Table 1

Population of Final Year Undergraduates per Faculty and Gender

Faculty	Male	Female	Total
Engineering and Technology	33	6	39
Agriculture	158	48	206
Science	108	22	130
Environment and Resources Development	22	11	33
Education and Community Studies	152	79	231
Arts and Social Sciences	74	51	125
Totals	547	217	764

Source: Admissions of final year undergraduate students, Egerton University, Njoro Campus (2006)

3.5 Sampling Procedure and Sample Size

Stratified random sampling technique was used to select the respondents from the various faculties which in this case are strata. This technique enabled the researcher to achieve the desired representation from various subgroups in the population (Mugenda & Mugenda, 1999). In effect, the respondents were stratified into different faculties (stratum) and further into males and females in their respective faculties. The researcher visited each faculty, got the students

population and further stratified them. From the student population of 764, a sample of 254 students was selected based on Kathuri and Pals (1993)'s table for determining sample size as shown in Appendix B. To determine the actual number of students to be selected from each faculty, proportional random sampling was used. Table 2 gives the distribution of students by gender and faculty.

Table 2
Distribution of the Sample per Faculty and Gender

Faculty	Male	Female	Total
Engineering and Technology	11	2	13
Agriculture	53	16	69
Science	36	7	43
Environment and Resources Development	7	4	11
Education and Community Studies	50	26	76
Arts and Social Sciences	25	17	42
Totals	182	72	254

3.6 Instrumentation

Data for the study was collected from the respondents by use of self-scoring questionnaire developed by the researcher. According to Gay (1992), questionnaires offer considerable advantages in administration to large numbers of people and they allow the respondents time to provide answers to questions requiring a lot of reflection and provide the researcher with an easy accumulation of data. Questionnaires are also preferable because they have both closed-ended and open-ended items. Structured (close-ended) questions solicit for short answers/facts and unstructured (open-ended) questions that allow the respondents an opportunity to express their views.

The respondents' questionnaire sought data about the influence of selected factors on the university students' perception of marriage life. The questionnaire was divided into two sections. Section I with six questions asked for the respondents' demographic information which provided

vital clues about their family or personal life that had a bearing on their perceptions toward marriage life. Section II had two sub-sections: Questions 7 to 28 contained items measuring the various independent variables with the aim of achieving the research objectives while Questions 29-35 were used to measure students' perception of marriage life based on a 5 point Likert Scale rating of Strongly Agree (1 point), Agree (2 points), Neutral (3 points), Disagree (4 points) and Strongly Disagree (5 points).

3.6.1 Validity and Reliability of the Instruments

To improve the validity of the results, the researcher scrutinised the questionnaire items to find out if they were in line with the objectives of the study. More still, the *instruments* were subjected to scrutiny by the researcher's supervisors and other research experts for validation purposes. Kathuri and Pals (1993) observe that piloting of instruments improves their validity. Hence, for the purpose of validity and even reliability of the instrument, the instrument was piloted on 30 final year undergraduates of Egerton University's Laikipia college Campus. The final year undergraduates at Laikipia Campus were assumed to have similar characteristics with those students (population) used in the actual study at Njoro Campus; both were admitted through Joint Admissions Board.

The reliability of the instrument, which measures its internal consistency in obtaining same results irrespective of the number of trials, was tested using the Cronbach's Coefficient Alpha which Kathuri and Pals (1993) recommend as one of the methods of determining instrument reliability. The obtained reliability coefficient of the questionnaire was 0.732. This was within the acceptable reliability threshold of 0.7 and above according to Henerson, Morris and Fitz-Gibbon (1987) as cited in Chepchieng (2004).

3.7 Data Collection Procedures

The researcher sought for a research permit from the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology and also permission from the University authority at Njoro Campus to enable her collect data. Upon the granting of permission, the researcher carried out pre-data collection activities such as developing the sampling frame which enabled her select the actual students to fill the questionnaires. Then the researcher visited the various faculties to establish rapport with

the respondents in addition to explaining the purpose of as well as their role in the study. The researcher also made appointments with the various lecturers teaching the core units affected by the data collection exercise in each faculty to arrange for the convenient time when the students were to be allowed to fill in the questionnaire. On the actual day of data collection, depending on the date agreed per faculty, the researcher personally administered the instruments and gave the respondents approximately 30 minutes to respond to the questionnaire items.

The above procedure enabled the researcher to collect data. However, secondary data from documents such as University admission records and other relevant written materials were gathered and analysed. They were useful in literature review, the preparation of the sampling frame and discussion of the findings when writing the report.

The return rate of the instruments enabled the researcher to determine how many instruments were returned out of the number issued. All the 254 questionnaires distributed were returned thus representing a 100 % return rate. However, on checking the questionnaires to determine the extent to which they were responded to or completed 7 (2.8 %) of them had over half of the questions not answered and therefore were discarded. Thus data analysis was based on 247 respondents representing a response rate of 97.2 % in which 175 (70.9 %) were male students while the rest, 72 (29.1 %), were females.

3.8 Data Analysis

Once the instruments were collected and checked, coding was done. In coding, Kothari (2004) observes, categories of responses are identified, classified and copied on a prepared sheet as per research hypotheses. To facilitate the coding and analysing of data, the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) computer programme was used. The data, which was both qualitative and quantitative, was then classified as guided by the objectives of study before being coded. The quantitative data was expressed in numerical values for further analysis. Responses from the open-ended items were transcribed. The qualitative data which were in the form of words or opinions of the respondents were analysed using the content analysis approach in which case the responses were scrutinised or evaluated as per the objectives of the study while establishing

patterns of relationships among them. Where possible the data was quantified through percentages and frequencies and supplemented by narrations.

The quantitative data which could be expressed in numerical values were analysed using both inferential and descriptive statistics. The descriptive statistics were frequencies and percentages. Frequencies were used in grouping the data involving many respondents whose responses were also diverse and therefore frequency tables were generated and accompanied by appropriate discussions. Percentages were used to generalize the study findings as well as to show the proportion of the respondents of certain subgroups in relation to the total group giving certain responses. The inferential statistics used were the t-test and chi-square (χ^2) tests which assisted the researcher in making inferences about the population based on findings from the sample. T-test was used to establish whether significant differences existed between males and females in perception of marriage life. Chi-square was used to test for the independence between variables that are categorical and also help to establish the association between the selected factors and students' perception of marriage life. All tests were done at $p=0.05$.

