

DEPARTMENT OF PHILOSOPHY AND RELIGIOUS STUDIES

**FACTORS LEADING TO PREMATURE DEATHS OF MALE YOUTHS
IN PREDOMINANTLY ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH KARŪRI
VILLAGE, KĪAMBU COUNTY: CHRISTIAN LIBERATION APPROACH**

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REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AWARD OF A MASTER OF ARTS
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STUDENT'S DECLARATION

I, the undersigned, declare that this is my original Study and has not been submitted to any College or University for academic credit.

Information from other sources and my main respondents has been duly acknowledged.

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

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DEDICATION

I would like to dedicate this Study to my loving husband Rūgendo Kamakia and our dear children, who have tirelessly given me every necessary support during my studies. My prayer is that they be blessed abundantly.

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS OF TERMS

ACS	-	African Christian Studies.
AFER	-	African Ecclesiastical Review.
AMECEA	-	Association of Member Episcopal Conference in Eastern Africa.
CCC	-	Catechism of the Catholic Church.
CHSS	-	College of Humanities and Social Sciences.
CUEA	-	Catholic University of Eastern Africa.
DB	-	Dictionary of the Bible.
DBT	-	Dictionary of Biblical Theology.
DNT	-	Dictionary of the New Testament.
IDB	-	Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible.
JKML	-	Jomo Kenyatta Memorial Library.
NJB	-	New Jerusalem Bible.
NJBC	-	New Jerome Biblical Commentary.
NRSV	-	New Revised Standard Version.
NCE	-	New Catholic Encyclopedia.
RCC	-	Roman Catholic Church.
SCCs	-	Small Christian Communities.
TDNT	-	Theological Dictionary of New Testament.

DEFINITION OF TERMS

African Christian Theology: It is a serious reflection on Christianity from the African context (T. T. Tshishiku).

Church: The community of those who have committed themselves to the Person and cause of Jesus Christ and who bear witness to it as hope for all men and women; essentially linked to the Redeemer and Savior... a community which forms a comprehensive community with others (H. Küng 1995).

Common Priests: The disciples of Jesus who by incorporation into the Church through Baptism and Confirmation are empowered to propagate and witness the Good News to all with the support and guidance of the Clergy.

Culture: The ensemble of meanings and significations, values and models, underlying or incorporated into the activity and communication of a human group into the activity and regard by it as a proper and distinctive expression of its human reality (M. C. Asevedo).

Feminism: It is both a coordinated set of ideas and a practical plan of action, rooted in women's critical awareness of how a culture controlled in meaning and action by men, for their own advantage, oppress women and dehumanizes women (J. W. Conn).

Feminist Agenda: It is a new theological reflection and investigation propagated by women liberation theologians which focuses on hermeneutical questions like: How do we interpret what is seen as male interpretation of the Bible? Is the experience of women more than a mere corrective for the Christian context? Is it not also a starting point and a norm? In what sense can liberation feminism serve as part of a Biblical hermeneutic? (H. M. Conn).

Inculturation: It is a process of evangelization by which the Christian life and message are assimilated by a culture in such a way that not only are these life and messages expressed through the items proper to this culture but they come to constitute a principle of inspiration as well, and eventually a norm and a power of unification that transforms, re-creates, and revitalizes that culture. It connotes a relationship obtaining between faith and culture(s), which are realities that reach and embrace the totality of the human life and person, on the individual and communitarian plane (M. C. Asevedo).

Interculturation: It implies a vital exchange between and among cultures. It is an essential dialogue between cultures in doing and living theology as an after-effect of our world becoming a global village and, indeed, the essence of Christianity as both missionary and cultural.

Liberation Theology: It is a theology which does not stop with reflecting on the world, but rather tries to be part of the process through which the world is transformed. It is a theology which is open- in the protest against trampled human dignity in the struggle against the plunder of the vast majority of people, in liberating love, and in the building of a new, just, and fraternal society- to the gift of the Kingdom of God (G. Gutierrez).

Ministerial Priests: These are ordained Church Pastors/Priests whose fundamental duty and obligation is to be Christ to all in offering Sacrifice of Mass and shepherding by virtue of the Sacrament of Holy Orders.

Salvation: A constant transforming process and grace-full reality of divinization, conversion and re-conversion with everlasting happiness in the heaven of eschaton as the goal made possible by objective redemption and realized freely in subjective redemption, endowing one with a chance to start a fresh as one perseveres in the realm of grace which in our Diaspora situation on earth, is in great danger of being disgraced owing to sinful state, sinful deeds, sinful

situations or environment in life imbued not only with good force but also with evil forces (P. N. Wachege).

ABSTRACT

There is a challenge that the male youths are confronted with that is threatening many of them to useless and hopeless living, subjecting a considerable number of them to unfortunate premature deaths. As it currently stands in Karūri Village Kīambu County, the premature deaths of male youths is a problematic scenario that poses disturbing questions like: Why the phenomenon of parents burying their male youngsters in large numbers and not vice versa? How come this unfortunate occurrence is prevailing in an area which is predominantly Roman Catholic in faith affiliation?

This Study therefore set to investigate the factors leading to premature deaths of the male youths in the predominantly Roman Catholic Karūri Village Kīambu County using the Christian Liberation Approach. The Study employed the descriptive survey research. Purposive sampling was used to select the sample of two priests and six administrators. A sample of twenty parents and sixteen male youths was selected using the judgmental and snowball sampling method respectively. The Study employed questionnaires and structured interviews as instruments for primary data collection. Secondary data was collected from various relevant sources. Descriptive analysis was used to analyze the data. This Study is guided by two theories i.e. mediation theory of L. Boff and C. Boff as well as redaction criticism theory propagated by Biblical scholars like G. Bornkamm, W. Marsen and E. Kasemann.

A key finding of the Study was that alcohol is the major cause of premature deaths among the male youths in Karūri Village while unemployment is one of the serious challenges confronting them. The Karūri family is in crisis- the role of the parents, especially the father is wanting and the youths feel unloved. The rapid social change in the society brought about by modernization has had a profound negative influence on the male youth leaving many secularized. The families in Karūri hope that the Church will accordingly devise innovative methods of youth apostolate. The Study, therefore, recommends that parents should effectively play their parenting role with the full understanding that first and foremost the male youth's upbringing ought to be carried out in the context of the family setting, since it prepares him to face the future responsibly. It is also recommended that the Church reviews Her approach to the youth ministry and that the Lay Christian get involved in the welfare of the challenged male youths in Karūri within and outside the Church to do justice to the image of the Church as the "Family of God."

CHAPTER ONE

BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

1.1 Introduction

This beginning Chapter deals with the following items: Introduction, Background to the Study; Statement of the research problem; Goal and objectives of the Study; Justification of the Study; Scope and limitations; Literature review; Theoretical framework; Research hypotheses; Methodology and lastly the Chapter's concluding remarks.

1.2 Background to the Study

Until recently in Kenya, the male youths were brought up to be a responsible lot that would take their respective positions in society. They were born, socialized and grew up with minimal distractions whether physical, mental, psychological or spiritual. Juvenile delinquency was hardly heard of. The male youths traditionally grew up to become mature men that would take care of their aged parents and usually oversaw the welfare and proper burial of their aged parents and participated fully for the common good of their respective communities.

This trend has changed over time. It can be observed generally nationwide that the male youth is now an endangered virtually helpless lot. Reason being that the mortality rate among the male youths has risen and continues to do so by the day. Moreover, their anxious restlessness, persistent dependence on their aging parents and fading virility is becoming so pronounced. Parents are now the ones burying their sons which is traditionally un-acceptable. This has become a worrying trend

particularly in areas like Karũri Village in Kĩambu Country which surprisingly is predominantly a RCC zone.

There are many sad malevolent forces and negative factors in our society today working singly or collectively to cut the life of the male youths prematurely reducing the others to existential weaklings. The worrying thing is that, if this unfortunate scenario is unchecked, the male youths will continue to live as endangered dependent species and more so in Karũri Village.

Karũri Village is not only a Nairobi suburb, multi-ethnic, densely populated but also predominantly Roman Catholic as far as faith affiliation is concerned. This is a populous mainstream Church famous for Her internationally renowned Documents and Encyclicals on family, parenting and healthy interpersonal relationships. It is also a Church whose role in schooling and education in Kenya is unparalleled. A Church with numerous well performing schools, higher institutions, hospitals, youth centers to Her credit as well as strategically built Church centers and highly educated celibate Priests like my First Supervisor Fr Prof. P.N. Wachege and Nuns throughout the country. Yet the above critical problem of the youth males is real even in Karũri Village where the RCC Parish centre is situated. All these issues provoked our kind of Study.

In addition to these, from our Biblical sourcing we learn that one of the basic Christian principles is that Jesus came that people may have life and have it more abundantly (John 10:10), but still the male youth's life more so those of Karũri Village can hardly qualify to be living fully. The Study seeks to investigate such a disconnection.

Another background factor that provoked our interest in undertaking this kind of Study is the pragmatic sympathy Jesus manifested on encountering the funeral procession of a young male, son of the widow of Nain, who the mother expected

to live to bury her as recorded in Luke's Gospel (Luke 7:11-17). As the best model of a Liberator, Jesus took the initiative empathizing with the mother as He resurrected her son to continue playing the role a son is expected to play for the good of the family in particular and the community in general. This phenomenon serves us with a strong passion to provoke especially the Christians, more so that of Karūri Village, to be thus concerned as Jesus was.

1.3 Statement of the Research Problem

If there are people in today's society who need a lot of attention, it is the youth - more so the male youngsters. Statistics show that Kenya is predominately a youth country, the so called ambitious digital generation. Despite this reality, a keen observer will be seriously disturbed by the high rate of premature deaths among the youth. A closer look at this scenario reveals a sympathetic reality that the male youths are the ones who are sadly overwhelmed by such a phenomenon. This is particularly so in Karūri Village Kīambu County. It is a locality in Kīambaa Constituency which has not only proximity to the City of Nairobi but is also densely populated, multi-ethnic and predominantly Roman Catholic in faith affiliation. Such an issue raises a great concern that merits a Study at erudition level.

Media sensational coverage and the author's experiential knowledge create awareness that male youths in Karūri Village in Kīambu County are an endangered species. It is in public domain that a considerable number of parents in this locality are burying their young male children prematurely and at an alarming rate which academics seem to wish away by neglecting to undertake a related research- a gap the Study endeavors to fill. It is, moreover, public knowledge that more and more of male youngsters are living hopeless and helpless lives and the situation is getting worse. Rather than being vibrantly and resourceful, they are increasingly a liability

not only to their respective families but also to the community and to the Nation as a whole.

Under normal customary circumstances, it is the male youths who have the honor of burying their respective parents. That is why African parents are traditionally excited to mother or father male children proudly expressing their esteemed living fascination. It is an assurance that their sons will guarantee the parents' decent proper burials while also ensuring the continuity, prosperity and harmony of the families after the departure of the parents. Yet, in places like Karūri Village in Kīambu County, the reality has it differently. The sad thing is that there is a concrete existential shift of burial roles: it is the parents burying their male youths - and in worrying numbers - instead of the customary acceptable tradition of male youngsters burying their parents. This extremely uncomfortable reversal of the above roles prompted the Study which, to our knowledge is yet to be done at a scholarly level.

What is even more striking is that a good number of the affected families are staunch adherents of the Roman Catholic Church who socialize their children into Catholicism from their childhood. This is a mainstream Church which is internationally renowned for its powerful instructions, Synodal Documents and Encyclicals on and about families' welfare and community well-being to an extent of attributing the titles like "Servant", "Institution", "Community of God" and above all, the "Family of God" to the Church. Such factors make the Study wonder whether these kind of beautiful Models of the Church¹ have become obsolete. It provokes the Study to have a kind of postmortem of the effectiveness of the pastoral undertakings by both the ministerial Priests called Pastors and common

¹ Read more about the images attributed to the Church in- A. Dulles, *Models of the Church* (New York: Doubleday, 1987).

Priests called the Laity² in this region and the implementation of above invaluable Church images. Such is the problem the Study grapples with and in light of Jesus Christ - the Liberator *per excellence*.

1.4 Goal and Objectives of the Study

The main goal of this Study is to investigate the factors leading to the premature deaths of male youths in the predominantly Roman Catholic Karūri Village using Christian Liberation Approach. The following are the specific objectives:

1. To discuss Christian Liberation Theology as a vital means for investigating the fatal challenges of male youths.
2. To identify the causes of premature deaths among the male youths in Karūri Village Kīambu County.
3. To peruse RCC doctrines and Encyclicals on and about family ministry in view of youths' service.
4. To contrast RCC instructions on family apostolate with the main items regarding premature deaths of male youths in Karūri Village Kīambu County.
5. To spell out the summary, implications and recommendations of the Study for a more useful ministry to the endangered male youths in Karūri Village and elsewhere.

² Y. Congar gives a comprehensive treatise on the role of the common Priests called the Lay people in his book titled- *Lay People in the Church* (Westminster, Maryland: Geoffrey Chapman, 1965).

1.5 Justification of the Study

There seems to be un-investigated challenges that the male youths are confronted with threatening most of them to “useless” life and “hopeless” living which subjects a considerable number of them to untimely premature deaths. This is particularly so in the predominantly Roman Catholic Karūri Village in Kīambu County. Such a problematic scenario poses disturbing questions like: Why is the phenomenon of parents burying their male youngsters and not the latter rendering such “honorable” traditional service to the former becoming the in-thing? What factors seem to be overwhelming Karūri Village male youths in this regard that society seems to wish away or ignore all together? How come this unfortunate phenomenon is prevailing in an area which is predominantly Roman Catholic in faith affiliation? How can such a mainstream Church with so many followers, numerous Small Christian Communities and renowned doctrines cum Encyclicals on and about family like *Familiaris Consortio* (The Family in the Modern World) accommodate this kind of scenario? Has the Christian invaluable vitality principal propagated by Jesus Christ that He came so that people may have life and have it to the full (Jn 10:10) become pragmatically obsolete? All these form part of the rationale for the Study.

Another justification is that, Karūri Village, owing to its dense population and upcoming permanent rental structures, qualify as a sub-town neighboring Mūchatha and Rūaka which are very first growing suburbs of the City of Nairobi. It is also interesting to note that although located at the heart of Agīkūyū land, Karūri is a multi-ethnic locality. There are diverse dwellers from various ethnic groups, many of them as tenants renting houses because of easy accessibility and good public means to the City of Nairobi and cheaper cost of living. Interestingly, the above male youths’ perils run across the ethnic groups although those belonging to Gīkūyū are the most notorious. That is another aspect that triggers and justifies the Study.

The Study is, furthermore, undertaken as a reminder to the community in general and the Roman Catholics in particular on how Jesus, the best Liberator, was so touched and deeply concerned when He encountered a woman of Nain who had buried her husband and was in the process of burying her only son who she had hoped would live to ensure her proper burial (Lk 7: 11-17). Jesus understood the pain of the grieved parent and did something about it. As Evangelist Luke records, He reacted positively towards the worrying incident without being persuaded by anybody. In this way, He exemplifies to us how we should get involved by being deeply concerned and do something to alleviate or at least minimize the pains and sorrow parents, especially in Karũri Village, are going through as this Study does. Jesus' exemplary pragmatic compassion in this regard further justifies the Study towards a contribution to the welfare of the endangered youths at least minimizing the grief of the parents and for the common good of all. The Study also aims at taking after Jesus in consoling the affected families with "...do not weep/cry..." (Lk 7:13) and restoring hope to the youngsters with "young men get up and live" (Lk 7:15) "...have life and have it to the full..." (Jn 10:10).

1.6 Scope and Limitations

The Study's focus is to investigate the factors leading to premature deaths of male youths in the predominantly Roman Catholic Church Karũri Village, Kiambu County using Christian Liberation Approach. Karũri Village was selected because it has a notorious frequent occurrence of cases of premature deaths of male youths and the situation is getting worse by the day. Karũri is regarded as a suburb of Nairobi City that is growing fast. It is multi-ethnic and is mainly RCC in faith affiliation. The population has been growing tremendously as a result of the influx of the working-class people from Nairobi coming to look for cheaper and more convenient accommodation in this area.

The Study sought to obtain information on premature deaths of male youths in Karūri Village using a sample drawn from four groups that the researcher considered best suited. The respondents included the following four groups: Parents, Youth, Priests and Administrators. Due to limitations imposed by this kind of Study, limited time availability and financial constraints bearing on this research, the Study could not cover a wider scope, thereby opting for Karūri Village hoping that in the future a wide coverage and more comprehensive undertaking will become a reality at PhD level.

1.7 Literature Review

Avery Dulles' book on the *Models of the Church*³ benefits this Study with the images of the Church that assist in knowing the nature and expectation of the Church more so in ministering. From this author, we learn these attributes of the Church namely: "The Church as Institution"; "The Church as Mystical Communion"; "The Church as Sacrament"; "The Church as Herald"; and "The Church as Servant".⁴ A shortcoming that the Study notices is that Dulles does not include the Image of the Church as "The Family of God" which is very useful for our kind of Study. Neither does the author relate the attributes to pastoral concern for the male youths as the Study does.