To achieve the research objectives, analysis of each hypothesis was as follows:

- i. The researcher used percentages and frequencies to achieve objective one.
- ii. Chi-square test, frequencies and percentages were used to achieve objective two.
- iii. To achieve objective three, t-test was used to determine whether gender differences exist in students' perceptions of marriage life.

CHAPTER FOUR: RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Introduction

The study sought to determine the influence of religious affiliation, mass media, family of origin, students' education aspiration and domestic violence on university students' perception of marriage life at Egerton University, Njoro Campus, Kenya. To this end, this chapter presents a discussion of the research results as guided by the objectives of the study, namely:

- i. To determine the University students' perception of marriage life.
- ii. To establish the influence of religious affiliation, mass media, family of origin, students' education aspiration and domestic violence on university students' perception of marriage life.
- iii. To determine whether significant gender differences exist in university students' perception of marriage life.

Based on the research objectives, the results have been presented under various themes which are the demographic characteristics of the respondents, the respondents' opinions on marriage, the influence of selected factors on the university students' perception of marriage life and gender difference in university students' perception of marriage.

4.2 Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents

The respondents who participated in the study were 254. However, on checking the questionnaires to determine the extent to which they were responded to or completed, 7 (2.8 %) of them had over half of the questions not answered and therefore were discarded. Thus data analysis was based on 247 respondents representing a response rate of 97.2 % in which 175 (70.9 %) were male students while the rest, 72 (29.1 %), were females. In this section, respondents were required to indicate their gender, age, marital status, family of origin and religious affiliation. The responses of 247 respondents are presented in the following tables:

Table 3

Respondents' Gender and Age

Category	f	%
Gender		
Males	175	70.9
Females	72	29.1
Total	247	100.0
Age		
20 - 24	108	43.7
25 - 30	133	53.8
Above 31	6	2.4
Total	247	100.0

n=247

Table 3 shows that 175 (70.9 %) were male students while females were 72 (29.1 %). This implies that the data collected represented views of both sexes as per the objectives of study, which sought to determine if there was a difference between them in the way they perceived marriage. On their ages, 108 (43.7 %) were between 20 and 24 years, 133 (53.8 %) students were between 25 and 30 years old and 6 (2.4%) were above 30 years old. Therefore, majority of the students were aged between 20 to 30 years. Since this is the age at which most people think of marriage or may be already married, the students were suitable in providing data required by the study.

Table 4

Respondents' Marital Status and Family of Origin

Category		f	%
Marital status	Married	41	16.6
	Single	206	83.4
Total		247	100.0
Family of Origin	<i>Single parent family</i>	47	19.0
	Nuclear family	155	62.8
	Polygamous family	42	17.0
	Blended family	3	1.2
Total		247	100.0

n=247

As revealed in Table 4, singles (83.4%) were more than those who were married, (16.6%). This implies that data collected was representative of views from both the single and married students and therefore provided information about perceptions of marriage. Of the students sampled, 155 (62.8%) came from nuclear families, 47 (19%) were from single parent families, 42 (17%) were from polygamous families, while 3 (1.2%) were from blended families. Due to diverse family of origin, the participants provided data that enabled the researcher to discuss the influence of family of origin on perceptions toward marriage life.

Table 5

Distribution of Respondents by Religious Affiliation.

Religious Affiliation	f	%
Islam	14	5.7
Protestant	175	70.9
Roman Catholic	54	21.9
Atheism	3	1.2
Scientology	1	0.4
Total	247	100.0

n=247

As shown in Table 5, majority of the sampled respondents, 175 (70.9%), were affiliated to the Protestant faith followed by Roman Catholic who were 54 (21.9%) and Islam who were 14 (5.7%). However, 3 (1.2%) students were Atheists while only 1 (0.4%) was affiliated to Scientology. The results imply that data was collected from students drawn from diverse religious backgrounds and therefore provided insights into how the religious values influenced their perception toward marriage life.

4.3 Respondents' Perception of Marriage Life

The first objective of the study sought to establish the university students' perception of marriage life. Specifically, the study focused on whether the students wished to marry, types of marriages they preferred, their perceptions on alternatives to marriage and their regard for the institution of marriage. Further, a Likert scale of 7 items was used to measure the respondents' general perception towards marriage life. On each of the items, students were required to rate whether they Strongly Agreed, Agreed, were Neutral, Disagreed and Strongly Disagreed. The five point scale was later collapsed into three: Agree, Undecided and Disagree. The findings are shown in Table 6.

Table 6

Respondents' Perception towards Marriage Life

Statement	Agree		Undecided		Disagree	
	f	%	f	%	f	%
The increasing number of divorced people and singles do not contribute to the decreasing percentage of married couples today.	47	19.0	37	15.0	163	66.0
High divorce and separation rates in our country have made me to view marriage positively.	36	14.6	32	13.0	179	72.0
Lack of material and financial possession has never contributed to family discord and marital instability in my family.	98	39.7	17	6.9	132	53.4
Marriage should not be legalized in our country.	28	11.3	16	6.5	203	82.2
Divorce should be encouraged when couples disagree.	21	8.5	19	7.7	207	83.8
HIV/ AIDS stigmatization of victims does not put fear into people hoping to consummate their marriage.	34	13.8	34	13.8	179	72.4
Prostitution should be legalized in our country to cater for those who do not wish to be committed to one partner.	29	11.7	14	5.7	204	82.6

n=247

As shown in Table 6, it is clear that marriage is highly regarded. Majority of the respondents who were 203 (82.2 %) preferred that marriage should be legalized. 207 (83.8 %) respondents disagreed that divorce should be encouraged when couples disagree while 204 (82.6%) of the respondents disagreed that prostitution should be legalized in our country. From the responses of the students in Table 6, it emerged that the students have a positive perception towards marriage as defined in this document. According to these responses therefore, it is noted that majority of the students do not value divorce nor prostitution.

4.3.1 Respondents' Perception on Whether They Wished to Marry

The respondents were further asked to state whether they wished to marry or not to marry to provide more information about their perception of marriage. Table 7 shows the responses of 206 single students who responded to this question.

Table 7

Proportion of Respondents wishing to get Married

Response	f	%
Yes	175	84.9
No	9	4.5
Undecided	22	10.6
Total	206	100.0

n=247

It is clearly evident in Table 7 that majority of students wished to marry. Only 9 (4.5%) did not wish to get married and 22 (10.6 %) were undecided. This implies that majority of university students still valued marriage life. When the respondents were further probed on why they wished to marry, they gave the reasons shown in Table 8.

Table 8

Respondents' Reasons for Wanting to Marry

Gender	Reasons for marrying	f	%
Male	Sexual satisfaction	74	56.0
	Procreation	20	15.2
	Companionship	27	20.5
	Life meaningful in marriage	11	8.3
Total		132	100.0
Female	God's plan	5	11.7
	Companionship	17	39.5
	Procreation	13	30.2
	Emotional feelings best expressed to life partner	8	18.6
Total		43	100.0

n=247

As revealed in Table 8, sexual satisfaction takes priority as one of the reasons for wanting to marry among male respondents whose response in favour was 74 (56.0 %) whereas for females they were mild about sexual satisfaction as a reason for wanting to marry. It was also interesting to note from the table that majority of the female respondents wanted to marry because of companionship that marriage provides 17 (39.5%), and procreation 13 (30.2%).

4.3.2 Types of Marriages Preferred

Both of the respondents who were married and singles were asked to state the type of marriage they preferred. They gave out the responses as shown in Table 9.

Table 9

Respondents' Perception on the Type of Marriage Preferred

Responses	f	%
Progressive marriage	5	2.0
Polygamous marriage	13	5.3
Monogamous marriage	155	62.8
Cohabitation	30	12.2
Swinging marriage	4	1.6
Single parenthood	27	10.9
Trial marriage	10	4.0
No marriage	3	1.2
Total	247	100.0

n=247

Results in Table 9 show that most students, who were 155 (62.8 %), preferred the monogamous marriage followed by 30 (12.2 %) who preferred cohabitation, 27 (10.9 %) preferred single parenthood while 13 (5.3 %) preferred a polygamous marriage. Those who preferred trial marriages were 10 (4 %), progressive marriages were 5 (2 %), 4 (1.6 %) preferred swinging marriage but 3 (1.2 %) preferred no marriage at all. The findings revealed a growing trend for embracing not only monogamous marriages but also current alternatives to marriage like cohabitation, single parenthood, trial marriage and swinging marriages. These results imply that fairly a large number of students preferred cohabitation even if the number of those who preferred single parenthood was equally high. This could be explained by the fact that many young people prefer co-habiting than committing themselves in marriage (Gethin, 2003). Gethin further argues that such people avoid getting married in order to escape from the institution's bondage.

When students were further probed on why they preferred these marriages, they gave the reasons indicated in Table 10.

Table 10

Respondents' Preference for Different Types of Marriage

Gender	Type	Reason for preference	f	%
Males	Polygamy	Avoid adultery	13	7.4
		Sexual satisfaction		
		Protection and security		
	Monogamy	Biblically supported	121	69.1
		Reduce conflicts		
		Ample time to discuss issues		
		Reduce spread of HIV		
	Trial	Try if it works if not end it	7	4
	Progressive	Avoid staying in a bad relationship	5	2.9
	No marriage	Not sure of future	2	1.1
		Religious reasons		
	Cohabitation	Avoid commitment and responsibility	23	13.2
	Swinging	Sexual satisfaction	4	2.3
Single parenthood		—	—	
Total			175	100.0
Females	Polygamy		—	—
	Monogamy	Law of God	34	47.2
		To avoid STIs		
		Not expensive		
		Easy to handle		
	Trial	To try if it works	3	4.2
	Progressive		—	—
	No marriage	To be a nun	1	1.4
	Cohabitation	Fear of responsibility	7	9.7
	Swinging marriage		—	—
Single parenthood	To avoid commitment	27	37.5	
	Not to be dominated by males			
Total			72	100.0

As shown in Table 10, most of the male respondents 121 (69.1 %) preferred monogamous marriage while the female respondents who preferred this type of marriage were 34 (47.2 %). It is also clear that 13 (7.4 %) males preferred polygamous marriage while none of the females were for it. Male respondents who were for cohabitation were 23 (13.2 %) while 7 (9.7 %) females were for it. The male respondents who preferred progressive marriage were 5 (2.9 %) while those who preferred swinging marriage were 4 (2.3%). Male respondents were against single parenthood, whereas the female respondents were against polygamy, progressive and swinging marriages. As shown in this table, monogamous marriage was preferred by a majority of the respondents citing the Law of God, fear of HIV/AIDS, to reduce conflicts through better opportunities for discussion of issues provided in a monogamous marriage, and that monogamous marriages are easy to handle.

To further assess their perception towards marriage life, all the (247) students were requested to indicate their level of agreement or disagreement on alternatives to marriage life. Table 11 shows the findings.

Table 11

Respondents' Opinions on the Alternatives to Marriage

Response	f	%
Encourage single parenting		
In agreement	35	14.1
Undecided	32	13.0
In disagreement	180	72.9
Total	247	100.0
Legalize gay marriages		
In agreement	20	8.1
Undecided	7	2.8
In disagreement	220	89.1
Total	247	100.0
Cohabiting is okay		
In agreement	43	17.4
Undecided	34	13.8
In disagreement	170	68.8
Total	247	100.0

n=247

As shown in Table 11, it is clear that many respondents 180 (72.9%) disagreed that single parenting should be encouraged. 220 (89.1%) rejected the idea of legalizing gay marriages while 170 (68.8%) disagreed that cohabiting is alright. The findings clearly show that an overwhelming majority of students dislike single parenting, legalizing gay marriages and also condoning cohabitation. Despite that, the views of the minority who were in support of single parenting, gay marriages and cohabitation cannot be ignored. However, it is clear from the table that majority of university students support marriage life which is the socially recognized, legitimized and supported union of individuals of opposite sex who together with their children seek to live together in a mutual relationship. This strong support for marriage is an indication that university students still value African culture which encourages marriage. In Africa, marriage is viewed as

a rite of passage, failure to which a person concerned has rejected the society and the society rejects him in return (Mbiti, 1969).