The Study is enriched by Benjamin Kiriswa with his assessment of the image of the Church as "Family of God."⁵ The shortcomings Kiriswa points out like that of the lay Christians being too dependent on the Clergy instead of playing their witnessing role they are entitled to by virtue of their Baptism and Confirmation provides a wakeup call for getting involved in the welfare of the challenged male youths in Karūri. Despite the enrichment, the gap in the author's work is lack of a

³A. Dulles, *Models of the Church*, (New York: Doubleday, 1987).

⁴ Ibid., pp.9-102.

⁵ B. Kiriswa, "African Model of Church as Family: Implications on Ministry and Leadership", in E. M. Ngoma (Ed.), *AFER*, June 2001, Vol.43, Nu.3, pp.99-108.

strong Biblical foundation in pointing out the positive elements and negative characteristics. The Study will fill up this gap by taking into account a related work by A. G. Msafiri.⁶

In a related work through his book *Towards a Credible African Interpretation of The Church as a Family of God*, A. G. Msafiri notes that the Church is a “household of God” (1 Tim 3:15), or part of God’s household (Eph 2:19-22). Household here is synonymous with family. From an African perspective, Msafiri explains the positive and negative implications of the family of God model. The family model is profoundly God-centered. God is central in Church’s divine origin, mission, continuity and care. God, therefore, plays the role of the father/mother of the Church just like the African parent is connected to his/her family. Such a convergence of African experience and the Church should enable Karūri parents towards deeper confidence in African Christianity. The theocentric aspect has positive implication.

A tripartite relationship and intercommunication between the three persons of the Holy Trinity demonstrates the profound inner life of the triune God, particularly family unity and the harmonious diversity. The close bond between family members and the solidarity that unites the wider family are undoubtedly important values in an African family. There is need therefore to take the attitudes and energies traditionally embodied in family relationships and to redirect them in broader perspective of present day society.

Christological – Sacramental aspect has positive implication in that the Church is the visible expression of Christ’s grace and redemption realized in the form of a society which is a sign. In many African societies Ancestors are regarded as agents of reconciliation. Traditional African-centered understanding of the family can

⁶ A. G. Msafiri, “*Towards a Credible African Interpretation of ‘the Church as a Family of God’*”, in P. Ryan (Ed.), ACS, Nairobi: CUEA, Vol.14, Nu.1, March 1998, pp.54-66.

strengthen the Christological – Sacramental dimension and roles in the African Church.

Another aspect that has positive implication according to A. G. Msafiri is the Eucharist aspect. There is a convergence in Christian Eucharistic banquet and traditional African communal meals and festivals. African values encompass hospitality and equality. The practice and concept of communal meals, festivals and get-togethers play a unitive role among members. Msafiri, furthermore, spells out the limitations of the “The family of God Model” firstly as negative ecumenical implication. He laments that the African traditional values that united the couple are steadily being replaced by newer values and lifestyles. Among others the divorce revolution, sexual freedom, consumerism, feminism and polycentrism. Secondly, it is the negative implication of an attitude towards death. He explains that feasting in funerals is one of the most serious moral problems where family rights and social justice are being violated. Despite such positive ideas, Msafiri does not deal with a specific case Study as our work does - more specifically on Karūri male youths as family of God endangered members.

P. N. Wachege is another author who enriches the Study. His book titled *Living to Die, Dying to Live: African Christian Insights*⁷, enriches the Study with a comprehensive treatise on the subject of living, death and life after this earthly living. As he himself puts it: It is a book necessitated by being confronted with a proliferation of numerous daily deaths on land, in the air, in the sea, underground...the tremendous pressure to live fully the contemporary person is subjected to tending to be overwhelming...tempting option to give up on life and, as some are already doing, readily embrace unauthentic living deviations like drug addiction, alcoholism, money-mania, criminality, exaggerated hedonistic escapism,

⁷ P. N. Wachege, *Living to Die, Dying to Live: African Christian Insight*, (Nairobi: Signal Press, 2002).

Satanic cultism and suicide as a last resort.⁸ The author also analyses different types of deaths including accidental and self-inflicted ones like those of youths actually killing fellow school mates. While appreciating that death comes to us all and, from the Christian point of reference, it is a doorway to a happy yonder life, Wachege explains that one has the duty to live well and within the community so that this event may be faced with hope, consolation and community satisfaction of a life well lived thus meriting blissful everlasting Ancestral living. He persuades the reader to demystify, de-taboo and tackle the above subject seriously but soberly thereby manifesting his sadness on the issue of premature deaths among the youths at the hands of fellow youths.⁹ On a more hopeful note, the author identifies and analyzes the requirements and consequences of living fully¹⁰. While all these benefit the Study a great deal, nevertheless, it has to be appreciated that this book though comprehensive is both speculative and general in its outlook. Our work will complement it by being concrete, existential and focusing on a particular locality for a case Study.

Kwesi A. Dickson is another writer whose reflection on the *Theology of the Cross*¹¹ enriches the Study with an African understanding of the Cross in the light of the New Testament and from an African perception. His ideas are significant to the Study from an anthropological perception of death among the Africans. In this regard, Kwesi inspires us that, for an African, the philosophy of death is as follows: Death is caused by evil; Death does not end life; Death does not sever the bond between the living and the dead; Death is an occasion for seeking more life; Death does not negate natural self-expression and Death affects the whole community. Furthermore, in his effort in Inculturating death using the above and in the light of the New Testament, Kwesi helps the Study to realize that: The Cross should be

8 Ibid., pp.30ff.

9 Ibid., pp.139ff.

10 Ibid., pp.263-321.

11 K. A. Dickson, *Theology in Africa*, (Maryknoll, New York: Darton, Longman and Todd, 1984), pp.185-199.

presented in glorious affirmation of it as that which is the basis of Christian hope; There should be stress on the fact that eating and drinking at the Lord's table is sharing in Christ's death on the Cross and also sharing in life with one another; That just as in Africa death is the door to beneficial Ancestral status, by His death Christ merits to be looked upon as Ancestor, the Greatest Ancestor, who never ceases to be one of the "living-dead"; and that just as for the African, death does not negate natural self-expression (one's own identity), so also is the theology of the Cross not basically opposed to its interpretation in African cultural terms. The Study will utilize these very good principles to address and inspire a particular case- i.e. the one of premature deaths of the male youngsters in a particular geographical setting called Karūri Village which Kwesi does not do.

Another invaluable monographs to the Study is that of Raymond F. Collins titled *Introduction to the New Testament*,¹² which assisted the Study to gain from the historical critical method of New Testament Study more so through redaction criticism as championed by scholars like W. Marxsen, E. Kasemann, H. Conzelmann, E. Fuchs and G. Bornkamm.¹³ The book provides the Study with an important tool for authentic critical sourcing from the Scriptures perusing how each author composed and arranged his material taking into account each author, his peculiar preferential purpose, his approach, his stress, and his theological inclinations. This helped in drawing relevant Biblical passages and in doing proper exegesis for the topic opted for. Despite these positive aspects, the Study noticed as a shortcoming it overemphasizes on the "historical Jesus" as if the "Christ of faith" is inferior, something the work will rectify by focusing on the witness and experience of the believers called Christians.

12 R. F. Collins, *Introduction to the New Testament*, (London: SCM Press, 1983), pp.196-229

13 Read more about this in- P.N. Wachege, CRS 202: *Introduction to the New Testament*, (Nairobi: University of Nairobi, 2010), pp.170- 180.

Another scholar that the Study benefits from is A. A. Boesak. Although his book is on South African black power theology of liberation¹⁴, nevertheless, it helps this Study in drawing out the way forward in the sense of strongly recommending to the male youths to emancipate themselves from naive approach to life, assert themselves as special people created in the image and likeness of God thereby not undermining their self-esteem. This Study is also assisted in explaining that “The search for true and authentic human identity and liberation is also to acknowledge that one’s Africanness is a God-given blessing to delight in rather than a fate to be lamented.”¹⁵In addition to this, Boesak’s book helps us to appreciate, be proud of and assert our African values. This should help the male youths accept themselves as youths gifted with respective identity, worthy history and culture as well as the talents to excel if they strive to live a disciplined life-style. The limitation is that Boesak’s book is mostly based on South Africans in their experience of apartheid oppression and exploitation while ours is situated in independent Kenya whose male youths are still dependent thus being in danger of dying before their time.

Jomo Kenyatta enriches this Study through his central document of highest distinction in anthropological literature, *Facing Mount Kenya*¹⁶, an invaluable key to the structure of the Agĩkũyũ society and the nature of the Agĩkũyũ mind before coming into contact with Europeans. He presents to us the Agĩkũyũ society that is patriarchal, and a people whose tribal organization is based on three most important factors without which there can be no harmony in the tribal activities. These factors or principles also govern the behavior and the status of every individual in the society. Firstly is the family group (*mbarĩ* or *nyũmba*), that comprises of all those that are related in blood. Secondly is the clan (*mũhĩrĩga*), which joins several families that have the same clan name. Thirdly is the system of age-grading (*riika*). Kenyatta shares the conviction that the Agĩkũyũ had a

14 A. A. Boesak, *Farewell to innocence: A Social-Ethical Study on Black Theology and Black Power*, (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 1977).

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p.40.

¹⁶ J. Kenyatta, *Facing Mount Kenya*, (Nairobi: EAEP, 2011).

worthy cultural heritage. Children were taught ideals of courtesy and diligence in traditional society. The young men were trained by their fathers at home being made ready to take up their respective roles in life as family uniters. They grew up to take care of their aged parents and finally buried them when they died. The same sentiments are shared by Fr. C. Cagnolo in his book, *The Agĩkũyũ - Their Customs, Traditions and Folklore*¹⁷. These ideas will be of great help to the Study although these two authors do not specifically deal with the perils of contemporary youth as our Study does.

Humphrey M. Waweru in his book, *The Bible and African Culture*¹⁸ shows the Agĩkũyũ people as being naturally educationists. Originally they had an informal system of education, which since has been replaced by a formal education. However, the Agĩkũyũ made an error by ignoring the informal system of education- they should have embraced both of them for instruction of their children. Although the formal system of education has firmly taken root, the Agĩkũyũ should continue with what is good in their culture such as storytelling, songs, and proverbs as these provide a rich source of African wisdom, religious beliefs, ideas, morals and warnings.

Wawerũ notes that the Agĩkũyũ community had attributes and traits that can easily be described as *umundu* (humanism) and include a sense of kinship and belonging, integration of strangers, solidarity, sympathy, compassion, patience, conformity, kindness and cooperation. He further identifies three ways in which humanism is applied in Agĩkũyũ philosophy.

i) *Kamuingi koyaga ndiri* – meaning ‘a crowd is able to lift a mortar.’

¹⁷ C. Cagnolo, *The Agĩkũyũ – Their Customs, Traditions and Folklore*, (Nyeri: Mission Printing School, 1933).

¹⁸ H. M. Waweru, *The Bible and African Culture*, (Limuru: Zapf Chancery Publishers Africa, 2011), pp.17-18, 26.

The mortar was used to prepare porridge and was believed to be one of the heaviest objects in the community requiring to be carried from one homestead to another through the help of family members and even neighbours. The proverb was used to show that the *Agĩkũyũ* needed each other all the times. In the context of this proverb, Wawerũ, argues that no one culture is self-sufficient and thus a dialogue between cultures, including that of the Bible culture is absolutely necessary.

ii) *Urutagwo mwiruti* – meaning ‘we help one who is able to help oneself.’

The proverb means that one must be able to help himself/herself in a small way before being helped in a big way.

iii) *Mugi ni mutare* – Meaning ‘the wise is advised.’

Therefore these three common and popular proverbs are the pillars of unity and in them *umundu* is fully realized and expressed. An African is never regarded as a loose entity, his being and destiny is intertwined with that of others in the community. There are always others with whom he is associated with so as to safeguard the welfare of the community.

The Study has now to concern itself with the applicability of these pillars of unity in the contemporary Karũri Village, which is multi-ethnic (other cultures) and has been influenced by modernization unlike the traditional *Gĩkũyũ* society.

Prompted by her concern about what people saw as a rapid decline in moral standards in Kenyan society, Hannah Kĩnoti in her book, *African Ethics: Gĩkũyũ Traditional Morality*¹⁹, says that the moral problem arose partly because of lack of moral guidance and the failure of what had replaced traditional African moral system. The Church had failed to create moral values that the people respected

¹⁹ H. Kinoti, *African Ethics: Gĩkũyũ Traditional Morality*, (New York: Rodopi, 2010).

and followed, and secondly, loss of respect for traditional values had created a moral vacuum that Christianity had failed to fill. She shows that the Gĩkũyũ conceived of morality as the reasonable order of things. Moral rules were obeyed because they made sense. Sanctions were meted out to the errant members of the community by human agents – the parents (peer groups, warriors, elders, kinsmen and local community) and by the supernatural agents (God and Ancestral spirits). She concludes that her Study of traditional Gĩkũyũ shows that morality and religious belief are inseparable. God was already at work in the world before Christ’s coming and that His moral law is to be found in all societies including Karũri residents. In relation to the above, Mary N. Getui in her article “*The Family, the Church and the Development of the Youth*”²⁰ advances an argument that there is need for the family and Church’s cooperation in the upbringing and training of young people, in order to make them well-equipped to face the future, of which they will be leaders. She looks at the irresponsible behavior of the young people, the African traditional family set up and how family and Church can cooperate. This was very resourceful for our Study since Karũri Village is predominantly Christian. The Study intended to complement Kinoti’s and Getui’s work by narrowing down to the case of male youths in Karũri Village.

Jürgen Moltmann is one of the most widely read theologians of the second half of the twentieth century. From his work titled *The Crucified GOD*²¹, Moltmann returns to the theology of the cross to avoid one-sided presentation of it in tradition, and comprehend the Crucified Christ in the light and context of His resurrection and therefore of freedom and hope. The Study draws liberating characteristics or elements for Karũri youths who are confronted with premature deaths. These young men’s eyes can be opened to the truth if they remember that at the center of Christian faith stands an unsuccessful, tormented Christ, dying in

²⁰ M. N. Getui, “*The Family, the Church and the Development of the Youth*”, in J.N.K. Mũgambi... (Eds.) *The Church in African Christianity*, (Nairobi: Acton Publishers, 1998), pp.71-87.

²¹ J. Moltmann, *The Crucified God*, (New York: Harper and Row, 1974), p. 4.

forsakenness. God raised this crucified Christ and made Him the hope of this world. Similarly Karūri male youths, need to identify themselves with Christ and gather courage and outlive the challenges facing them, through focus, hard work and endurance. The Cross of Jesus becomes a constant source of inspiration and reminder for the wretched youths that God loves them passionately, just like He did with Christ by resurrecting Him from the dead.

In yet another of his books titled *Theology of Hope*²², J. Moltmann notes that hope strengthens faith. The Study narrows his general exposition by asserting that youths can become inspired visionary leaders with passion for the possible. It is possible to get engaged in active discipleship through holistic approach both spiritual and physical.

The Study is informed by J. N. K. Mugambi's book titled *African Christian Theology-An Introduction*,²³ that all education should be for liberation if education is thought of as extending beyond the classroom. The Church then will be involved in the process of liberation because its role will be to help in the alleviation of physical suffering as well as to guide it's following towards spiritual fulfillment. The Church needs to be versed as a 'school' where people learn how to realize fuller human dignity. The pastor is not only a spiritual shepherd, he is also a leader. As a good shepherd leads his flock to green pastures, so should a priest lead, as a facilitator, his congregation towards a better life here on earth.

In their book titled *Theologies of Liberation and Reconstruction*,²⁴ I. M. T. Mwanse & E. K. Kamaara observes that J. N. K. Mugambi proposes theology of reconstruction as a leading paradigm for African Christian theology in the twenty-first Century. He advocates a theology of reconstruction, based on the process of

22 J. Moltmann, *Theology of Hope*, (London: SCM Press Ltd, 1967), pp.22-23.

23 J. N. K. Mugambi, *African Christian Theology-An Introduction*, (Nairobi: EAEP Ltd, 1989), p.111.

24 I. M. T. Mwanse & E. K. Kamaara, *Theologies of Liberation and Reconstruction*, (Nairobi: Acton Publishers, 2012), P.213.

social reconstruction which invites every member of the society to participate in establishing a new social order more aligned with God's intention for humanity. His concern is that in the recent past, liberation and Inculturation have been taken as the most "basic concepts for innovative African Christian theology" though the African context has changed from colonialism and apartheid to liberation, freedom and independence. Mugambi sees reconstruction not as something impersonal or non ecclesiastical; rather it starts with the personal aspect and then moves on from ecclesiastical territory to other secular levels. The Church is expected to take a leading role in the reconstruction and still not be immune from inward renewal, transformation and reconstruction.

Although the Mugambi paradigm was initially propounded with reference to African Christian theology in general, the Paradigm is relevant for the reconstruction of male youth's life in contemporary Karūri Village.

The New Constitution of Kenyan promulgated in the year 2010 comes in handy. Under the Bill of Rights Chapter 4, Part 2, Article 29 (c), every person has the right to freedom and security of the person which includes the right not to be subjected to any form of violence from either public or private sources. Chapter 4, Part 3, Article 55 (b) and (d)²⁵ states that the State shall take measures including affirmative action programs, to ensure that youths have opportunities to associate, be represented and participate in political, social, economic and other spheres of life and that they are protected from harmful cultural practices and exploitation. This transformed Constitution allows the cultural practice of taking beer. In the traditional Gikuyu society this was done in social ceremonies like those of initiation rites. They did drink responsibly then but today the youths of Karūri Village abuse such rights. Hence the seeming conflict between the spirit of the

²⁵ *The Constitution of Kenya, Revised Edition*, (Nairobi: The National Council for Law Reporting, 2010), pp.25, 37-38.

law in this regard and the distorted implementation more so on the side of male youths as the Study investigates.

1.8 Theoretical Framework

This Study is guided by two theories namely, Mediation Theory and Redaction Criticism Theory.

Mediation Theory is propagated by the two Latin American brothers who are famous for Christian Liberation Approach to theology. These are Leonardo Boff and Clodovis Boff. They do it in their book titled *Introducing Liberation Theology*.²⁶ This theory gives three major aspects for a worthwhile involvement in a Christian liberation theology which are: Socio-analytical aspect; Hermeneutical aspect; and the Practical aspect also called Praxis. The Social-analytical mediation helped the researcher to insert oneself into the situation of male youths in Karūri Village to get first-hand information with regard to their existence, their lifestyle, the challenges they face and then make a critical social analysis as to why they are what they are. In this useful social setting, the researcher was equipped with relevant related data in socio-religio-cultural economic areas.

Hermeneutical mediation was an engagement relating the data acquired to the will of God as found in the Bible. It was an exercise that utilized the findings in the above stage that provides the actual socio-religio-cultural economic conditions of the male youths in Karūri Village who are in dire need of being liberated. In this way, it assisted the Study to have a theological reflection thus distinguishing it from sociology since the Study intended to be mainly theological. The Praxis mediation inspired the Study to come up with a viable way-forward as the

²⁶ L. Boff and C. Boff, *Introducing Liberation Theology*, (New York: Maryknoll, Orbis Books, 1987), pp.24-39.

contribution of the work. In this concluding stage of liberation theology, the practical outcome of the Study for the welfare of the challenged Karūri Village male youths was drawn resulting in intended transformation for better. This last liberation stage was therefore, to provide practical solutions to help transform the male youths in Karūri Village for better.

The other theory that guided the Study is the Redaction Criticism Theory. It is propagated by Biblical scholars like G. Bornkamm, W. Marxsen, E. Käsemann and H. Conzelmann as documented and explained by Raymond F. Collins in his book titled *Introduction to New Testament*.²⁷ This theory is employed to help the Study source from the Bible in a scholarly way. It has to be appreciated that we get the will of God – for instance, in finding out that it is not the will of God to have pre-mature deaths and hopeless life-style among male youths in Karūri Village and elsewhere - from this major Source of Christianity giving the Study a comprehensive Christian guidance. The theory, which is within historical critical method of Biblical Study, helped the researcher to draw inspirations from the Scriptures at an academic level for the good of the challenged male youths in Karūri Village and elsewhere.

1.9 Research Hypotheses

The main hypothesis of this Study is that the model of Christian Liberation Theology is an effective means for a profound investigation into factors leading to fatal challenges of male youths in the predominantly RCC Karūri Village and the resulting way forward.

The following are the specific hypotheses:

²⁵R. F. Collins, *Introduction to New Testament 2nd Edition*, (London: SCM Press, 1992), pp.196ff.

1. Christian Liberation Theology is a vital means for investigating the fatal challenges of male youths in Karūri Village and elsewhere.
2. Identifying the causes of premature deaths among the male youths in Karūri Village Kĩambu County is indispensable for effective youths' ministry.
3. There is a need to peruse RCC doctrines and Encyclicals on and about family ministry in view of fruitful youths' apostolate.
4. It is important to relate RCC striking instructions on family apostolate with the main items regarding premature deaths of male youths in Karūri Village Kĩambu County.
5. The summary, implications and recommendations drawn from the Study will be useful for a more effective apostolate to the endangered male youths in Karūri Village and elsewhere.

1.10 Methodology

This sub-section focuses on the research design, the target population, sample selection and the techniques that were used in gathering and analyzing the data.

1.10.1 Research Design

The research was conducted through the survey research design. A survey research design is a research where a researcher wishes to understand a population by studying a part of it. It provides description of some part of the population and explains events as they are²⁸.

²⁸ W.Y. Oso & D. Owen, *A general Guide to Research Proposal and Report*, (Nairobi: The Jomo Kenyatta Foundation, 2009), p.75.

Detailed primary data was obtained on personal facts, attitudes, behaviors and opinions of respondents. This enabled the researcher to examine, analyze and explain the challenges facing the male youths in Karūri Village.

The survey design was selected for the Study because the Study intended to gather in-depth primary data to gain knowledge about the factors leading to premature deaths of male youths in predominantly RCC Karūri Village, Kīambu County.

The researcher wanted to collect data that cannot be directly observed such as the opinion of the parents, youth, priest and the administrators.

1.10.2 Target Population

The Study population comprised the parents, the youth, the Clergy and the local administrators in Karūri Village, Kīambu County.

1.10.3 Sample Selection

The sample was selected from the four as follows: The researcher selected a total of twenty parents – five of deceased youths, seven RCC members, seven non Church going and one elder. Further, sixteen youths, two priests and six administrators - three chiefs, one Officer Commanding Police Station (OCS) and two Ministry of Health officers were also selected.

The researcher relied on the judgment of the priest-in-charge and the senior chief to select the parents for the sample. The sample of the priests, the administrators and the elder were selected by the researcher depending on who the researcher felt would make the highest contribution to the Study using purposive sampling. Those selected were heads of the institutions as these had more knowledge in the

subject area and in one way or the other directly handle youth issues in Karūri Village. The youths were selected using the snowball sampling method where those whom the researcher connected with first referred to others and so on until the required number was achieved.

1.10.4 Data Collection Techniques

The Study used structured interview together with the questionnaire in gathering data on the Study topic. The primary data was captured from the respondents by way of questionnaires, interviews and personal interactions. In this undertaking Boff's Mediation Theory consisting of insertion cum social-analytical aspect, hermeneutical aspect and praxis was of great practical use. The researcher also engaged the Redaction Criticism Theory of historical critical method of Biblical Study as propagated by E. Kasemann, G. Bornkamm et.al. This assisted the Study in doing proper exegesis with reference to the relevant Biblical scriptures that concerned the Study. The Study benefited by using insights from these Bible scholars as useful means for a lawful sourcing from the Gospel. Secondary data was collected from JKML, Wachege's Little Eden library, Hekima College library and Church Doctrines and Encyclicals.

1.10.4.1 Questionnaires

Questionnaires were used to obtain data from the parents and the youth. Open and closed ended questions were used. In his book titled "*Research Methodology: Methods and Techniques*"²⁹, C.R. Kothari, assert the questionnaire has fewer biases in data presentation and can also be used over a large sample. A questionnaire is also easy to administer, cheaper and relatively confidential.

²⁹ 29 C. R. Kothari, *Research Methodology: Methods and Techniques*, (New Delhi: Eastern Limited, 1985), p.52.

1.10.4.2 Interview

The guided interview technique was used in gathering data from priests and administrators. This enabled the researcher to gather detailed and in-depth information. Although interviews are more expensive, they allow flexibility for probing questions and clarification by either the researcher or the interviewee. The interviews were administered by the researcher herself.

1.10.5 Data Analysis

The questionnaire was cross checked for completeness and any clarification made with the respondents before the researcher picked it from the respondents. Data was sorted to minimize errors, coded, entered into the computer and processed using Microsoft Excel for analysis.

1.11 Chapter's Concluding Remarks

This beginning Chapter dealt with the following items: Introduction; Background of the Study; Statement of the research problem; Goal and objectives of the Study; Justification of the Study; Scope and limitations; Literature review; Theoretical framework; Research hypotheses; Methodology and lastly the Chapter's concluding remarks. This Chapter has laid the foundation for launching deeper into the Study. The next Chapter will deal with Christian liberation theology as a vital means for investigating the fatal challenges of male youths in Karūri Village.

CHAPTER TWO

CHRISTIAN LIBERATION THEOLOGY AS A VITAL MEANS FOR INVESTIGATING THE FATAL CHALLENGES OF MALE YOUTHS

2.1 Introduction

On the basis of the reflections in Chapter One, this Chapter examines Christian liberation theology as a vital means for investigating the fatal challenges of male youths in Karūri Village under the following subsections, namely: The nature of Christian liberation theology, Biblical insights sourced through redaction criticism; Foundations of moral theology; Changes affecting youth development and Chapter's concluding remarks.

2.2 The Nature of Christian Liberation Theology

According to P. N. Wachege in his monograph, *African Women Liberation – A man's Perspective*³⁰, liberation theology is known as one of the strongest theological trends in our contemporary society useful for restoring authenticity. The origin of liberation theology is mainly Latin American theologians who have oriented theologians all over the globe. Such scholars/theologians include G. Gutierrez, J. Sobrino, L. Boff and C. Boff among others. Globally, and in terms of content liberation theology is one and the same all over with regard to point of departure which is a situation of un-freedom and the goal which is freedom. This include underlying themes like emphasis on justice and peace, God's preferential option for the poor; righteous anger at the conditions of slavery; hermeneutic suspicion on interpreting Scriptures and appreciating the capacity of the people to liberate themselves- like in our case Karūri youths. Theologizing in this manner is

³⁰ P. N. Wachege, *African Women Liberation – A man's Perspective*, (Nairobi: Industrial Printing Works, 1992), pp.25-35.

known by different names in different parts of the world – in Europe is known as Political theology, in North America as Black Power theology and in South Africa as Black theology.

L. Boff gives the definition of Liberation theology as nothing other than the theological moment of liberation of Christian faith when it undertakes to consciously transform a world in a situation of dependence on the basis of the Gospel.³¹ Boff brings out three moments/mediations in liberation theology which are very important on how to do authentic liberation theology- in our case, one geared towards handling the un-freedom situation of Karūri male youths resulting in uncomfortable number of premature deaths so as to come up with way forward that will help to correct the disturbing situation and assist them to live in freedom and fully at that. The term mediation is used because the four stages represent means or instruments of the theological process. The three stages work and relate together. These are:

1. The moment of insertion and social analysis:

The theologian experiences the real life situation first hand of the oppressed and this he achieves by inserting himself into the situation. Social – analytical mediation operates Karūri in the sphere of the world of the oppressed. It tries to find out why the oppressed are oppressed.

2. Hermeneutical Mediation

This stage operates in the sphere of God's word. It tries to discern what God's plan is for the poor. Once the theologian has understood the real situation of the oppressed, he has to ask what the word of God and the

³¹ L. Boff, quoted in J. G. Goulet, "*Liberation Theology and Our Annual Plenary Assembly of the National Missionary Council*", (Aylmer, Quebec, 17 October, 1982, Mimeo), p.1.

Christian Tradition has to say about the situation. The effort is however geared towards getting the right way forward. In this stage discourse is formally theological.

3. Practical Mediation

This aspect of pastoral action operates in the sphere of praxis. It tries to discover the courses of action that need to be followed so as to overcome oppression in accordance with God's plan.

In Karūri Village, there is a demographic group - the male youth that is confronted with the challenge of premature death. This death is preceded by numerous challenges faced on daily basis which no one seems to offer solutions. Faced by this kind of a problem, these youths can be described as the poor or the oppressed. The researcher's identification of this group as a deserving lot and choosing to investigate the causes of these premature deaths afforded the researcher the opportunity to use Boff's theory in guiding the investigation. A step-by-step application of the Mediation Theory was followed, firstly by the researcher inserting herself into the situation of the oppressed - the male youth. Using data collection instruments the researcher was able to identify the cause of the premature deaths. The researcher then reviewed numerous theological doctrines aimed at understanding the will of God concerning the situation of the poor, by looking at the word of God and the Tradition. The Study finally discovered the courses of action that need to be followed so as to overcome oppression in accordance with God's plan for the Karūri youth.

L. Boff also explains the three levels at which liberation theology is done as follows:-

1. Popular level

This is the level where the ordinary people, out of oppression, cry out for help. The dire situation of Karūri male youth is calling for attention.

2. Pastoral level

At this level the pastors/Clergy hear the cry of the poor, and react by addressing their plight through sermons, catechesis, pastoral letters, conferences etc.

3. Professional level

Through critical erudition, the scholars explicate the liberation theologian's response through journals, monographs or workshops. All these levels as Boff explains are intertwined in that they have for their common denominator faith that transforms history thereby affecting freedom and authenticity.

This Study, though purely carried out for academic reasons, contains recommendations to which the researcher hopes will be useful in finding a solution to the challenge of premature deaths of Karūri male youths.

G. Gutierrez, who is referred to as the father of liberation theology, qualifies liberation theology as a liberating transformation of the history of mankind. In his book, *A Theology of Liberation*,³² he explains that the term liberation theology carries three meanings:

1. Emancipation from sin and restoration/re-establishment of life in Christ

³²G. Gutierrez, *A Theology of Liberation*, (Mary Knoll, New York: Orbis Books, 1973), p.36.

2. Freedom from oppressive conditions e.g. social-economic, political and cultural ones, and
3. Re-establishment of human authenticity.

The youth of Karūri need the restoration of their human authenticity since they are created in the image and likeness of God meaning that they have dignity. Every kind of habits they acquire that contributes to their early death indicates that they live in a state of sin thereby requiring emancipation from sin and reestablishment. One's death outside Christ is in vain.

P. N. Wachege³³ goes on to explain that every liberation theology must capture three important themes that are outlined below:

1. God's preferential option for the poor
2. A critical questioning of the prevailing interpretation of the Bible i.e. Biblical hermeneutics
3. Stress on justice, peace and reconciliation.

Paulo Freire³⁴, an influential writer and thinker on education is the master of the following concepts:

1. "Conscientization": A process by which the learner advances towards critical consciousness;

³³ P.N. Wachege, *African Women Liberation – A man's Perspective*, (Nairobi: Industrial Printing Works, 1992), p.33.

³⁴ P. Freire, *Education for Critical Consciousness*, (New York: Continuum Publishing Company, 1998), pp.9-10.

2. The "Culture of Silence": In which dominated individuals lose the means by which to critically respond to the culture that is forced on them by the dominant culture.

Education for Critical Consciousness is the main statement of Freire's revolutionary method of education. It takes the life situation of the learner as its starting point and the raising of consciousness and the overcoming of obstacles as its goals. For Freire, man's striving for his own humanity requires the changing of structures which dehumanize both the oppressor and the oppressed.

Paulo Freire in his monologue, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*,³⁵ which is a critical work in liberation theology and radical education, condemns the "culture of silence" among the illiterate poor peasants, and sees it as deterrence to their attaining their freedom. He however sees the importance of pedagogy in eliminating this culture. *Pedagogy of the City*³⁶ is an important look at education and the urban poor, and a continuation of the experiments in education of *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. Freire describes the everyday struggles, political as well as administrative, fought in the urban schools of Sao Paulo during his 10-year tenure as Minister of Education. He sees impediment in the school management system towards conscientization of the oppressed. The curriculum is developed in a way to uphold the rich oppressor of the weak.

Freire theory of conscientization helps our Study in informing the Karūri society that it has to strive for its own re-establishment of its dignity. For the challenge of premature deaths of the male youths in Karūri Village to be fully addressed, the culture of silence and living in denial should be confronted, since it a deterrent to their attaining freedom. Through this Study the researcher wishes to educate for critical consciousness, the Karūri parents and the male youths about challenges

³⁵ P. Freire, *Pedagogy of The Oppressed*, (New York: Peguin Books, 1972), p.10.

³⁶ P. Freire, *Pedagogy of The City*, (New York: Continuum Publishing Company, 1993), p. 41.

that lead to the premature death of the youths with the aim for their emancipation. Freire also offers invaluable insights into the importance of Karūri male youths pursuing erudition advancement as a necessary weapon towards curbing challenges they face.

J. N. K. Mugambi from the point of view of an African Christian theologian defines liberation as a word which suggests a process whose goal is the realization of freedom. Jesus was not concerned only with the salvation of the soul but also spent much time and effort alleviating the physical suffering of people and restoring the eroded dignity of individuals.

The Ministry and teaching of Jesus emphasis that focus on the physical aspect of reality without a metaphysical or theological basis can only lead to self-deception. Thus for Him liberation includes both a physical and a spiritual dimension. When he healed the sick, he also forgave the sins. In his healing Ministry there was an intimate connection between the elimination of physical illness and the restoration of spiritual wholeness hence the Church cannot achieve a comprehensive Ministry following the footsteps of Jesus, unless it combines both spiritual and temporal concerns for the restoration of broken humanity. The Church must therefore be involved in ‘liberation’ as well as ‘salvation’.