Mugambi (1989) concurs with Mbiti arguing that in the African tradition, no man or woman was socially recognized as a grown up without being married, no matter the age. As shown in Table 11, majority of the students rejected that gay marriages should be legalized. From the African point of view, gay marriage is wrong as expressed by the African bishops who boycotted the Lambeth Conference in Britain (Mathenge, 2008). Mathenge further notes that according to Archbishop Benjamin Nzimbi of the Anglican Church of Kenya, those who attended the previous Lambeth Conference said no to same sex marriages but those in support of it went ahead and consecrated a gay bishop. Archbishop Benjamin Nzimbi is the out gone head of the Anglican Church of Kenya and has been a sharp critic of the homosexual unions that have bedeviled the Anglican Communion worldwide in the recent past.

4.3.3 Respondents' Regard for the Institution of Marriage

The students were also required to provide views on other general issues affecting the institution of marriage that were likely to influence greatly their perceptions towards the institution such as whether marriage should be permanent, the use of sexual devices and whether marriage is becoming outdated. On each of the items, students were required to state whether they Agree, are Undecided and Disagree to provide information on how they valued the institution of marriage. With regard to whether marriage is a permanent contract or not, the responses are presented below.

Table 12

Respondents' views on whether Marriage is a Permanent Contract

Views on marriage as a permanent contract	f	%
Agree	168	68.1
Undecided	19	7.7
Disagree	60	24.2
Total	247	100.0

n=247

Findings in Table 12 show that a total of 168 (68.1%) respondents agreed that marriage is a permanent contract. This may in turn make them develop positive perception towards marriage life. Thus majority of them valued highly the institution of marriage. This is in contrast to what has been reported in developed countries such as UK and USA where 1/3 and 1/2 of every marriage ends in divorce respectively (Scott, 1990; O'Connell, 1994). This could probably be explained by the fact that many of the students were religiously inclined. Only 19 (7.7%) of the respondents had no opinion on whether marriage should be a permanent contract or not. In contrast, 60 (24.2%) respondents disagreed that marriage is a permanent contract. This regard might influence negatively their perception towards marriage life. This is a situation likely to confirm the idea that marriage is for convenience that provides companionship, social and sexual activities and domestic comfort, (Baruth & Huber, 1984) without which there should be no marriage.

The respondents were equally asked to express their opinions on whether marriage is getting outdated or not. Their responses are shown in Table 13.

Table 13

Respondents' Views on whether Marriage is Getting Outdated

Views on whether marriage is getting outdated	Male		Female	
	f	%	f	%
Agree	11	6.3	3	4.2
Neutral	7	4	3	4.2
Disagree	157	89.7	66	91.6
Total	175	100.0	72	100.0

n=247

Table 13 shows that most students believed that the institution of marriage is not outdated. Results of their views show that 157 (89.7%) males and 66 (91.6%) female students disagreed that marriage is getting outdated. The findings are contrary to what Shaw (1985) asserts that the

concept of marriage is being challenged today by young people who prefer to live together without taking marriage vows in case things do not work out.

On the emerging trend of using sexual devices, the students also expressed their feelings about it and the influence it is likely to have on marriage life. Their responses are shown in Table 14.

Table 14
Respondents' Views on Use of Sexual Devices

Views on use of sexual devices to replace partners	Male		Female	
	f	%	f	%
Agree	18	10.2	6	8.3
Neutral	5	2.9	3	7.1
Disagree	152	86.9	63	87.6
Total	175	100.0	72	100.0

n=247

Table 14 shows that a very small number of students, being 24 preferred use of sexual devices as a replacement of partners. Of those who agreed, the males were the majority, being 18 (10.2%) while the females were only 6 (8.3%). Otherwise, majority of the students, who were 152 (86.9%) males and 63 (87.6%) females were against use of sexual devices arguing that it undermines marriage. The high number of students rejecting the use of sexual devices as alternatives to marriage partners indicate that they regarded highly the institution of marriage implying that they had positive perceptions towards it.

4.4 Factors influencing University students' perception of marriage life

Objective two of this study aimed at establishing the influence of selected factors on university students' perception of marriage life. To achieve this objective, a chi-square test was run to determine the association between the variables. It is important to remember at this point that students' perception of marriage was measured using a five point Likert scale of Strongly Agree,

Agree, Neutral, Disagree and Strongly Disagree which was later collapsed into three: Agree, Undecided and Disagree. The Likert scale sought to find the students views and opinions on traditional marriage as defined in this study versus their views and opinions on alternatives to marriage life.

4.4.1 Influence of Religious Affiliation on Students' Perception of Marriage Life

One of the factors that the researcher considered to be influencing perception of marriage life is religious affiliation. The students were asked whether religious affiliation contribute to greater likelihood of marital unhappiness and instability. A chi-square (χ^2) was run on the respondents to determine this association. Detailed analysis is in Table 15.

Table 15

Influence of Religious Affiliation on Students' Perception of Marriage Life

Variable	χ^2	df	p-value
Religious affiliation	60.318*	2	.000

n=247 *Significant at 0.05

The χ^2 value of 60.318 and the p-value of 0.000 was obtained as presented by results shown in Table 15. The analysis in Table 15 shows that there is a significant influence of religious affiliation on university students' perception of marriage life ($p < 0.05$). Therefore, the null hypothesis that predicted no significant influence of religious affiliation on university students' perception of marriage life is rejected. The findings imply that, to most respondents, religious affiliation influenced their perception of marriage life. It did not matter what religion the respondents came from as they seemed to hold the marriage institution highly. This was the case, given that majority of the respondents ascribed to some religious affiliation such as Christianity, Islam, among others. These religions are opposed to alternative marriages such as gay marriage. An example of this strong position was exhibited by the African bishops' boycott of the Anglican Church conference at Lambeth in 2008 (Mathenge, 2008). Mathenge further noted that

the head of the Anglican Church of Kenya, Archbishop Benjamin Nzimbi, has been a sharp critic of gay unions that have bedeviled the Anglican Communion worldwide in the recent past.