A Christian Ministry which preaches the salvation of soul, but ignores the physical condition of those whom the preaching is directed, is at best irrelevant, and at worst useless. For it would imply that those who are suffering on earth today should be content with their suffering, expecting compensation in heaven where their ‘souls’ are supposed to go. Man has a right to live in dignity here on earth, irrespective of whether or not he will go to heaven after death. Human quest for ultimate happiness demands both the physical and the metaphysical

dimensions. The theological dimension gives us hope where we would otherwise be desperate.³⁷

2.3 Biblical Insights Sourced Through Redaction Criticism

In Raymond F. Collins book titled *Introduction to the New Testament*³⁸, E. Kasemann and G. W. Marxen, Bornkamm and H. Conzelemann gives the Study an opportunity by grounding it in historical method of New Testament Study through Redaction criticism, also known as Composition criticism or Editorship criticism. This is a method of analyzing each Gospel as a literary composition looking into the background of each author, their use of language and arrangement of their material, the aim of their writing and the emphasis of each.

Redaction criticism theory enriches the Karūri male youths with the knowledge that they can use the principles from this theory to successfully source from the Bible useful insights that becomes a tool in their emancipation from sin and re-establishment of their human authenticity.

Mark records more of Jesus' miracles than sermons. Jesus is clearly a man of power and action, not just words. Jesus did miracles to convince the people who He was and to confirm to the disciples His true identity – God. This is important in that it shows the male youths that He can save anybody regardless of their present or past situations. His miracles of forgiveness bring healing, wholeness, and changes lives of those who trust in Him. In doing all this Jesus sought to restore human life and dignity.

³⁷ J. N. K. Mugambi, *African Christian Theology-An Introduction*, (Nairobi: EAEP Ltd, 1989), pp.108-110.

³⁸ R. F. Collins, *Introduction to The New Testament*, (London: SCM Press, 1983), pp.196-229.

Jesus suffered violent death in His assignment of redeeming mankind from sin. He is liberator per excellence, who the youths should look up to having the confidence that Jesus is also fighting for them. Those that lead the struggle for the liberation of the male youths should emulate Jesus as the model of the most exemplary Liberator.

Mark records more accounts of healing and life restoration by Jesus. In these healing accounts it is worth noting that most of the oppressed people were men. Mark 9:14-28, Jesus healed a demon possessed boy and in John 7:11-17, Jesus raised a widow's son from death. This should inspire the Karūri male youths to do a clear Biblical exegesis from their point of view. Since time immemorial men did depend on divine intervention for whatever had challenged their human authenticity.

Jesus great concern and preferential treatment for the poor is self telling. In many cases he clashed with the Pharisees about healing on a Sabbath. He demonstrated that the poor needed to be minded about in season and out of season (John 5: 16-17). Jesus also brought salvation to those the society had condemned like Zacchaeus – the people murmured that Jesus cannot be a guest of a sinner. The Karūri Village male youth, being people that suffer on daily basis contempt from neighbors and general public, this should greatly appeal to them.

2.4 Foundations of Moral Theology

Alexander Lucie – Smith contributes a lot to this Study through his book *Foundations of Moral Theology*³⁹. He quotes a passage from Galatians 5:16-26, which is a moral passage, dealing with how to behave and how not to.

³⁹ A. Lucie-Smith, *Foundations of Moral Theology*, (Nairobi: Paulines Publications, 2006), pp.34, 35-36, 71.

“I say then, live by the Spirit and you will certainly not gratify the desire of the flesh. For the flesh has desires against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; these are opposed to each other, so that you may not do what you want. But if you are guided by the spirit, you are not under the law. Now the works of the flesh are obvious: Immorality, Hatred, Rivalry, Jealousy, Outbursts of fury, Sorcery, acts of Selfishness, Dissensions, Factions, and occasions of Envy, Drinking bouts, Orgies and the like. I warn you as I warned you before, that those who do such things will not inherit the Kingdom of God. In contrast the fruit of the Spirit is Love, Joy, Peace, Patience, Kindness, Generosity, Faithfulness, Gentleness, and Self-control. Against such there is no law. Now those who belong to Christ have crucified their flesh, with its passions and desires. If we live in the Spirit, let us also follow the Spirit. Let us not be conceited, provoking one another, envious of one another.”

Saint Paul gives two lists, one of virtues (things to be done) and one of vices (things to be avoided). A virtue, Alexander says, is a habitual way of acting well; the more we act in this way, the easier it becomes. As, by contrast, is an evil habit which may also become second nature to us.

Aristotle sees the virtue as the mean between two extremes of behavior: thus the virtue of courage is the happy medium between the vices of harshness on one hand and cowardice on the other. Moderation in all things was taken as the watchword. The four principle virtues according to Aristotle and St. Thomas are Fortitude, Prudence, Temperance and Justice; one cannot have one without the others as they are all interlinked. These four are the foundation upon which Faith, Hope and Charity grow⁴⁰.

⁴⁰ Ibid., pp.36-38.

The Old Testament explores a lot on the issues of morality. For instance, the Garden Story explains what it means to live in a state of sin. By state of sin one means a state of alienation from God and from oneself. In other words, we are at once removed from our true selves, our true lives, which are lives meant to be lived in communion with God. The Garden Story is purely in human terms about nostalgia for a lost childhood, a lost happiness, a lost innocence. Therefore though the Eden story seems very naive in tone, it is in fact profoundly existential. This Bible story tells the Karūri male youths that human beings are meant for God and a communion with Him, and that without God the youths are lost in the world. The first moral lesson is that God created man for Himself, but man has lost Him and so man is restless until he is reunited with God, hence need for the liberation of Karūri male youth.

The second thing is that since it is a story about sin, it gives understanding to what sin is and is not. Sin can be understood as a breaking of a command. The lord God gave man this order “You are free to eat from any of the trees of the garden except the tree of knowledge of good and evil. From that tree you shall not eat; the moment you eat from it you are surely doomed to die” (Gn 2:16-17).

Alexander explains that there is a natural fit between the human nature and the law; law is not something alien to human nature but rather the two are tailored to each other. Human beings, by keeping the law, ensure their own happiness and the law of God is the best way to achieve that goal. They have a natural affinity with good. That good exists and it is not some sort of illusion. That there is a moral order that is independent of human thinking.⁴¹

⁴¹ Ibid., p.71.

Gerardo Castillo, an educationist of the school of education at the University of Navarre, through his book, *Teenagers and their Problems*⁴², educate parents on the issues which must be of prime concern to them, concerning their youth. He says that if the parents got to know their children, then the parents can understand the youth's behavior and whether it is a passing phase or not, and in this case the parents of Karūri Village.

Castillo, in explaining the behavior of today's youth, observes that the youth of today is not radically different from his predecessors, but neither is he exactly the same. It is mainly the society that has changed. "However we must also agree with other writers that social change has had serious repercussions not only on the forms of external conduct but also in the character of today's youth."⁴³ Today's youth is complicated and poses new problems especially in his relationship with adults.

2.5 Changes Affecting Youth Development

Castillo outlines the five phenomena that have arisen in the society in which humans live: they are:-

1. Precociousness in physical development: Nowadays adolescents are somatically precocious and this manifests itself mainly in earlier sexual maturity. Physical growth is earlier and on average tends to be greater than in previous ages. This physical precociousness is not usually paralleled by a corresponding maturity. This imbalance is brought about by the higher living standards of today - better food, hygiene, medical services, etc. and certain environmental factors such as reading and television, play an important part. This imbalance between somatic and mental maturity may be prejudicial to

⁴² G. Castillo, *Teenagers and their Problems*, (Nairobi: Focus Publishing Limited, 2010), pp.77-84.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, P.80.

the harmonious development of the youth's personality. Besides, parents and teachers may be impressed by the child's premature physical growth and mistakenly think that there is bound to be a direct proportion between his physical body and his psychological development.

2. Belated adulthood: The late development of adulthood together with the earlier onset of puberty means the period of adolescence is considerably longer than previously. The crisis is therefore prolonged and two achievements in particular, which could have been expected between the ages of seventeen and twenty namely freedom with responsibility and the choice or setting up of an ideal, are now delayed.
3. Group consciousness excludes adults: Young people have set up their own society, which is outside the society of adults through group consciousness.
4. The influence of mass media: The youths of today are better informed than their predecessors ever were. The press, cinema, radio, television, and internet offer a continuous barrage of news, opinion and comment. Much of this chaotic information exploits, for commercial purposes, the weaknesses of the teenage personality, the desire to escape, their vulnerability to suggestions from others, their emotional stress and the weak control they have over their imagination, their will or immediate desires and impulses.
5. Effects of social change: The society is changing and in continual evolution. It can be witnessed that there is loss of a large number of the spiritual and moral values which in earlier periods gave meaning to human life; people have experienced the deterioration of the family, consequently today's society does

not respond to needs and aspirations of the youth. Youths have no one to copy from any substantial values, they have no role model.⁴⁴

2.6 Chapter's Concluding Remarks

The introduction to this Chapter advocated a position to examine Christian liberation theology as a vital means for investigating the fatal challenges of male youths in Karūri Village under the following subsections, namely: Introduction; The nature of Christian Liberation theology; Biblical insights sourced through Redaction Criticism; Foundations of moral theology; Changes affecting youth development and Chapter's concluding remarks. This Chapter provides a link to tackle the next Chapter which deals with the causes of premature deaths among the male youths in Karūri Village, Kĩambu County.

⁴⁴ Ibid., p.80-87.

CHAPTER THREE

CAUSES OF PREMATURE DEATHS AMONG THE MALE YOUTHS IN KARŪRI VILLAGE, KĪAMBU COUNTY

3.1 Introduction

The previous Chapter discussed Christian liberation theology as a vital means for investigating the fatal challenges of male youths in Karūri Village. Having done this, the Study endeavors to explore the causes of premature deaths among the male youths in Karūri Village in the following manner: Introduction; Death; Purpose of death; Challenges facing the male youths of Karūri Village; General public's view of the male youths; The parents' parenting role; Church's contribution; Government's role in youth affairs; Causes of premature deaths among the male youth, Suggested measures to reduce the impact of the challenges faced by the youth and the Chapter's concluding remarks.

3.2 Death

Death is the cessation of all biological functions that sustains a living organism. Humanity's awareness of its mortality and the nature of death in society has been a concern for religious traditions and of philosophical enquiry, which includes belief in resurrection as associated with Abrahamic religions.

*The Dictionary of Biblical Theology*⁴⁵ defines physical death as irreversible cessation of bodily functions (Rom 6:23, Heb 9:27) but occasionally the gradual weakening of physical powers (2Cor 4:12). Spiritual death describes man's natural alienation from God, his lack of responsiveness to God, or his hostility to

⁴⁵ *The Dictionary of Biblical Theology*, (London: Geoffrey Chapman Publishers, 1993), P.114.

God because of sin (Gn 2:17, Mt 8:22, Jn 5:25-25, Rm 6:23). Death has a presence and is experienced by every man. It creates discomfort in people around those who experience it, (Gn 49, 50:1). No one can run away from death, it is something that everyone should envisage for himself since he also will see death (Ps39; 49, Lk 2:26, Jn 8:51). By all means death is a bitter thought for those contented with their earthly lives. Hezekiah pleaded with God for more days to live, (2Kin 20:2f). Death is the common lot of mankind, having been pronounced on men as a result of Adam's sin. What is dust returns to the dust, (Gn 3:19).

Death is inevitable but a large proportion of individuals die before their time. One could argue that any death before the average life expectancy age is premature, and many people hope to live longer. A premature death occurs when a person dies before reaching an expected age. In Kenya this age would be determined by the average life expectancy rate which was 61.84 years by the end of 2013 according to World Health Organization⁴⁶.

Death strikes human beings in diverse ways: sickness, accident, judicial, extra judicial, alcohol & drugs, murder and genocide. P. N. Wachege⁴⁷ identifies and clearly articulates various types of deaths.

3.3 Purpose of Death

In Christ, the promises of Scripture find their realization. Christ's death was not an accident (Mk. 8:31), but meant death to sin as Rm 6:10 shows "The death He died, He died to sin once and for all: but the live He lives, He lives for God". He willed to take on Himself our mortal nature in order to free us from the sway of death.⁴⁸

⁴⁶ World Health Organization, <http://www.who.int/countries/ken/en>, 2013.

⁴⁷ P. N. Wachege, *Living to Die, Dying to Live*, (Nairobi: Signal Press Limited, 2002), pp.109-215.

⁴⁸ *The Dictionary of Biblical Theology*, (London: Geoffrey Chapman Publishers, 1993), P.115.

The first purpose of death is “death to life”. This dying with Christ is, in reality a dying to death itself when man was captive of sin, meaning to be dead (Col 2:13). This means man has returned from death and is now alive. This death gives spiritual life. Secondly bodily death takes on a new meaning for Christians. The Christian dies for the Lord just as He lived for him.

Elisabeth Kübler-Ross, from a psychiatrist’s point of view says that, “it is inconceivable for our conscious to imagine an actual ending of our life on earth – we can only be killed. Death is associated with a bad act, a frightening happening. Something that itself calls for a retribution and punishment. Man fends himself from death because he cannot pretend that he is safe. His attitude is to think that death is possibility for others but not him or his loved ones”. Kübler-Ross looks at the attitude of man towards death and explains, “Psychologically man denies the reality of his own death and do believe in his own immortality”⁴⁹. Departure of a loved one brings about worries and concerns. There is feeling of loneliness and resentment.

In the light of this, the role of religion in changing times comes into focus. In the olden days, belief in God was unquestionable. People believed in a life after death which would relieve them of their pain and suffering. In heaven, there would be a reward depending on the courage, grace and destiny on how one carried oneself. But science and technology has contributed towards easing pain and suffering thereby providing quick fixes. This has rendered man’s suffering meaningless and therefore not calling for reward. With this change also the belief of being rewarded as a result of suffering here on earth, has long changed thereby causing suffering to lose meaning. With this change, fewer people believe in death after life. This is in itself a denial of one’s mortality. It follows that if there are no rewards in heaven, then suffering has lost its purpose. People now take part in

⁴⁹ E. Kübler-Ross, *On Death and Dying-What the Dying Have to Teach Doctors, Nurses, Clergy and Their Own Families*, (Simon and Schuster, 2003), p.14.

Church activities for socialization purpose. This deprives the Church of its former purpose of firstly to give hope and purpose in a hopeless situation and secondly an attempt to understand and bring meaning to otherwise unacceptable painful occurrence in life.

3.4 Challenges Facing the Male Youths of Karūri Village

The youths respondents (89%) identified lack of employment as the major challenges they are facing. Insecurity and lack of education were identified as the other challenges at 4% and 7% respectively. This is in contrast with the opinion of the parents who feel that the biggest challenge facing the youths is indiscipline and irresponsibility followed by abuse of drugs including alcohol and lack of employment.

The parents involved in the Study identified the following as the challenges that face the male youth: indiscipline and irresponsibility (20%), drug abuse including alcohol (16%), lack of employment (16%), financial constraints (12%), lack of role model (12%), bad company and peer pressure (12%), lack of education (4%), lack of quality time with parents (4%) and others at (4%).

The respondents from the administration (42%) identified indiscipline and irresponsibility as the major challenge facing the youths followed by alcohol at 17%, crime at 17%, drug abuse at 8%, diseases at 8% and unemployment at 8%.

3.4.1 Unemployment and Idleness

Majority of youths in Karūri idle around due to what they call lack of jobs. An idle mind is a devil's workshop. Because of being idle, they engage in alcohol consumption, drug abuse, and immoral activities leading to HIV/AIDS and sexually transmitted diseases. The local vigilante groups factor, also easily

influence the youths because of this idleness. This behavior is also to quite a large extent fueled by peer pressure.

Many youths would like to resume normal productive lives but accessibility to rehabilitation centers is very limited and again, the fact that they are jobless becomes a stumbling block to positive change.

The major challenges facing Karūri male youths can be blamed largely on the fact that they lack employment, thus exposing them to engage in alternative ways of using their time at still a young age. It is hard to secure employment mainly because of lack of appropriate education and lack of jobs in the country, and also the fact that they don't have the necessary skills. The youths hang out in groups and because of peer pressure; those with good morals are corrupted, and soon get into alcohol, drugs, crime etc. Quite a number of those that are deceased got their morals corrupted through peer pressure.

Joblessness has pushed some male youths to the transport industry where they work mostly as *matatū* touts. The industry is to some extent known to be controlled by vigilante groups. Both the jobless and the idle youths are inducted into being group members and on recruitment they are expected to collect levy for the illegal groups. Most end up being hunted by police and jailed and/or kill each other because of vested interests.

Another challenge faced by the male youths is that of lack of information on available opportunities even for casual jobs and guidance on best options to take. One 25 aged man lamented that the local leaders don't share any information with them when opportunities arise. Concerning the recently launched KShs. 6 billion youth fund, they are in the dark.

3.4.2 Lack of Education

The Study found out that a number of male youths in Karūri, after attaining their Kenya Certificate of Primary Education, or Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education, don't advance their studies mostly because of lack of school fees. For those who proceed beyond primary education, many have to go outside Karūri as there are few boys' secondary schools in the area.

The problem is compounded further by lack of adequate education facilities within Karūri for the male youths like Village polytechnics.

3.4.3 Quality Time with Parents, Peer Pressure, Indiscipline and Irresponsibility

The parents themselves identified lack of spending quality time between themselves and their sons as one challenge that the youths have to contend with. The reality of the absent father and drunkard father creates void for a father figure in mentorship and a role model for majority young men to enumerate. Given that most youths indicate the father is their role model then, his absence leaves a gap that is sometimes filled by the peers. The Mother has to work for family support and therefore has to leave for her business place early and come in late - thus having no quality time with the son/s.

Parents of male youths in Karūri feel that they are faced with a serious challenge in raising up their male youths because of internal and external forces. They assert that the Karūri male youths have a know-it-all attitude brought about by ignorance. They do not regard much the parental counsel or see the need to be guided into adulthood, leaving the parents to watch them helplessly as they veer off the correct path to their own destruction. Quite a number do not want to take any responsibility at home, but still expect parental support. Even those who are lucky to get parental guidance are not keen on it. The parents blame this on peer

pressure and the negative effects of semi-urban environment. Some male youths beget children outside wedlock which they are not able to take fatherly responsibility for.

3.4.4 Financial Constraints

Some youths idle around the *matatũ* (public transport vehicle) terminus, mostly waiting for an opportunity to work as a *matatũ* conductor. Some are recruited into the illegal groups to collect illegal levy from *matatũs* plying specific routes. This means that already the individual is in illegal operation and has to be vigilant where law enforcers are concerned. They get executed by police or get killed by their colleagues out of internal strife due to vested/competing interests within the group.

3.4.5 Insecurity and Crime

Insecurity is also a major challenge for the male youth. It involves being murdered, mugged and knocked down by vehicles, police assault and mob justice. The proximity of Karũri to Nairobi has a negative influence on the male youth. According to the officer commanding Karũri Police Station, some youths are involved in crime in the city while making Karũri their hideout.

The above mentioned factors are contributors towards making parenting of the male youths in Karũri difficult. The behavior of the present male youths of Karũri Village is very different from those from the previous generations, largely because of today's social changes which are not only technical advances and material conditions but also in the sphere of ideas and values.

3.5 General Public's View of the Male Youths

3.5.1 The Parents

When asked their opinion on what the public thinks of the youth, 22% of the parents responded that the public sees the male youths as unreliable, 22% said that the public views them as a reflection of their parents and 22% of parents indicated that the public sees the youths as having reached a point where they are unredeemable. Another 17% of the parents indicated that the public views the youths as undisciplined & irresponsible while 6% indicated that the public views the youths as part of the insecurity experienced in the area. In fact the parents pointed out that the public fears the youth. However 11% of the respondents felt that the public views the youths as people with good virtues.

3.5.2 The Administration

Twenty nine percent (29%) of the administrators that took part in the Study felt that the public views the youths as having lost direction while 14% of the respondents think that the public views the youths as unreliable. 14% of the administrators indicated that the public views the youths as uneducated and an equal percentage felt that the public views the youths as part of, if not, the cause of insecurity in the area. Fourteen percent (14%) of the administrators felt that the public has ignored the youths while another 14% felt that the public sees the youths as an impatient lot looking for quick results.

The police, the chiefs and the medical personnel all agree that the public views the youths as uneducated, not admirable, lost direction, impatient and want quick results and lack creativity. In short, the public views the male youths as a reckless lot within the community, people that are on their own path because they have

refused counsel. They too agree with the parents that the youths are contributors of the insecurity in the area. The public does not seem to care about the plight of their young men though they are well aware of the situation. In the present circumstances because the results sought for by the youth do not seem to be achievable fast enough, thus leading to frustration and hopelessness which may explain the reasonable occurrences of suicide cases and alcohol consumption.

3.5.3 The Clergy

The Roman Catholic Parish Church in Karūri is well established with three presiding Priests and two Catechists, holds a membership of 4,000 and conducts two services (Mass) on one Sunday. The Clergy who took part in the Study felt that the public views the youths as lacking self awareness and that the society has put emphasis on girl child leaving the boy child somehow neglected. This is because by nature the girl appears more vulnerable than the boy.

The RCC Parish Karūri Catechist would like to see a youth with good behavior guided by moral principles that are enshrined in the Catechesis of the Catholic Church. They should be patient in life. The male youths are engaged in life threatening activities probably thinking that they are speeding to their prosperous life.

The general public thinks that the youths are totally lost and a reckless lot who constantly cause concern to the rest of the members of the community. It is clear that the public does not like the male youths and on average they associate them with all bad things, thus the use of words such as “bad people” to describe them. The Roman Catholic Church in Karūri is concerned that the society has ignored the male youths and sees the need for their liberation from the woes surrounding him.

3.6 The Parents' Parenting Role

There was a unanimous agreement by Clergy and administrators that the parents are not playing their parenting role properly. This section explains the findings of the Study obtained from the respondents when asked the question, 'in your opinion, have the parents played their parenting role properly?'

3.6.1 A Family-in-Crisis

The findings from the Study strongly point to a Karūri family that is in crisis. The general and overwhelming consensus is that parents of the male youths have not played their role rightly in their upbringing. They have left it to teachers and the Church while they are busy doing business or engaged in other activities. The local area police commandant explained why the family in Karūri is nearly broken down. The parents leave early in the morning to attend to their day's activities, and the sons also go about their own activities usually unguided. No one seems worried what the other one is doing. They later meet in the evening, and the cycle continues.

Society has turned its face the other way and behaved as if this male youth's problem doesn't exist within it. Long gone are the days when a child was corrected by the older in society. The Karūri community blame parents for failing in parenting duty, taking no social responsibility themselves to become advisors of these male youth. According to the Karūri police commandant, even parents now live in denial of their own sons' evils. They shield them from correction with the full knowledge that they are using drugs or are involved in other kind of crime.

Parenting role is not made easier by the reality that a significant number of homesteads are headed by single mothers or widows that shoulder the burden of

supporting the family single handedly. There is also another category of families, headed by a father that is absent in that alcohol and/or drugs have made him useless in performing his fatherly duties. The sons cannot look upon him for spiritual, financial or psychological support. In some cases the male youths, inherit the drinking habit from the alcoholic father. Most youths pointed out that the fathers are their role models. Other fathers have sat pretty relegating their responsibility of mentorship to teachers, pastors and the wider community. One 3rd year college student expressed the desire for those conducting this Study to occasionally meet with the youths of Karūri in an effort to offer any necessary help since the situation is dire.

It is worth noting here that, generally the wives do not have much respect for their husbands, however on the other hand husbands have proved irresponsible. Most sons wish that the parents can work as a team for the sake of the family development. Obviously this kind of an environment has led to what the youths are calling “stressful life”. The home is therefore not warm a place to groom their talent. According to US Department of Health and Human services, Children thrive when parents provide not only affection, but also respectful communication and listening, consistent rules and expectations, and safe opportunities that promote independence. Successful parenting fosters psychological adjustment, helps children succeed in school, encourages curiosity about the world, and motivates children to achieve.⁵⁰ Parents matter a lot because when parenting is at its best, children thrive. Indeed, the vast majority of children reach adulthood ready to make their way in the world.

Barry Goldson and Janet Jamieson (*Youths Justice*)⁵¹ observe that indeed, the improper conduct of parents is identified as one of the principal causes of juvenile

⁵⁰ <http://www.childwelfare.gov/can/factors/knowledge.cfm>.

⁵¹B. Goldson and J. Jamieson, *Youths Crime, the 'Parenting Deficit' and State Intervention: A Contextual Critique*. <http://www.yjj.sagepub.com>, 2002.

delinquency by the first public inquiry into youths' crime, therefore proclaiming without hesitation that neglect of parental authority, improper conduct, disproportionate severity, undue indulgence, permitting absence from school, weakness, laxity of morals and other deficits combine to cause delinquency.

3.6.2 The Parents as Mentors of and Role Models for the Male Youths

Most youths (70%) indicated that they are mentored by their parents especially the father and 30% indicated that they are mentored by other people like the elder brothers, grandmother and uncles. This was collaborated by the parents themselves when answering the question - who mentors the male youths in your family? Fifty five (55%) of parents indicated that it was the father who mentors the male youth, 30% indicated it is the mother and 15% others.

Forty one percent (41%) of the youths indicated that their role model within the family was the father, the big brother at 29%, the mother at 24% and the uncle at 6%. When the youths have a challenge requiring a male figure to assist, they turn to the father (43%), big brother (29%), mother (7%), wife (7%), uncle (7%) and grandmother (7%).

From the Study it can be concluded that overall a father figure is desired by the male youths in Karūri Village. He is the person that the youths consider as the most appropriate role model within the family and the desired mentor irrespective of their absence and irresponsibility or otherwise. Although the mother is ranked second to the father in view of mentorship and role modeling the male youth has a stronger relationship with the mother.

3.6.3 Youth-Parent Relationship

When the youths were asked to describe their relationship with their parents, a whopping 75% said the relationship is very good, 0% said it is good, 13% said it is satisfactory while another 13% said it is poor. When asked to rate the relationship between them and their mother a significant 81% said their relationship is very good, and 19% said it was satisfactory. No respondent said the relationship was poor. Regarding the relationship with their fathers, 69% said it is very good, 25% said it was poor, 6% said it was satisfactory and none said it was good.

Although the research found that the relationship between youths and their parents and especially the mother is strong, the youths suggested that the relationship could be improved if; the family stood together in unity when confronted by issues (36%), family provided financial support to them (29%), they got into gainful employment (14%), there is love between the parents (24%) and they acquired education (7%). The high percentage of youths suggesting that the relationship could be improved if the family solved issues together and if there was more love between the parents points to another finding that there is little love within the family.

3.6.4 Mandatory Roles of the Parent

The youths were clear on what area they need their parents to support them on without fail. They mentioned parental care, love and moral support at 50%, guidance & counseling at 25%, financial assistance at 13%, education at 6%, and another 6% said they do not require any parental support.

It is apparent that the youths' expectations of their parent, parental care, love and moral support rank highly. The Study also found out that parents do not spend

ample and quality time with their male youths as they are busy with their businesses and other activities. There is also an assumption that the male youths are more able to wade through life issues than girls. Consequently this is partly how the male youths in Karūri misses out on the valuable moral teachings of life and gives him the opportunity to think that he is not loved.

The Study found out that a considerable number of parents earn a monthly income of between KSh1, 000 to KShs 30,000 with most earning less than KShs 2,000. They argued that this is hardly enough to meet the family needs such as education, food and other basic needs and as a consequence the youth's education has suffered greatly.

Many parents informed the Study that they study the Bible together with the family members. Fifty percent of the youths however, responded that they do attend Church and they even questioned the value in going to Church given that their Church attending peers also face similar challenges like them. The research also found out that two of the youths who died in 2012, were active Church members who held responsibilities in the Church. The causes of their deaths were lifestyle related.

Going by the above it is apparent that the parents are unable to meet all the expectations of the youth. Since they are living in a harsh suburban environment that is financially demanding, one can understand the reasons why the parents have a hard time dividing their time between work and the family. However the needs discussed here are key in laying the foundation of the total development of youths, and therefore the parents cannot be excused from their duties.

It can be drawn from the findings that the youths really need or miss the attention of the parents. This was raised by over 50% of the youths begging the question;

Are the parents of Karūri Village adequately equipped to provide parental care, love and moral support to their male youth?

3.7 Church's Contribution

The RCC in Karūri believes that she is making a reasonable contribution in the community as far as male youths are concerned. The youth is a recognized group within the Church. About 100 of them are active in the youth's programs run by the Church. The teachings of the youth are for holistic development. The Gospel is preached and is expected to create awareness that choosing good things leads to life and choosing evil things leads to death. This prepares the youth to make informed decisions. The Catechist based at the Church explained that the activities by the Church benefit the youth who are Church members as well as those around Karūri.

3.7.1 Youths Programs Sponsored by the Church

The youths identified sports, choir and music, guidance and counseling as the programs sponsored by the RCC in Karūri with 57% of them pointing that sport is the major activity followed by choir and music (15%), guidance and counseling (14%) and other activities (14%).

According to RCC Clergy, the Church has the following programs for the youth:-

1. Guidance and peer counseling - comes in as a reaction to a crisis - meaning it is not preventive
2. Festivals and games - most common activity is music and football. This gives the youth an opportunity to develop their talent
3. Educational seminars and motivational programs

4. Programs on behavioral change, maturity, drug addictions, social networking and peer counseling.

The youths pointed out that the programs are not adequate and that some of them are not aware of some of the Church initiated programs especially guidance and mentorship. Many were categorical that the Church ought to set up vocational and technical education facilities such as youth polytechnics to equip them with skills like cookery, carpentry, tailoring, metal work and masonry. A parent of a deceased male youth, complimented findings of this Study by sharing his advice to the Church leadership on the need for the Church to lay more emphases on the plight of the youths and specifically the male youth, and do so without delay.

Thirty percent (30%) of the parent's pointed out that the Church contributes more to the youths through guidance and counseling more than any other program followed by youths seminars and spiritual nourishment at 25%. Interestingly a significant percentage of the parent respondents (25%) felt that the Church is not doing much.

It is worthy of note that the youths pointed out that outside the Church, football was still the main activity they engage in at 44% followed by volleyball at 19%. This is actually a reflection of what the youths are able to find outside the Church.

3.7.2 Suggestions by the Youths to the RCC Karūri

In future the youths would like to see the Church concentrating more on guidance and mentorship at 45%. Secondly the youths would want to see a Church that is more inclusive by engaging non- members in the youth's activities at 22%. At the same level of 11%, the youths felt that the Church should provide vocational and technical education facilities like youths polytechnics, take a facilitative position

within the society while other youths' respondents felt that the Church is already doing enough.

3.7.3 Church as the Last Resort

Some youths have given up on the Government, the society and parents as agents to facilitate them out of poverty. To them, the nearest place help can come from is the Church. They feel that their neglect of the Church could be one cause of their problems. They need to be quickly brought into spirituality. At the same time some of those who do not attend Church feel that they don't miss much, quickly observing that Church going peers equally appear hopeless.

The Catechist and the youths seen to have opposing opinions on the reach of activities run by RCC in the Karūri community. Jesus came for all. The possibility of the non-involvement of the non-member community in Church activities means the Church's programs may have little impact in addressing problems in society and by extension those of the male youths. Another fact to note is that a significant number of male youths do not attend Church; half (50%) of the youths respondents indicated that they do not attend Church, but need help.

The limited choice of activities available to the youths leaves him with a lot of time to engage in undesirable activities. It is not an unreasonable for him to demand these services from the society including the Church. Probably the starting point is by providing counseling and guidance services which the youths and the parents clearly pointed out as a major need. If guidance and counseling programs are already in place then a good communication plan can be designed to let the male youths in Karūri know of its existence. However in doing so, the Church should not lose its primary calling that of proclaiming the word.

The youth programs initiated by the Church do not include income generating activities. The finding was that youths desired employment more than anything else, hence an association is seen between this and the claim by them that the RCC run programs are not adequate for them. Adequacy is again seen as stemming from the infrequent occurrence of these activities.

To the outsider the Church appears slow in recognizing and reacting to the rapid social change that is happening today which is affecting the youth. These changes are partly due to modernization and there is concern whether the Church should not remodel her strategy in aiding the youth encounter with the Gospel.

3.8 The Government's Role in Youth Affairs

According to the youth respondents the Government and the economy are the major culprits to blame for their joblessness state. The Government has not taken visible measures to alleviate the suffering. For instance, there is no sensitization effort yet on the procedure of acquiring funds for business development from youths empowerment programs like the recently launched *Uwezo* (youths' kitty) fund. Largely, the youths feel and rightly so, that the Government should have provided them with adequate information on this fund. Although Government administrators are supposed to be in the forefront of understanding and getting solutions to the challenges facing the male youth, they don't. Interestingly an administrator refused to give his opinion to our Study on why the male youths in Karūri die young fearing consequences from the employer. This brings to fore the gap that exists to curb these premature deaths. Though the youths who have reached the stage of drug addicts may desire rehabilitation, there is no such government facility in the area.

Most efforts by various stakeholders have been concentrated on the girl child. There has been an overemphasis on protecting the girl and ensuring that she gets

all the necessary support to successfully take her through education and other challenges in life. This trend has been set by the many gender - based NGOs on the ground and the parents seem to have believed that the boy child does not need much parental guidance way up to his adulthood. This unfortunate belief however can also be blamed on the fact that the girl has and still is vulnerable to many negative forces in society.