4.4.2 Influence of Mass Media on Students' Perception of Marriage Life

Another factor that the researcher was interested in was mass media. The students were asked whether mass media influenced their perception towards marriage life. Table 16 indicates the results of the analysis.

Table 16

Influence of Mass Media on Students' Perception of Marriage Life

Variable	χ^2	df	p-value
Mass Media	154.508*	2	.000

n=247 *Significant at 0.05

The results in Table 16 indicate that the χ^2 value of mass media was 154.508 and the p-value was 0.000. Therefore, the null hypothesis that there is no significant influence of mass media on university students' perception of marriage life is rejected ($p < 0.05$). This implies that mass media influences university students' perception of marriage. These findings concur with Adams (1983) who observes that mass media often focuses on the negative aspects of marriage like marital violence and divorce. This in turn affect students' perception of marriage life as it may impress in their minds that marriage life does not matter at all.

4.4.3 Influence of Family of Origin on Students' Perception of Marriage Life

The students were also required to provide responses on whether one's family background had any influence on their perception of marriage life. A chi-square (χ^2) was run on this variable to determine this association. The results of the analysis are in Table 17.

Table 17

Influence of Family of Origin on Students' Perception on Marriage Life

Variable	χ^2	df	p-value
Family of Origin	91.461*	2	.000

n=247 *Significant at 0.05

Results in Table 17 show that χ^2 value of family of origin was 91.461 and p-value was 0.000. Therefore, the null hypothesis that there is no significant influence of family of origin on university students' perception of marriage life is rejected ($p < 0.05$). This may imply that family of origin significantly influences university students' perception of marriage life. The findings support Baruth and Huber (1984) who noted that partners are to a large extent the way they are because of what they learnt from their parents. They further noted that people who have come from polygamous families may shun marriage because of the difficulties they experienced such as unhealthy competition, poverty among others. These findings are also supported by above authors' claim that most people tend to incorporate from the family of origin what they perceived as positive and eliminate what they saw as negative.

4.4.4 Influence of Students' Education Aspirations on Perception of Marriage Life

The respondents were asked whether they preferred pursuing education after their first degree before settling down to marriage life. Table 18 shows the results of the analysis.

Table 18

Influence of Students' Education Aspirations on Students' Perception of Marriage Life

Variable	χ^2	df	p-value
Student's Education Aspirations	193.681*	2	.000

n=247 *Significant at 0.05

As revealed in Table 18, the calculated χ^2 value of 193.681 was obtained with a p-value of 0.000. Therefore, based on the observed p-value, the null hypothesis that indicated no significant influence of students' education aspirations on university students' perception of marriage life is rejected ($p < 0.05$). This shows that education significantly influences university students' perception of marriage life. It also implies that a good number of respondents prefer pursuing education before settling down to married life. These findings support Shaffer (1994) who says that many young singles are postponing marriage to pursue educational and career goals. Although Grossbard-Shechtman (2003) claims that high levels of husband and wife's education have a stabilizing effect on marriage, other studies have attributed the increase in divorce rate to women being highly educated and empowered (Stott, 1990).

4.4.5 Influence of Domestic Violence on Students' Perception of Marriage Life

The respondents were also asked whether domestic violence made them have a negative perception of marriage life. A chi-square test (χ^2) was run on this variable. The results are presented in Table 19.

Table 19

Influence of Domestic Violence on Students' Perception of Marriage life

Variable	χ^2	df	p-value
Domestic Violence	116.645*	2	.000

n=247 *Significant at 0.05

From Table 19, it is observed that the calculated χ^2 value was 116.645 and the p-value was 0.000. The analysis in this table shows that there is statistically significant influence of domestic violence on university students' perception of marriage life. Therefore, the null hypothesis that there is no significant influence of domestic violence on university students' perception of marriage life is rejected ($p < 0.05$). This implies that domestic violence is significant in influencing university students' perception of marriage life making them have a negative view towards the family institution. The findings are in contrast with Lamanna's (1988) claim that

women tolerate abuse because of childhood experience. He further says that this is because people who experience violence in their parent's home while growing up may have an increased tolerance for violence and may regard beatings as part of married life. The findings however support what O'Donovan (1992) asserts that children who have grown up in abusive homes normally develop a wrong view of marriage or become bitter and negative about marriage and may be influenced to repeat the same pattern of life that they saw in their parents or opt not to get married. Reuters (2009) covering the life of a Beijing born child of a sales merchant, concurs with O'Donovan arguing that "Wang Guiying opted not to get married until at the age of 107 when she started looking for her first husband". Reuters further adds that "this was because she grew up watching her uncles and other men scold and beat their wives and often found her aunt crying in the woodshed after an attack".

4.5 Gender Difference in Students' Perception of Marriage Life

The third objective sought to determine whether there were significant differences in the way male and female students perceived marriage life. A t-test was run on students' perception and gender. The results of this analysis are presented in Table 20.

Table 20

Analysis of Gender Difference in Students' Perception of Marriage Life

Students	N	Mean	Mean difference	Df	Sd	t-value	p-value
Males	175	20.51	.72	245	2.100	1.942*	0.006
Females	72	21.24			2.850		

n=247*Significant at 0.05

The results in Table 20 show a slight gender difference of university students' perception of marriage life. The females scored slightly higher (\bar{x} =21.24, SD=2.85) than males (\bar{x} =20.51, SD=2.1). This may imply that female respondents have a positive perception towards marriage life than male respondents. However, a second examination of the means and a t-test for independent samples (t =1.942, p <0.05) indicated essentially that significant gender difference

exists in university students' perception of marriage life. Therefore, the null hypothesis that there is no significant gender difference existing in university students' perception of marriage life is rejected ($p < 0.05$). The findings concur with Oslon and DeFrain (2000) who asserts that marriage has continued to be more important to young women than to young men. Despite the fact that more young women are seeking jobs and careers, they still value marriage and parenthood more than young men do.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the summary, conclusions and recommendations made from the study. It has also highlighted areas recommended and suggested for further research.