3.9 Causes of Premature Death Among the Youth

The Study revealed that death among the male youths in Karūri Village is caused by varied factors. According to parents who took part in the Study, the major cause of death among the male youths of Karūri Village is alcohol (30%), followed by drug abuse (25%), crime (15%), diseases (15%), natural death (10%) and accidents 5%. This was collaborated by the male youths who took part in the Study who overwhelming (50%) indicated that alcohol was the main cause of male youth's death followed by diseases (31%) and drug abuse (13%) and crime at 6%. Administrators too agreed that alcohol was among the major causes of death among the male youth. However the administrators indicated that alcohol was at par with drug abuse and diseases all at 21%.

Alcohol and drugs contribute to the breakdown of moral fiber among the youths that leads them to contract HIV/AIDS and other STDs. The Karūri police station receives an average of 5 male youths arrested for various crimes daily. The Karūri Medical center treats an average of 35 male youths per day of which half of the cases are HIV/AIDS, alcohol, drugs and accident related. A number of youths have died as a result of serious accidents caused while driving under the influence of alcohol.

3.9.1 Alcohol Consumption

The Study shows that excessive alcohol consumption is the major cause of male youth deaths in Karūri. Due to joblessness, hope is lost thus driving the young men to excessive drinking of illicit brews mostly *chang'aa* (distilled traditional liquor) and other unregulated homemade brews. Because of the effects of alcohol consumption many youths get into crime, die from alcohol related complications, get involved in motor accidents or get murdered.

The Study revealed that the youths drink too much – drinking too much on a single occasion or over time can take a serious toll on one's health. Alcohol affects the way the brain works and affects clarity of mind and coordination. It also damages some body part like the heart and liver and eventually weakens the immune system making the body a much easier target of opportunistic diseases.

In addition, alcohol abuse poses a broad range of physiological and psychological dangers such as impaired vision and impaired motor coordination, memory defects, hallucinations, blackouts, and seizures, all of which expose the youths to the danger of death. It could also lead to impaired judgment, apathy, introversion, antisocial behavior, inability to concentrate, and deterioration of relationships with family, friends, and co-workers (National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism).

Children of alcoholics are significantly more likely than children of non alcoholics to initiate drinking during adolescence. Peer pressure is strongly seen by parents as the major cause of drinking among the youth. While both peer influences and parental influences are important, their relative impact on adolescent drinking is unclear. Illicit brews are also always a stone throw away from reach of the youths.

3.9.2 Abuse of Drugs

The second major cause of death of the male youths is through the abuse of hard drugs such as Bhang and Heroin. The drugs interfere with their mental ability, thus rendering their lives useless or helpless - like. All these dangerous illegal substances are easily accessible by the youth.

3.9.3 Death Related to Crime and Murder

The youths engage in crimes to make a living and also maintain their substance usage lifestyles. Drugs and alcohol requires money to purchase. Engaging in vigilante group activities and in other crimes like robbery within and in the city and its neighborhoods becomes an option in their predicament. The youths commit crimes in the city centre and use Karūri as a hiding place from the authority.

Occasionally the youths who commit these crimes are arrested and/or may be killed. Others are killed by gangs on revenge missions while others fall victim to murderers while walking home late in the night.

3.9.4 Suicide

Staring to what they describe as 'hopeless life' and not knowing when or how it could come to an end, there are isolated cases of male youths committing suicide to escape from the harsh reality of life. Karl max⁵² observed that "religion is the opium of the masses ... the sigh of the oppressed creature, the spirit of a spiritless situation". This particular group of male youths in this generation has refused even religion to be a conduit of letting out their frustrations.

⁵² <http://www.atheism.about.com/od/philosophyofreligion/a/marx.htm>.

3.10 Suggested Measures to Reduce the Impact of the Challenges Faced by the Youth

Of the parents' respondents, 43% would like to see guidance & counseling services provided to the youths while 20% would like to see the youths employed, 15% would encourage the youths to attend Church and participate in Church activities, 7% would like alcohol to be banned while 10% would encourage the youths to participate in family affairs and 5% would like to see youths being given financial assistance.

A 48% of the youths' respondents would like to see a behavior change in them as a first line address to curbing the challenges they are facing. Another 33% would like to see the creation of jobs for them, 10% would like to be preached to and prayed for, 5% would like to see more medicine availed to hospitals and 5% would like to see more youths empowerment institutions built in Karūri.

RCC Clergy that took part in the Study indicated that they would like to see the youths receiving formal education (67%) while 33% indicated that they would like to see the Mūtutho Law on alcohol enforced.

All the groups that participated in the Study saw education as a measure of reducing the impact of the challenges faced by the youth. The parents and the youths seem to agree that change in youths' behavior is necessary for the good of the community.

3.11 Chapter's Concluding Remarks

Drawing from the analysis of the field research, this Chapter sought to comprehensibly identify and explore the causes of premature deaths among the male youths of Karūri Village of Kĩambu County. This has been achieved through

discussing the following items: Introduction; Death; Purpose of death; Challenges facing the male youths of Karūri Village; General public's view of the male youth; The parents parenting role; Church's contribution; Government's role in youth affairs; Causes of premature deaths among the male youths, Suggested measures to reduce the impact of the challenges and Chapter's concluding remarks. Having done this, the Study is now ready to tackle the next Chapter that looks at the RCC Documents and Encyclicals on and about family ministry.

CHAPTER FOUR

ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH DOCTRINES AND ENCYCLICALS ON AND ABOUT FAMILY MINISTRY

4.1 Introduction

Having painstakingly investigated the factors leading to premature deaths of male youths in Karūri Village and documenting the results in the previous Chapter's, this Chapter aims at perusing RCC Documents and Encyclicals on and about family ministry in the following order: Introduction; Teachings of the Synod of Bishops from Africa (Ecclesia in Africa); John Paul II's *Familiaris Consortio* (The family in the modern world); Pope Francis *Evangelii Gaudium* (The Joy of the Gospel) Related reflections by theologian C. H. Peschke and Chapter's concluding remarks.

4.2 Teachings of the Synod of Bishops from Africa

The Synod of Bishops from Africa⁵³ sheds light to the Study. The nucleus family consists of the father, mother and children. In evangelization the Synod looks at the Church as "Family of God." This model guides the Synod's idea of evangelization. The image of the Church advocates solidarity, care for others, acceptance, dialogue and warmth in human relations. These parameters are found in a Christian family. This is how the Bishops put it concerning the new evangelization: "The new evangelization is aimed at building up Church as

⁵³ *The Church in Africa: Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation of the Holy father John Paul II*, (Nairobi: Paulines Publications Africa, 1995).

Family, avoiding all ethnocentrism and excessive particularism, trying instead to encourage reconciliation and true communion ...”⁵⁴

In the family, dialogue is encouraged in order to have good communication within its members. The Synod encourages openness to dialogue within the family of the Church at all levels. It is also in the Christian family, referred to as “domestic Church” that education and useful values are taught. In the heart of evangelization are the integral human development and especially the poor. Among other pastoral plans, the dioceses should develop a plan for family apostolate.

The Synod reminds us that Africa is endowed with a wealth of cultural values and diverse human qualities. Africans have a profound religious sense of the sacred, as J.S. Mbiti puts it; “Africans are notoriously religious.”⁵⁵ They love and respect life from its beginning to its natural end. It is because of love for life that Africans venerate their Ancestors as much as they celebrate children of either gender as God’s gifts demonstrating that the role of the family is a fundamental one in life. While adopting the positive values of modernity, the African family must preserve its own essential values.

The Synod adds that; “The youths are not only the present but above all the future of humanity. It is thus necessary to help young people to overcome the obstacles thwarting their development: illiteracy, idleness, hunger and drugs cited as some. In order to meet these challenges young people should become evangelizers of their peers. No one can do this better than they.”⁵⁶

In this light, the Study receives a strong confirmation that the lives of the male youths can be preserved even in the advent of “progressive civilization” or other practices that can in one way or another prove hostile to life. It is demanded of

⁵⁴ Ibid., p.46.

⁵⁵ J. S. Mbiti, *African Religion and Philosophies*, (Oxford: Heinemann, 1990), p.1.

⁵⁶The Synod of Bishops, *Ecclesia in Africa*, (Nairobi: Paulines Publications Africa, 1995), P.71.

them to live life to the full. This also helps to create awareness that Karūri male youths, and other youths elsewhere, can look to the riches of their own traditions and also to the Faith and in this way find genuine freedom and Christ that leads them to the truth. This reflections, therefore, provides the Study with a strong backing in making its contribution towards the reconciliation of the defiant male youths and their parents.

To advance the kind of argument where the youths are inclusive in the effort to identify and confront the challenges rendering their lives less productive and even to the point of death, and above all the working towards liberation of their lives, is to agree with the objective of the subject of the Study.

The Synod Bishops task the Church in Africa to be faithful in its vocation to stand with the oppressed, the voiceless and the marginalized – giving them preference.

4.3 John Paul II's *Familiaris Consortio* (The Family in the Modern World)

Pope John Paul II adds value to this Study through his contribution by outlining four general tasks for the family in his Encyclical *Familiaris Consortio* (Role of Christian Family in the Modern World) as follows:

1. Forming a community of persons
2. Serving life
3. Participating in the development of the society
4. Sharing in the life and mission of the Church

By virtue of the covenant of married life, husband and wife are “no longer two but one flesh”. This unity is not only indispensable but also indivisible. Between husband and wife there exists natural complementarity and personal willingness

by both to share their lives and to socialize the fruits of their love namely children irrespective of their gender. Conjugal communion is also characterized by its indissolubility; “the Holy Spirit who is poured out in the sacramental celebration offers Christian couples the gift of a new communion of love that is the living and real image of that unique unity which makes the Church the indivisible Mystical Body of the Lord Jesus.”⁵⁷

The letter continues to enrich the Study by showing that each family member has the power, through their gifts, to build a school of deeper humanity; a fundamental opportunity for building such a communion is constituted by the educational exchange between parents and children, in which each gives and receives. By means of love, respect and obedience towards their parents, children offer their specific and irreplaceable contribution to the construction of an authentically human and Christian family. The parent’s authority is a true and proper ministry serves the human and Christian well-being of their children, and helps them acquire a responsible freedom. The Pope explains family communion can only be preserved and perfected through a great spirit of sacrifice. It requires, in fact, a ready and generous openness of each and all to understanding, to forbearance, to pardon, to reconciliation. There is no family that does not know how selfishness, discord, tension and conflict violently attack and at times mortally wound its own communion: hence there arise forms of family division in the family life. But at the same time every family is called by the God of peace to have the joyous and renewing experience of reconciliation that is, communion re-established, unity restored.⁵⁸

In the family, which is a community of persons, equal dignity of men and women is underlined. Women are human beings and not objects of trade. Gender bias against women has facilitated the rise of feminism, of which it is partly

⁵⁷ John Paul II, *Familiaris Consorti*, (Nairobi: Paulines Publications Africa, 1982), pp.26.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, p.30.

responsible for single motherhood, which is common within families in Karūri Village. Pope John Paul clearly expounds on this and lays it bare that, with due respect to the different vocations of men and women, the Church must in her own life promote as far as possible their equality of rights and dignity; and this for the good of all, the family, the Church and the society. But clearly all of this does not mean for women a renunciation of their femininity or an imitation of the male role, but the fullness of true feminine humanity which should be expressed in their activity, whether in the family or outside of it, without disregarding the differences of customs and cultures in this sphere.⁵⁹

The parents hold the responsibility of educating their children as they also accord them their dignity, which is their right. The virtues learnt within the family become a good foundation for the child's future success. Pope John Paul teaches that, within the communion, man has the role of husband and father. The family being a community of persons, parents observe the rights of their children. They develop a profound esteem for their children's personal dignity. Parents have the most solemn obligation to educate their children hence parents are acknowledged as the first and foremost educators of their offspring. The family is the first school of those social virtues which every society needs. This role is irreplaceable and inalienable and incapable of being delegated to others or usurped by others. The children also have a duty of responding to the parents' love by giving back to the family in love and obedience.

The document also emphasizes the importance of children of both gender and their proper upbringing to become responsible citizens of the world, even for the unborn, necessary care is extended. He puts it thus: "No country on earth, no political system can think of its own future otherwise than through the image of these new generations that will receive from their parents the manifold heritage of

⁵⁹ Ibid., p.33.

values, duties and aspirations of the nation to which they belong and of the whole human family.”⁶⁰

Nevertheless whether the family is that of one parent or both, the role of children education in social virtues should be exhaustively carried out. This brings a lot of value to the Study since commitment to marriage is an emphasis since children brought up should not be discriminated against on the basis of what kind of family they belong. The Pope assures the Church that pastoral care is at the service of the family who may have unique or similar problems.

The Pope affirms that; “Knowing that marriage and the family constitute one of the most precious of human values, the Church wishes to speak and offer her help to those who are already aware of the value of marriage and the family and seek to live it faithfully, to those who are uncertain and anxious and searching for the truth, and to those who are unjustly impeded from living freely their family lives. Supporting the first, illuminating the second and assisting the others, the Church offers her services to every person who wonders about the destiny of marriage and the family.”⁶¹

Agents of pastoral care for the families include Bishops and Priests, men and women religious, lay specialists and recipients and agents of social communication. The Pope further notes that the responsibility of the bishops extends to moral and liturgical matters as well as personal and social matters, supporting the family in its difficulties helping them to see their lives in the light of the Gospel. This mostly is exercise with a true apostolic spirit. All the teaching and advice given are supposed to be in harmony with the Church’s authentic Magisterium (the official teaching authority in the Catholic Church). This will

⁶⁰ Ibid., p.36.

⁶¹ Ibid., p.7.

ensure that Christians gain correct sense of the path which is subsequently applied in every day practice.

The second task of the family is to serve life - which is among the main tasks of the family. The Pope states: “Thus the fundamental task of the family is to serve life, to actualize in history the original blessing of the Creator – that of transmitting by procreation the divine image from person to person.”⁶²

God created man and woman in his own image, meaning that the Karūri male youths bear the image and dignity of God. The life they have must therefore be guarded jealously since it is precious, and should do everything within their power to recover their human dignity. The Cross of Jesus gives them hope and strength to emancipate themselves bearing the knowledge that from such an old rugged Cross, there comes forth freedom for them to live life authentically, fulfilling their assignment of caring for their aged parents and according them decent burial.

Through this Study the culture of silence concerning the premature deaths of male youths in Karūri Village is confronted and challenged. The male youths should live out fully their lives, being the reason that Jesus gave up His own life (Jn 10:10). The Church stands for life. In his letters the Pope writes: “But the Church firmly believes that human life, even if weak and suffering is always splendid gift of God’s goodness. Against the pessimism and the selfishness that cast a shadow over the world, the Church stands for life: in each human life she sees the splendor of that Yes and Amen which is Christ Himself.”⁶³

The Pope continues to enrich the Study by further clarifying the role of the family as one of participating in development of society. The family can be said to be the

⁶² Ibid., p.38.

⁶³ Ibid., p.40.

first and vital cell of the society. Family life does experience communion and sharing. Thus the fostering of authentic and mature communication between persons within the family is the first and irreplaceable school of social life, an example and stimulus for the broader community relationships marked by respect, justice, dialogue and love. The family is thus the place of origin and the most effective means of humanizing and personalizing society. In this kind of set up, the sanity of family members is restored.

“Consequently, faced with a society that is running the risk of becoming more and more depersonalized and standardized and therefore inhuman and dehumanizing, with the negative results of many forms of escapism – such as alcoholism, drugs and even terrorism – the family possesses and continues still to release formidable energies capable of taking man out of his anonymity, keeping him conscious of his personal dignity, enriching him with deep humanity, and actively placing him, in his uniqueness and unrepeatability, within the fabric of society.”⁶⁴

The society on its part has a duty not to fail the family.

The Church serves the believers in their religious and spiritual needs while believers have a duty to love the Church and reverence Her ministers. Looking at the profound bond linking the Church and the Christian family, The Pope says,

“It is, above all, the Church as mother that gives birth to, educates and builds up the Christian family by putting into effect in its regard the saving mission which she has received from the Lord. By proclaiming the Word of God, the Church reveals to the Christian family its true identity, what it is and should be according to the Lord’s plan; by celebrating the

⁶⁴ Ibid., p.56.

sacraments, the Church enriches and strengthens the Christian family with the grace of Christ for its sanctification to the glory of God the Father; by the continuous proclamation of the new commandment of love, the Church encourages and guides the Christian to the service of love, that the Lord Jesus has for the entire human race.”⁶⁵

On the service to society by the Church, the Pope says the following “in turn the Christian family is grafted into the mystery of the Church to such a degree as to become a sharer, in its own way, in the saving mission proper to the Church.” The Church and family have many bonds linking them that establish the family as a Church in miniature (*Ecclesia domestica*).⁶⁶

4.4 Pope Francis *Evangelii Gaudium* (The Joy of The Gospel)

Pope Francis enriches the Study through his Apostolic Exhortation, *Evangelii Gaudium*.⁶⁷ He observes that the task of evangelization implies and demands the integral promotion of each human being irrespective of what gender one belongs to. There are many things in today’s world that can blind one’s conscience towards social virtues. He says,

“The greatest danger in today’s world, pervaded as it is by consumerism, is the desolate and anguish born of a complacent yet covetous heart, the feverish pursuit of frivolous pleasures, and blatant conscience. Whenever our interior life becomes caught up in its own interests and concerns, there is no longer room for others, no place for the poor. God’s voice is no longer heard, the quiet joy of his love no longer felt, and the desire to do good fades. This is a very real danger for believers too. Many fall prey to

⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁶ Ibid., p.61.

⁶⁷ Pope Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium*, (Nairobi: Paulines Publications Africa, 2013).

it, and end up resentful, angry and restless. That is no way to live a dignified life and fulfilled life; it is not God's will for us, nor is it the life in the Spirit which has its source in the heart of risen Christ.⁶⁸

Pope Francis makes a wakeup call to Christians to renew their encounter with Christ, because they are lost. This Study is a wakeup call to the Karūri Church and other believers that they need to have a renewed encounter with Jesus and consequently positively confronting the challenge of premature death facing their male youth as their duty owing to their status as common priests, who must necessarily cooperate with ordained Priests. It is a way of rediscovering oneself, the reality of their lives taking after St Paul who asserts: "Lord I have let myself to be deceived; in a thousand ways I shunned your love, yet here I am once more, to renew my covenant with you. I need you. Save me once again, Lord, take me once more into your redeeming grace,"⁶⁹ God forgives His people seven times seven (Mt 18:22). As such, each individual Christian and every community is called to be an instrument of liberation for the liberation and promotion of the poor, and for enabling them to be fully a part of society. This demands that Christians be docile and attentive to the cry of the poor and to come to their aid. I have observed the misery of my people who are in Egypt; I have heard their cry on account of their taskmasters (Ex 3:7-8, 10). The Lord raised for the Israelites a deliverer or a liberator, when they cried to Him.⁷⁰

Jesus had a special regard for the poor, He Himself lived a poor life. Jesus became poor so that the poor can receive redemption (2 Cor 8:9). Pope Francis regrets that the worst discrimination that the poor – in our case the male youths of Karūri- suffer is lack of spiritual care. St. James talks of the cry of the oppressed, "the wages of the laborers (poor) who mowed your fields, which you kept back by

⁶⁸ Pope Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium*, (Nairobi: Paulines Publications Africa, 2013), pp.7-8.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, p.8.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 99-100.

fraud, cry out and the cries of the harvesters have reached the ears of the Lord of hosts” (Jn 5:4).

The challenges in the world today affect the Christian family too. In the process of evangelization, Pope Francis demands that the following challenges have to be confronted:

1. Economic of exclusion. The economy of today is that of inequality and exclusion. This kind of economy fails. The law of survival for the fittest is leaving out many without work or means of escape.
2. New idolatry of money. The Bible says that, possessions will follow those who seek after righteousness, (Deut 28:1-2). People no longer have to weep for their poor neighbour’s pain nor are their conscious alive to the fact the cry of the poor is their responsibility. Their conscious is alive to a lifestyle that excludes others and sustains enthusiasm for selfish ideal. Money has become a kind of idol worship (Eze. 32:1-35). Money should not dominate anyone. A good financial system should not rule but serve, for God never created money to dominate any person or society, but should reflect human purpose.
3. Inequality that spawns violence. Pope Francis rightly observes that for violence to be eliminated from society, exclusion and inequality in society and between peoples has to be reversed.⁷¹

4. Cultural challenges

- (i) The cultural roots are deteriorating rapidly due to globalization, civilization and modernization among other factors. Emphasis is on

⁷¹ Ibid., pp.34-38.

the outward, the immediate, the visible, the quick, the superficial and the provisional.

- (ii) The traditional values of societies are under great threat of exposure to mass media and entertainment industries. They have also threatened the sacredness of marriage and stability of family.
- (iii) Proliferation of new religious movements. These involve fundamentalism and spirituality without God. This is human reaction to a materialistic, consumerist and individualistic society. Secularization process is reducing the faith and clinging to the sphere of personal and private. There is a disregard for ethics and instead promotion of individual human rights, increase in relativism and weakening sense of collective sin.
- (iv) We are living in an information-driven era, bombarding society indiscriminately with data. This is causing superficiality in moral discernment. In response the Church needs to provide an education which teaches critical thinking and encourages the development of mature moral values.⁷²

4.5 Related Reflections from Theologian C. H. Peschke on Family

C. H. Peschke in his book titled *Christian Ethics Volume II*,⁷³ detailed description of the duties of the family. He refers to the family as the primordial community. He goes on to explain that it is in the family where a person can develop bodily and spiritually in a healthy fashion. Through the stimuli of parental love, the moral

⁷² Ibid., pp.38-42.

⁷³ C. H. Peschke, *Christian Ethics Volume II- A Presentation of Special Moral Theology in the light of Vatican II*, (Alcester & Dublin, 1978).

and religious life and his capacity to love are awakened. The nature of the family is such that it's a community of parents and children. The family's natural constitution is demonstrated by the "needs and inclinations of the child, affections of the parents and the ties of blood with all the implied bodily and spiritual affinities."⁷⁴

Upbringing of the children and care for family's daily needs for its members constitute the task and purpose of the family. According to Peschke, the family has three basic functions that it must perform. These are:-

Primary Economic Unit

It is in the family that basic needs of its members are met. These needs include food, shelter, and clothing. Members that can afford to are expected to contribute their work or earning to the family. It is the responsibility of all members to ensure proper use of the family resources.

The Primary Educational Unit

It is in the family that child receives both intellectual and moral development. The child learns important social virtues of charity, justice, obedience, readiness to help, fairness, sincerity and diligence. Knowledge attitudes are conveyed to the child through the mother's dedicated love. Children also learn through the parents and siblings.

Primary Spiritual Community for Man

The family provides a spiritual home for its members. The family is the domestic Sanctuary, called to pass on the faith of the Ancestors to cultivate the religious

⁷⁴ Ibid., pp.242-243.

traditions to offer common prayer to God and to translate in daily life its religious convictions.

On having brought forth life into the world, it becomes the responsibility to the parents to care for the child since it entirely depends on their loving care. The primary duty of the parent therefore becomes responsible assumption of parenthood.⁷⁵

Parental Duties

Primary duty of parents⁷⁶ which precedes all others is responsible assumption of parenthood. Parents must have reasonable hopes that they will be able to rear and educate their children in a way worthy of a human being. Love is a fundamental obligation of the parents. Still the parents are required to provide life, health and material well-being. Parents are duty bound to educate their children. Education of the children is the most excellent task of the parents. Their failure in this role cannot be compensated for. As the children grow older, they should have been trained to take part in public life.

Another aspect of great importance in the child's education is intellectual training and schooling. As much as parents strive to give their children education, effort should also be put to protect their children from defective injurious education.⁷⁷

Duties of Children

On the other hand, children have a role to play towards their parents⁷⁸. Their obligation and love is based on the fact that the parents are, after God the second

⁷⁵ Ibid., pp.243-245.

⁷⁶ Ibid., pp.246-251.

⁷⁷ Ibid., pp.246-251.

⁷⁸ Ibid., pp.256-258.

source of life, growth and education. The children owe their parents many benefits. Consequently the child has the obligation to love, obey, reverence and give gratitude. The fourth commandment orders the child to honor the parents (Ex 20:12).⁷⁹

Duties of the Church

C. H. Peschke says the following while defining the Church, “By her relationship with Christ, the Church is a kind of sacrament or sign of intimate union with God, and of the unity of all mankind. She is also an instrument for the achievement of such union and unity.”⁸⁰

Firstly, Church is mediator between God and man that performs her function through her Priests and Ministers. The Church has hierarchy. The Church function is to serve men in their religious and spiritual needs and to promote the values of faith and religion. She is called to imbue the everyday activity of men with a deeper meaning and to serve as a leaven and as a kind of soul for human society, with the goal to renew it in Christ and to transform it into God’s family.

It is a foremost duty of the Church to preach the Word of God. The priests and pastors are required not to teach their own wisdom. Priests should teach and admonish men according to the words of the Apostle (2Tim 4:2).

The believers share in Christ’s grace and glory. They should love and reverence the Church and her ministers. Love for the Church is love for Christ. Believers should also be obedient to Church – the Church is competent guide in faith and morals.

⁷⁹ Ibid., pp.256-258.

⁸⁰ Ibid., pp.294-301.

4.6 Chapter's Concluding Remark

This Chapter examined the RCC Documents and Encyclicals plus some theologians' reflections on and about family ministry. This was done in the following manner: Introduction; Teachings from the Synod of Bishops from Africa (Ecclesia in Africa); John Paul II's *Familiaris Consortio* (The family in the modern world); Pope Francis *Evangelii Gaudium* (The Joy of the Gospel) and related reflections by theologian C. H. Peschke. The Chapter gave insights for contrasting with the main items regarding the premature deaths of male youths in Karūri Village. The next Chapter therefore contrasts the RCC striking Doctrines with the main items regarding the premature deaths of male youth.

CHAPTER FIVE

ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH INSTRUCTIONS ON FAMILY APOSTOLATE AND THE MAIN ITEMS REGARDING PREMATURE DEATHS OF MALE YOUTHS

5.1 Introduction

The previous Chapter examined the RCC Documents and Encyclicals plus some theologians' reflections on and about family ministry which are contrasted in this Chapter with the main items regarding the premature deaths of male youths in Karūri Village in light of Christian liberation theology. The Chapter deals with the following: Introduction; The covenant of marriage; The family; Functions of the family; Roles of the family; The role of the Church to the society; The duty of the state to its citizens; The role of the society; Life is sacred, Challenges faced by the male youth of Karūri and Chapter's concluding remarks.

5.2 The Covenant of Marriage

In *Familiaris Consortio*, Pope John Paul II explains that a marriage is a covenant between two adult and willing people of different gender that is husband and wife, naturally complementing each other and in this indissoluble conjugal communion showing willingness to share their lives. The Catechism of the Catholic Church emphasizes that a marriage concluded and consummated between baptized persons can never be dissolved as it is established by God Himself.⁸¹

The RCC teaches the value of keeping the marriage covenant and the principles of marriage such as complementarity, virtues and sharing among couples. Not all

⁸¹ *The Catechism of the Catholic Church*, (Nairobi: Paulines Publication Africa, 1994), p.394.

marriages in Karūri are Christian marriages, others are civil and traditional. The RCC teachings are interpreted to mean a marriage covenant is between only two people and in that sense therefore may not be applicable to all the marriages in Karūri. Although couples in Karūri may outwardly be seen as operational, there are several issues noted by this Study that lead us to conclude that the husband and wife may not be living naturally complimenting each other as taught by RCC.

A program by the name Marriage Encounter, an initiation of both the Church and couples in Karūri Catholic Parish, involved in the couples going for retreats, seminars where they would receive pieces of advice on marriage and family matters. The Church however does not engage the services of a professional marriage counselor. The program has since stalled. Premarital counseling is done to willing persons who intend to enter into the marriage covenant. This is conducted by the Priest. However the Church members judge that this program is ineffective because the priest is not adequately equipped for such an undertaking and should delegate the counseling to a married couple, who have a wealth of experience on marriage issues.

The Karūri family cherishes marriage. This is evidenced by their initiative to follow up premarital counseling programs and also to seek help from the Church when a rift occurs between the partners with the aim of preserving their marriage; in line with the divine wisdom that marriage covenant is indissoluble.

5.3 The Family

The Synod of Bishops defines the nucleus family as consisting of the father, mother and children. Pope John Paul II, in *Familiaris Consortion* describes the family as a community of persons; of husband and wife, of parents and children, of relatives, a community that is founded and given life by love. C. H. Peschke, while defining the family says that the nature of the family is such that it's a

community of parents and children. Therefore, in summation, RCC teachings define the family as comprising three key elements: father, mother and children.

In contrast, a significant number of families in Karūri Village do not conform to this definition of a family by RCC teachings. The definition does not mention single parent families where the father or mother is absent. The face of the family has been changing over time and today, families of single parents, especially single mothers, are on the rise not only in Karūri Village but also nationally. In the case of Karūri, most single parents are mothers. There are varied reasons that have contributed to single motherhood phenomenon in Karūri Village. Some women have entered into single motherhood by choice and others by fate.⁸² Traditionally, the woman would not have been accorded the luxury of making a choice in a matter this important.

Single motherhood is on the rise since the measures taken in the traditional society to contain families within marriage are no longer observed in the contemporary society. While the Karūri community entirely appreciates and agrees with the RCC teachings that a family is not complete without the three elements, the family has not been able to contain the pressures of modern life that somehow tears away the nucleus family such that the family is no longer as expected by RCC teachings.

5.4 Functions of the Family

According to C. H. Peschke, the task and purpose of the family consists of the upbringing of children and in the care for the daily needs of its members. He discussed the three basic functions of the family as:

⁸² Read more about this in- P.N Wachege's *Millennium African Single Mothers and Mother Widows: Ethno-Religio-Philosophical Touch*, (Nairobi: Signal Press Ltd, 2003), pp.130-150.

5.4.1 Primary Economic Community

Firstly, the family is the primary economic community in which the family provides everyday needs of food, shelter and clothing to its members. The members in return are obliged to contribute their work or their earning towards the upkeep of the household. It is the duty of the parents to see to it that they don't cause economic misery and penury by incompetent spending, for this inflicts "secondary poverty" on the family. All family members are expected to behave responsibly.

Karūri Village is characterized by families that have small land acreage. The land is basically utilized for subsistence farming. Most parents in Karūri are self-employed earning income of between KShs 1,000 and KShs 30,000 per month with the majority earning KShs 2,000 and below. The majority of male youths in Karūri do not contribute positively their work or earnings towards the upkeep of the household. To raise some income, some youths engage in crimes. In addition, the absenteeism of some fathers is blamed largely on economic hardships and partly on the wife's economic independence. The women are becoming more financially able and thereby economically independent without their husbands contribution. Through such facilities like micro financing institutions and *chamas* (women groups), women have been empowered in establishing income generating projects.

RCC teachings seem to assume that the right circumstances exist for parents to acquire the economic means required to support the family. Sadly the parents in Karūri do not live in an environment exclusive of challenges.

5.4.2 Education

Secondly the family is the primary educational unit in which the parents are duty bound to educate their children to the best of their abilities as well as looking after the child's spiritual welfare. The parents should see this as a noble task, a task necessary for intellectual and moral development of the children and persons within the family. Important social virtues of charity, readiness to help, fairness, sincerity and diligence, including the two most important social virtues of due obedience and just rule are basically taught in the family. H. Peschke emphasizes the value of mother's love to the child and the need for the parent's to feel challenged to put forth their best self in order to achieve fully the great and noble aim of a happy family, and by doing so and through their children contribute towards their own holiness.

In Karūri Village, there is a blame game among the family members. In general the community feels that the parents have failed in their parenting duties, not very keen to take any social or economic responsibilities in their families. The three elements of the family: the father, mother and children (in this case the male youth) 'fear' each other and are not concerned much with what the other does. In fact the parents of Karūri have given up on the youths and on their part, the youths wish that the parents would pay attention to them. The mushrooming single parent families have not made the parenting responsibility any easier for the parents who feel inadequate to play certain roles.

To their credit and despite these odds, the parents in Karūri Village see the value of educating their male youths morally, spiritually and formally. The social virtues articulated by H. Peschke have either not been taught or not effectively taught to the boy child, leaving a gap for peer pressure. The Study found out that for the majority of the male youths formal education level is of high school - Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education with many not able to proceed due to

financial constraints. The parents spend most of their time away from home and the family and therefore do not spend quality time with the children who idle around the village looking for something to do. The Study noted that the parents and the community are in total agreement that there is near total failure in the parenting of the male youth.

However instances were noted where the youths turned to their parent's advice whenever they had an issue to sort out. They still felt that parents are the best mentors and providers of assistance when in need. Although parents have failed to show their love for the children by cultivating good virtues in them, they still show their love for their male youth by for instance, shielding them from those who are out to harass them such as the police.

5.4.3 Primary Spiritual Community for Man

Lastly the family provides a spiritual home for its members in their daily lives based on love, trust, esteem and respect, exchange of ideas, convictions, values and attitudes, a sharing of the experiences of joy and successes, trials and sorrow. The family is also the domestic sanctuary which passes on the faith of the Ancestors, cultivates the religious traditions, offers common prayer to God and translates into daily life its religious convictions.

Both parents have equal duties and equal rights in begetting, rearing and educating the children with the division in tasks partly arising from the nature of fatherhood and motherhood, and partly from the customs of society. The primary duty of the parent is the responsible assumption of parenthood. Parents must rear and educate their children in a way worthy of a human being. As the children grow older, they should be trained to take part in public life. The father's presence is most beneficial for the children especially the male youth.

As it is the case of the Karūri family, such social virtues as care for others, acceptances, dialogue, warmth in human relations, have suffered a setback. Many young men wish their fathers could be good role models by taking their positions in the family responsibly. Absentee fathers have robbed the male youths of their mentorship right. Mothers can only nurture and to some extent, teach the young man on how to be a man. Such a position may explain why more youths indicated that mothers are their best friends in the family. One university student expressed the desire for those conducting this Study to occasionally meet with the youths of Karūri in an effort to dialogue with them or offer any necessary help.