5.2 Summary of the Findings

Based on the objectives of the study, the following major findings were established:

- i. The female respondents have a positive perception towards marriage life than male respondents.
- ii. Mass media, student's education aspiration, religious affiliation, family of origin and domestic violence significantly influence university students' perception of marriage life.
- iii. Significant gender difference exists in university students' perception of marriage life.

5.3 Conclusions

The following conclusions were reached based on the analysis of the data in chapter four and the major findings:

- i. Students' perception of marriage life is affected by students' education aspiration. This implies that majority of the students prefer pursuing education before settling down to married life.
- ii. Domestic violence has an influence on university students' perception of marriage life. Therefore, parents should settle their differences without necessarily fighting. This is because this may affect their children who may in turn not be enthusiastic to establish intimate relationships geared to marriage.
- iii. Students' perception of marriage life seems to be affected by mass media. This shows there is need for media owners to be careful on the programmes they air on television to ensure that young adults do not watch pornographic materials that are likely to affect their perception of marriage negatively.
- iv. There was significant gender difference in perception of marriage life among university students.

- v. Family of origin significantly influences university students' perception of marriage life.
- vi. Religious affiliation seems to influence students' perception marriage life.

5.4 Recommendations

In view of the above conclusions, the following recommendations about university students' perception of marriage life can be made:

- i. The respondents have a positive perception towards marriage life, therefore marriage therapists and religious leaders should offer premarital counselling to young adults in order to equip them with skills that will help them overcome any negative perception they may have toward marriage life.
- ii. Marriage counselors should take note of the fact that marriage has continued to be more important to young women than to young men. This knowledge will be helpful to them as they counsel their clients.
- iii. Media owners should use the media as a tool to enhance positive image of marriage. The media could also control programmes that might influence attitudes that are destructive to marriage.
- iv. Marriage therapists should take advantage of the media to enhance their counseling given that mass media affects most of their clients.

5.5 Suggestions for Further Research

The study suggests that further research can be done in the following areas:

- i. This study was limited to a public university and final year undergraduate students only. It may be crucial to carry out another study in a private university to ascertain whether the findings would be different or similar to those of this study.
- ii. The study was limited to university students. There is need to carry out a comparative study between university and middle level college students' perception of marriage life.
- iii. A study that covers other public universities students' perception of marriage life could be carried out to compare the findings.
- iv. A study on young adults can be carried out outside the university to establish their perception of marriage life.

REFERENCES

- Adams, J.E. (1983). *Solving Marriage Problems*. Michigan: Zondervan Publishing House.
- Anthony, J. (1996). *Types of Counselling. A life span Development & Situational Approach*. Nagercoil: Anugraha Publications.
- Bandura, A. (1982). *The Psychology of Chance Encounters and Life Paths*. New York: Ronald Press.
- Baruth, L.G., & Huber, C.H. (1984). *An Introduction to Marital Theory and Therapy*. Monterey: Brooks and Cole Publishing Co.
- Bee, H. (1985). *The Developing Child* (4th ed.). New York: Harper and Row, Publishers.
- Berk, L.E. (1997). *Child Development* (4th ed.). Boston: Allyn and Bacon.
- Biehler, R.F. (1978). *Psychology Applied to Teaching*. Boston: Houton Mifflin Company
- Carlson, N.R., & Buskist, W. (1997). *Psychology the Science Behavior* (5th ed). Boston: Allyn and Bacon Co.
- Chauhan, S.S. (1978). *Advanced Educational Psycholog*. New Delhi: Vikas Publishing House Pvt Ltd
- Chepcheng, M.C. (2004). *Influence of Institutional Characteristics on Students attitudes toward Campus Environment: A comparative Study of Public and Private Universities in Kenya*. Unpublished Doctorial Thesis: Egerton University.
- Collins, G.R. (1980). *Christian Counselling*. Waco: Word, Incorporated.
- Cretney, S.M. (1997). *Family Law*. London: Sweet and Maxwell Limited
- Eitzen, D.S. (1989). *Social Problems*. New York: Allyn and Bacon
- Feldman; R.S. (1996). *Understanding Psychology* (4th ed.). New York: McGraw-Hill Companies, Inc.
- Gay, L.R. (1992) *Educational Research: Competences for Analysis and Application* Macmillan Publishing Co; New York
- Gethin, H. (2003, June 30). Is there a future for the trouble age-old institution? *East African Standard*, (p. 2). Nairobi: The Standard Ltd.
- Gichuki, R. (2003, 12th June-18th July). Women who love single motherhood. *Kenya Times/Saturday Trends*, (p.II). Nairobi: Times Media Group Ltd.

- Grossband-Shechtman, S.A. (2003). *Marriage and the Economy*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Hetherington, E.M., & Parke, R.D. (1999). *Child Psychology; A Contemporary Viewpoint* (5th ed.). Boston: McGraw-Hill College.
- Kathuri, N.J., & Pals, D.A. (1993). *Introduction to Educational Research*: Njoro: Egerton Education Book Series.
- Kemunto, M. (2004, November 8). Gender violence: Is it enough to pass laws? *Monday Nation/outlook*, (p. 8). Nairobi : Nation Media Group Ltd.
- Kayongo-Male & Onyango, P. (1984). *The Sociology of the African family*. New York: Longman Inc.
- Kerlinger, F.N. (1973). *Foundations of Behavioural Research*. India: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc.
- Kephart, W.M., & Jedlicka, D. (1988). *The Family, Society and the individual*. New York: Harper and Row, Publishers, Inc.
- Kimani, L. (2002, October 28). 'Quitting marriages that don't work a trendy thing'. *East African Standard*, (p. 4). Nairobi: The Standard Ltd.
- Kothari, C.R. (2004). *Research Methodology: Methods and Techniques*. (2nd ed.). New Age International Publishers, New Delhi, India.
- Kroeger, C.C., & Nason-Clark, N. (2001). *No Place for Abuse: Biblical & Practical Resources to Counteract Domestic Violence*. Illinois: Intervarsity Press.
- Lamanna, M.A. (1988). *Marriages and Families*. Belmont, California: Wadsworth, Inc.
- Lauer, R.H. (1998). *Social Problems and the Quality of Life*. New York: McGraw Hill Companies, Inc.
- Lehrer & Chiswick (1993). *Religious differences*. Retrieved March 8, 2005 from [http //tc.paper differences. html](http://tc.paperdifferences.html).
- Mathenge, O. (2008, July 31). 'Bishops still doubt move on gay clergy'. *Daily Nation* (p.9). Nairobi: Nairobi: Nation Media Grp Ltd.
- Mbiti, J.S. (1969). *African Religions and Philosophy*. Nairobi: Heinemann Kenya Ltd.
- Mbitiru, C. (2008, July 7). Anglican rift set to widen as talks open'. *Monday Nation* (p.19). Nairobi: Nation Media Grp Ltd.