5.5 Roles of the Family

Pope John Paul II in *Familiaris Consortio* details four general tasks of the family that include: Forming a community of persons, serving life, participating in the development of the society and sharing in the life and mission of the Church. The family's first task is to live with fidelity in a constant effort to develop an authentic community of persons. The second, which is the fundamental task of the family, is to serve life by procreation thereby transmitting the divine image from person to person.

God created man and woman in his own image, meaning that the Karūri male youths bear the image and dignity of God. The life they have must therefore be guarded jealously since it is precious, and they should do everything within their power to re-establishing their human dignity. Such is the call to Karūri community to be re - awakened to the reality of whom they currently are and who they ought to be. The death of male youths prematurely negates the command to multiply and fill the earth. "God blessed them and God said to them, be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it" (Gen 2:28).

The third role of the family is, being a vital cell of the society, to participate in the development of the society and in the process humanizing and personalizing the society and restoring the sanity of the family members which minimizes the risk of having inhuman and dehumanizing tendencies that may bring negative results of many forms of escapism – such as alcoholism, drugs and even terrorism.

This position of the family is remedial enough to help solve the current youth problems of escapism. The disconnection is in the family not being aware that it possesses this ability of humanizing and personalizing society. In Karūri Village, the families are not actively participating in the development of the society. The family in Karūri is clearly fragmented with no emphasized basic family values that would be useful inputs to its members as a contribution to the society. The society too is fragmented to the extent that issues of the community are inadequately addressed. However the Study noted that the community in Karūri, is very receptive to ideas on how they can redeem and improve the lost glory of the family, its members and society.

The fourth role of the Christian family is to build up the Kingdom of God in history through everyday living by sharing their spiritual riches with other families. The families in Karūri reverence God and freely share His Word with others. The role of evangelizing families through families is suffering a setback because of the challenges given the political, economic, social and cultural difficulties the African families face as a result of the great changes which characterize contemporary society. While adopting the positive values of modernity, the African family must preserve its own essential values. Some members of the community openly would not like to attend Church or share the word of God, while others are committed to sharing in family prayer with their family members including the male youth.

5.6 The Role of the Church to the Society

The RCC Catechesis explains that Christ was born and brought up in the bosom of the holy family of Joseph and Mary. The Church is nothing other than the “family of God”. The Holy Family is the prototype and example for all Christian families and the model and spiritual source for all families. The future of the world and the Church passes through the family (CCC. No.1655).

From the point of view of RCC teachings, believers are to be taught about their religious and spiritual needs and have a duty to love the Church and reverence her Ministers. The Church advocates solidarity, care for others, acceptance, dialogue and openness, warmth in human relations and encourages reconciliation and true communion.

The RCC in Karūri comes into focus concerning her family ministry. This is in light of the noticeable shortcomings of the family in Karūri. In the Study the youths felt that they need to be totally brought into spirituality. The feeling has been that some of those who do attend Church commit similar offences just like the non Church members.

The Karūri male youths look up for help from the following sources: Parents, Government, Church and the larger society. Having given up on most of them, the male youth has been banking his hope in the Church. The Catechist acknowledged the Church could do more for the youth.

5.7 The Duty of the State to its Citizens

As H. Peschke notes, man can only realize his existential ends fully under the protection and with the help of the state. Pope Francis explains that one of the challenges facing the Christian family today is the issue of economic inequality

and exclusion. This is where the affluent have no concern for the poor and selfishness thrives with money becoming a kind of idol worship (Eze. 32:1-35).

The good of the family is an indispensable and essential value of the civil community. In this view the public authorities should do everything possible to ensure that families have all those aids – economic, social, educational, political and cultural assistance – that they may need in order to face all their responsibilities in a human way.

The youths consider that the government has abandoned them, a fact confirmed by a local administrator who refused to comment on what the government has identified as the causes of deaths among the male youths in Karūri for fear of being apprehended. Most of them lament that the local administration does not inform them of some opportunities that arise from the government and where the information is available no advice is given on how they should go about taking advantage of the opportunities. There seems to be a clear impasse between the youths and the local administration.

The state has the responsibility of providing security to its citizens. Insecurity incidences in Karūri are frequent contributing to some of the challenges experienced by the male youths which include being murdered, mugged, motor vehicle accidents and police assault.

5.8 The Role of the Society

The society on its part has a duty not to fail the family. RCC teaching indicates that the family and society have complementary functions in defending and fostering the good of each other and every human being.

The situation on the ground is such that the society has lost hope in the male youth. It describes the youths as a lost and reckless lot within the community who have refused counsel and have consequently lost direction but still want anyway to be successful. In general the society fear and loath the youths and has concluded that the male youths are contributors, if not part, of the insecurity in the area.

5.9 Life is Sacred

Contrary to the occurrences of premature deaths of male youths in Karūri Village, which is predominantly RCC in faith affiliation, the RCC Church stands for life, irrespective of whatever state the life is in. The Church firmly believes that human life, even if weak and suffering is always a splendid gift of God's goodness. In each human life She sees the splendor of that yes and amen, who is Christ Himself. The life of the youths should therefore be preserved. Statistics show that in 2012, out of the total number of youths who died due to alcohol consumption in Kīambu East, most were male and comprised 86% of the total.⁸³

5.10 Challenges Faced by the Male Youths

The Synod of Bishops, highlight that youths are the present and the future of humanity and therefore should be accorded the necessary help to overcome obstacles that thwart their development. Challenges faced by the youths as noted by the Synod include illiteracy, idleness, hunger and drugs. The Karūri youths are not only faced with the challenges the Synod spells out but also a hostile society, insecurity, unemployment, negative effects of modernization and nonfunctional families.

⁸³ Department of Civil Registration, Analysis of deaths by month of registration -deaths by sex, age of deceased and cause of death, 2012.

5.11 Chapter's Concluding Remarks

This Chapter contrasted the Roman Catholic Church striking instructions on and about family apostolate and the main items regarding the premature deaths of male youths in Karūri Village in light of Christian Liberation theology. This was dealt with in the following manner: Introduction, The covenant of marriage; The family; Functions of the family; Roles of the family; The role of the Church to the society; The duty of the state to its citizens; The role of the society; Life is sacred, Challenges faced by the male youths and the Chapter's concluding remarks. Drawing from the previous three Chapters the Study looks forward in the next Chapter to analyzing and documenting the research data collected.

CHAPTER SIX

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

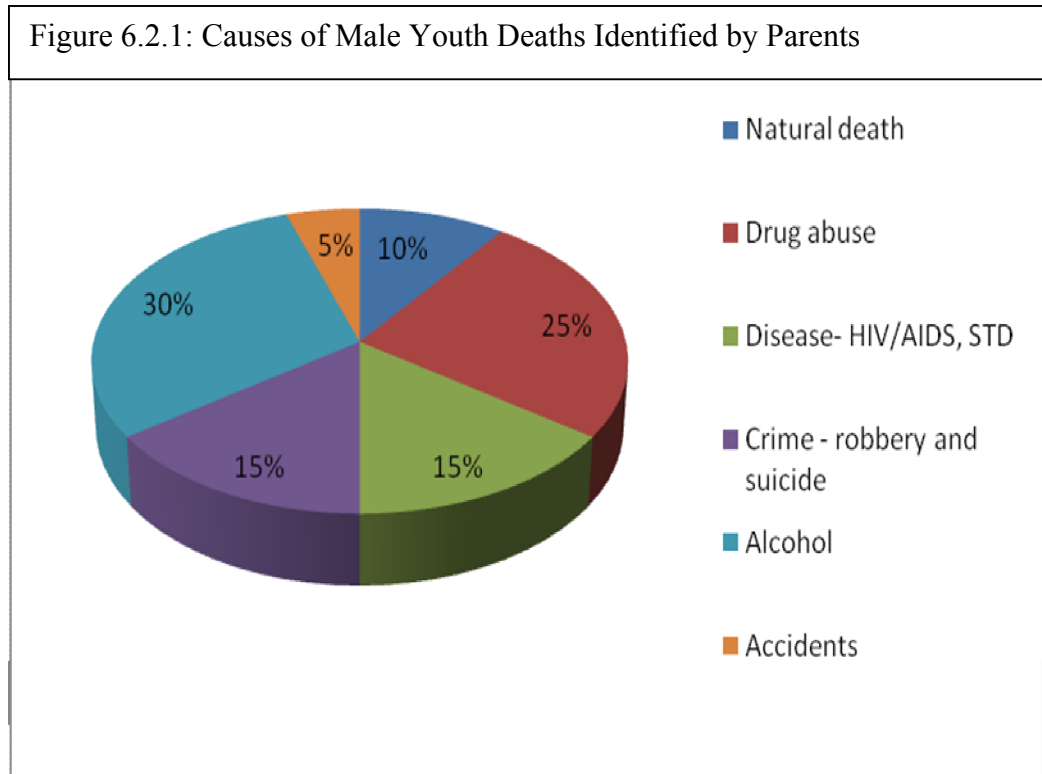
6.1 Introduction

The previous Chapter contrasted the Roman Catholic Church striking instructions on and about family apostolate and the main items regarding the premature deaths of male youths in Karūri Village in light of Christian Liberation theology. Having done that, this Chapter sets out to analyze and document the collected research data in figures and diagrams and draws the relationships between the various data elements. This is done in the following manner: Introduction; Causes of premature deaths among the Karūri male youths; Challenges faced by the Karūri male youths; General public's view of the male youths; The parents role of bringing up the male youths; Measures taken by parents to reduce the impact of the challenges; Measures that the youths take to address the challenges; Recommendations to address the challenges; What should be done to address the challenges faced by the youths; Youth programs initiated by the Church; The relationship between parents and the youth; and Chapter's concluding remarks. This Chapter and the previous Chapters are geared towards confronting the challenges faced by the male youths in Karūri Village in light of Christian Liberation theology with the finality of contributing to invaluable recommendations to tackling the challenges facing the male youth.

6.2 Causes of Premature Deaths Among the Karūri Male Youth

Table 6. 2.1: Causes of Male Youth Deaths Identified by Parents		
Causes of death	No. of Respondents	%
Natural death	2	10%
Drug abuse	5	25%
Disease- HIV/AIDS, STD	3	15%
Crime - robbery and suicide	3	15%
Alcohol	6	30%
Accidents	1	5%
Total	20	100%

Figure 6.2.1: Causes of Male Youth Deaths Identified by Parents



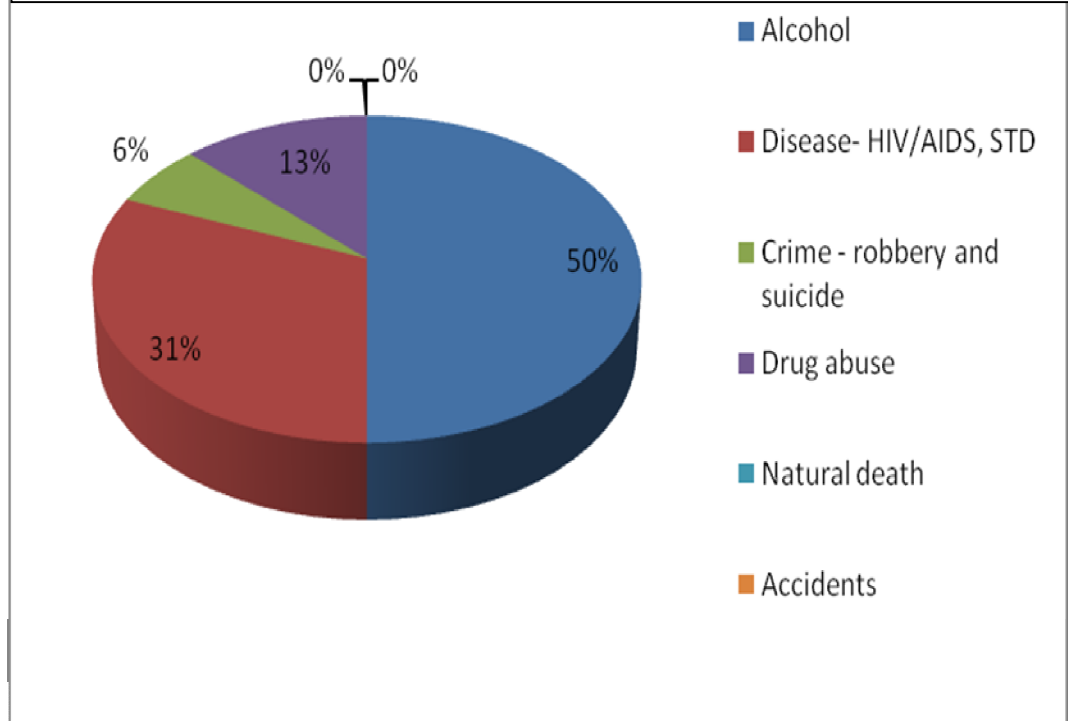
6.2.1 Causes of Male Youth Deaths Identified by Parents

According to the parents, the major causes of death among the male youths of Karūri Village are: Alcohol 30%, drug abuse 25%, crime 15%, diseases 15%, natural death 10% and accidents 5%.

Table 6.2.2: Causes of Male Youth Deaths Identified by Youths

Cause of death	No of respondents	%
Alcohol	8	50%
Disease- HIV/AIDS, STD	5	31%
Crime - robbery and suicide	1	6%
Drug abuse	2	13%
Natural death	-	0%
Accidents	-	0%
Total	16	100%

Figure 6.2.2: Causes of Male Youth Deaths Identified by Male Youths



6.2.2 Causes of Male Youth Deaths Identified by Male Youths

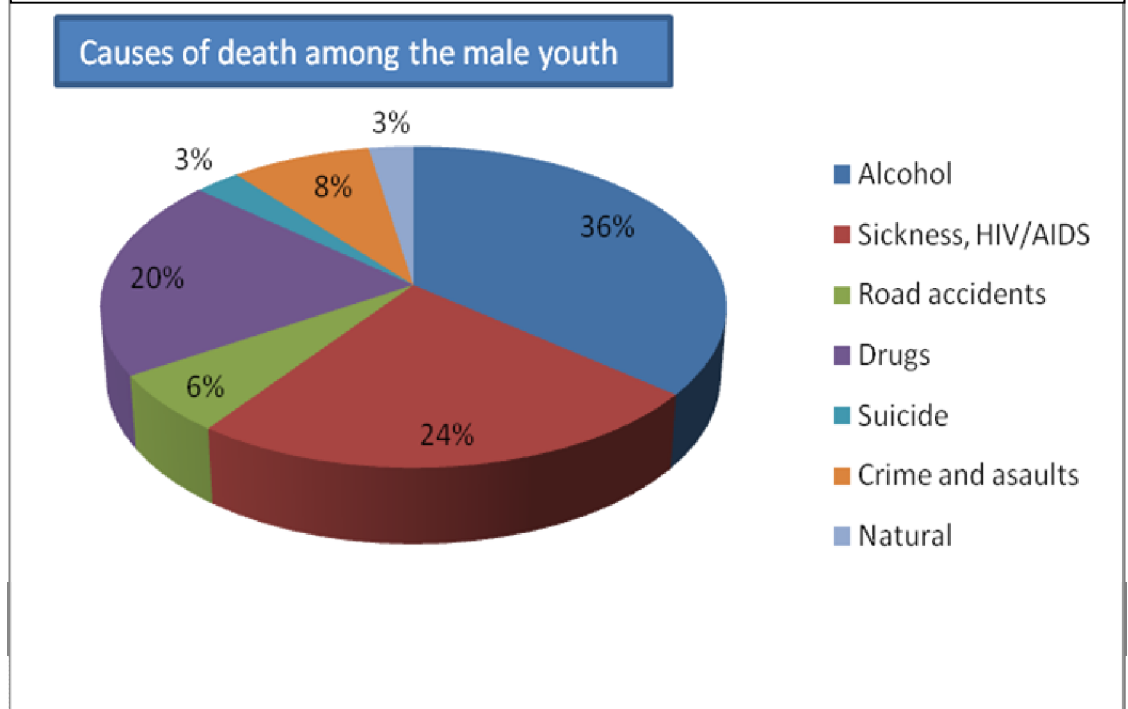
An overwhelming 50% of male youths identified alcohol to be the highest contributor to deaths among the male youths. Another 31% identified diseases, 13% drug abuse and 6% crime as the other causes of death in that order.

Table 6.2.3: Causes of Male Youth Deaths Identified by Administrators	
Cause of death	%
Alcohol	21%
Disease	20%
Accidents	11%
Drug abuse	21%
Suicide	11%
Crime - robbery and suicide	11%
Natural death	5%

6.2.3 Causes of Male Youth Deaths Identified by Administrators

Six administrators involved in the Study responded that the major causes of death among the youths alcohol were alcohol (21%), drug abuse (21%) and diseases (21%). Therefore the three accounted for 62% of the deaths among the youth. Other causes were identified as accidents (11%), suicide (11%), crime (11%) and natural death (5%).