- Melgosa, J. (2000). *Parents and Adolescent*. Spain: Editorial safe Liz.
- Mugambi, J.N.K. (1989). *African Heritage and Contemporary Christianity*. Nairobi: Longman Kenya Ltd.
- Mugenda, O.L., & Mugenda, A.G. (1999). *Research Methods: Quantitative and Qualitative Approaches*. Nairobi: Acts Press.
- Mutua, K. (2004, August 1). Wedding after 18-year wait. *Sunday Nation*, (p. 2). Nairobi: Nation Media Group Ltd.
- Munguti, K., & Kamaara, E. (1999). *Situation Analysis of the Family in Kenya: An Annotated Bibliography*. Nairobi: Association of African Women for Research and Development.
- Myers, D.G. (1986). *Psychology* (1st ed.). New York: Worth Publishers, Inc.
- Nation reporter (2004, October 11). How poverty turns love into battle of the sexes. *Daily Nation*, (p. 4). Nairobi: Nation Media Group Ltd.
- Nicky, G. & Sila L. (2000). *The Marriage Book*. London: HTB Publications.
- Nock, S.L. (1992). *Sociology of the Family* (2nd ed.). New Jersey: Prentice Hall, Inc.
- O'Connell, H. (1994). *Women and the Family*. London & New Jersey: Zed Books Ltd.
- O'Donovan, W. (1992). *Biblical Christianity in African Perspective*. Ilorin: Kwara state, Nigeria Evangelical Fellowship.
- Olson, D.H., & Defrain, J. (2000). *Marriage and Family: Diversity and Strengths*. London: Mayfield Publishing Co.
- Otindo, B. (2003, June 30). Today's marriages will thrive only when there is honour and rest. *East African Standard*, (p. 8) Nairobi: Standard Media Group Ltd.
- Otieno, D. (2002, November 13). African cultures endorse gender bias. *East African Standard Midweek magazine*, (pg iv) Nairobi: Standard Media Group Ltd.
- Oyaro, K. (2004, November 17). Why do they prefer the streets? *Wednesday Nation*, (p. 1). Nairobi: Nation Media Group Ltd.
- Papalia, D.E., & Olds, S.W. (1992). *Human Development* (5th ed.). New York: McGraw-Hill, Inc.
- Pala, O. (2003, Oct.4-10). Beaten up! You deserve it. *Saturday with the Nation*, (p. 10). Nairobi: Nation Media Group Ltd.

- Reuters (2009, January 13). Woman seeks first husband. *Tuesday Nation* (p. 26). Nairobi: Nation Media Group Ltd.
- Schaefer, R.T. (2001). *Sociology* (7th ed.). New York: McGraw-Hill Companies, Inc.
- Schaefer, R.T., & Lamm, R.P. (1992). *Sociology* (4th ed.). New York: McGraw-Hill, Inc.
- Sdorow, L.M. (1995). *Psychology*. (5th ed.). New York: McGraw-Hill Publishing Co.
- Shaffer, D.R. (1994). *Sociology and Personality Development* (3rd ed.). California: Brooks /Cole Publishing Co.
- Shaw, I. (1985). *Christian Family Matters*. Bryntirion: Evangelical Press of Wales
- Sroufe, L.A., Cooper, R.G., & DeHart, G.B. (1992). *Child Development* (2nd ed.). New York: McGraw-Hill, Inc
- Stott, J. (1990). *Issues Facing Christians Today*. London: Marshall Pickering
- Tischler, H.L. Whitten, P., & Hunter, D.K. (1983). *Introduction to sociology*. U.S.A: CBS College Publishing
- Worthington, E.W. (1989). *Marriage Counselling: A Christian Approach to Counselling Couple*. Downers Grove, Illinois: Intervarsity Press
- Wright, H.N. (1981). *Marital Counselling: A Biblical, Behavioural and Cognitive Approach*. New York: Harper and Row, Publishers, Inc.

APPENDICES
APPENDIX A
STUDENTS' QUESTIONNAIRE

Dear respondent,

RE: Research Study on Influence of Selected Factors on University Students' Perception of
Marriage Life

I'm a postgraduate student at Egerton University, Njoro Campus pursuing Master of Education Degree in Guidance and Counselling. I'm conducting a research study on the above and you have been selected to take part in this study. I would be grateful if you would assist me by responding to all items in the attached questionnaire as honestly as possible. Your response will be treated with utmost confidentiality since the test items are designed for this research only. DO NOT WRITE YOUR NAME ANYWHERE IN THE QUESTIONNAIRE.

Thanks in advance.

Alice Wairimu Omondi

(Researcher)

SECTION I: Students' Demographic Information

1. Name of Faculty _____
2. Age: 20-24 25-30
3. Your sex: Male Female
4. Marital status: Married Single Other (specify)
5. Religious affiliation: Islam Protestant Roman Catholic Other (specify) _____
6. Family of origin: Single parent family Nuclear family Polygamous family
Blended family (family formed after remarriage of either spouse and includes children of the previous marriage) Other (specify) _____

SECTION II:

Instructions: Tick only once per question or fill in the blanks where choices have not been given.

7. Which is your living arrangement while not in campus?

- Live alone
- With parents
- With partner
- With others

8. Regarding education and marriage, which of these statements represent your view?

- Marry first and then pursue education
- Continue with education and then marry once I'm through with education
- I think education is enough for me, I do not have to marry
- Not decided

9. Do you think bride price is a way of oppressing men and women and denying them their human rights?

- Yes
- No
- Undecided

Give reasons.

10. If not married, would you like to get married?

- Yes
- No
- Undecided

Give reasons for wanting to do so.

SECTION II:

Instructions: Tick only once per question or fill in the blanks where choices have not been given.

7. Which is your living arrangement while not in campus?

- Live alone
- With parents
- With partner
- With others

8. Regarding education and marriage, which of these statements represent your view?

- Marry first and then pursue education
- Continue with education and then marry once I'm through with education
- I think education is enough for me, I do not have to marry
- Not decided

9. Do you think bride price is a way of oppressing men and women and denying them their human rights?

- Yes
- No
- Undecided

Give reasons.

10. If not married, would you like to get married?

- Yes
- No
- Undecided

Give reasons for wanting to do so.

11. Which type of marriage do you prefer?

- Progressive marriage (having a series of spouses one at a time without difficulty of divorce proceedings)
- Polygamous marriage
- Monogamous marriage
- Trial marriage
- Others (specify) _____

Give reasons for your preference.

12. Which current alternative to marriage are you in favour of?

- Cohabitation (come we stay)
- Single parenthood (out of choice)
- Gay marriage (same sex marriage)
- Swinging marriage (sexual exchanges with other couples)
- Trial marriage
- None of the above

13. Did you ever observe fighting between your parents?

- Never
- Seldom
- Sometimes
- Often
- Very often

14. What should couples do to an unhappy marriage?

- Separate
- Hang on and wait for spouses to change
- Divorce
- Seek marriage counselling
- Not sure
- Talk amongst themselves

15. What is your parent(s) marital status?

- Married and living together
- Separated
- Divorced, both single
- Divorced, both remarried
- Divorced, one single, one remarried
- Others (specify) _____

16. State your parents or guardians level of education.

- Primary level
- Secondary level
- College
- University
- No formal education

17. Which of the following best describes your parents or guardians occupation?

- Peasant farmer
- Professional e.g. doctor, lawyer, engineer
- Major business
- Industrial worker
- Others (specify) _____

18. Single parenting should be encouraged in our country.

- Agree
- Undecided
- Disagree

19. Marriage should not be considered a permanent contract between a husband and wife

- Agree
- Undecided
- Disagree

20. Marriage is an out of date institution

- Agree
- Undecided
- Disagree

21. Religious affiliation does not contribute to greater likelihood of marital instability

- Agree
- Undecided
- Disagree

22. Mass media has influenced my perception of marriage life positively.

- Agree
- Undecided
- Disagree

23. Domestic violence has made me to have a negative perception of marriage life.

- Agree
- Undecided
- Disagree

24. Gay marriage should be legalized in our country

- Agree
- Undecided
- Disagree

25. Family of origin has no influence on my perception of marriage life.

- Agree
- Undecided
- Disagree

26. Cohabitation is an okay way of life.

- Agree
- Undecided
- Disagree

27. One does not need to get married because of availability of electronic devices in the market for sexual satisfaction.

- Agree
- Undecided
- Disagree

28. I prefer pursuing education after my first degree before settling down to married life

- Agree
- Undecided
- Disagree

Tick appropriately what best describes your views about marriage.

Strongly agree [SA] Agree [A] Neutral [N] Disagree [D] Strongly disagree [SD]

	Questions	SA	A	N	D	SD
29	The increasing number of divorced people and singles do not contribute to the decreasing percentage of married couples today.					
30	High divorce and separation rates in our country have made me to view marriage positively.					
31	Lack of material and financial possession has never contributed to family discord and marital instability in my family.					
32	Marriage should not be legalized in our country.					
33	Divorce should be encouraged when couples disagree.					
34	HIV/ AIDS stigmatization of victims does not put fear into people hoping to consummate their marriage.					
35	Prostitution should be legalized in our country to cater for those who do not wish to be committed to one partner.					

Thanks for responding to the items.

APPENDIX B

Table for determining needed size of a randomly chosen sample from a given finite population of N case such that the sample proportion, S, will be within, + or - 0.05 of the population proportion, with a 95% level of confidence.

Population size (N)	Sample size (S)
20	19
50	44
90	73
150	108
220	140
360	186
500	217
800	260
1200	291
1800	317
2200	327
3000	341

Source: Kathuri, N. & Pals, (1993), P.55. Introduction to Education Research, Njoro: Egerton Education Book Series.

APPENDIX C
RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION

MINISTRY OF SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

Telegrams: SCIENCE TEC", Nairobi

Fax No.
Telephone: 318581
When replying please quote



JOGOO HOUSE
HARAMBEE AVENUE
P. O. Box 9598-00200
NAIROBI
KENYA

MOST 13/001/37C 96/2

2nd March 2007

Omondi Alice Wairimu
Egerton University
P.O. Box 536
NJORO

Dear Madam

RE: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION

Following your application for authority to carry out research on, *'Influence of Selected Factors on University Students Perception of Marriage and Family Life: A Case of Egerton University, Njoro'*

I am pleased to inform you that you have been authorized to carry out research in Egerton University for a period ending 31st December 2007.

You are advised to report to the Vice Chancellor, Egerton University before embarking on your research project.

On completion of your research, you are expected to submit two copies of your research report to this office

Yours faithfully


M. O. ONDIEKI
FOR: PERMANENT SECRETARY

Copy to

The Vice Chancellor
Egerton University
P O Box 536
NJORO

APPENDIX D
LETTER OF INTRODUCTION

Alice Wairimu Omondi
P.O.Box 12731
Nakuru

20th March 2007

To Selected Lecturers
Egerton University
P.O: Box 536
Egerton, Njoro.

Dear Sir/Madam,

RE: LETTER OF INTRODUCTION

My name is Alice Wairimu Omondi, a postgraduate student at Egerton University, Njoro Campus pursuing Master of Education Degree in Guidance and Counselling. I am conducting a research study on: *Influence of selected factors on University Students' Perception of marriage life at Egerton University, Njoro Campus, Kenya*.

I would like to kindly, request you to allow me to collect data from your final year undergraduate students. Your students' responses will be treated with utmost confidentiality and will be used strictly for academic purposes.

Thanks in advance for your favourable response.

Yours faithfully,

Alice Wairimu Omondi.

cc.

Faculty of Engineering and Technology
Faculty of Agriculture
Faculty of Science
Faculty of Environment and Resources Development
Faculty of Education and Community Studies
Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences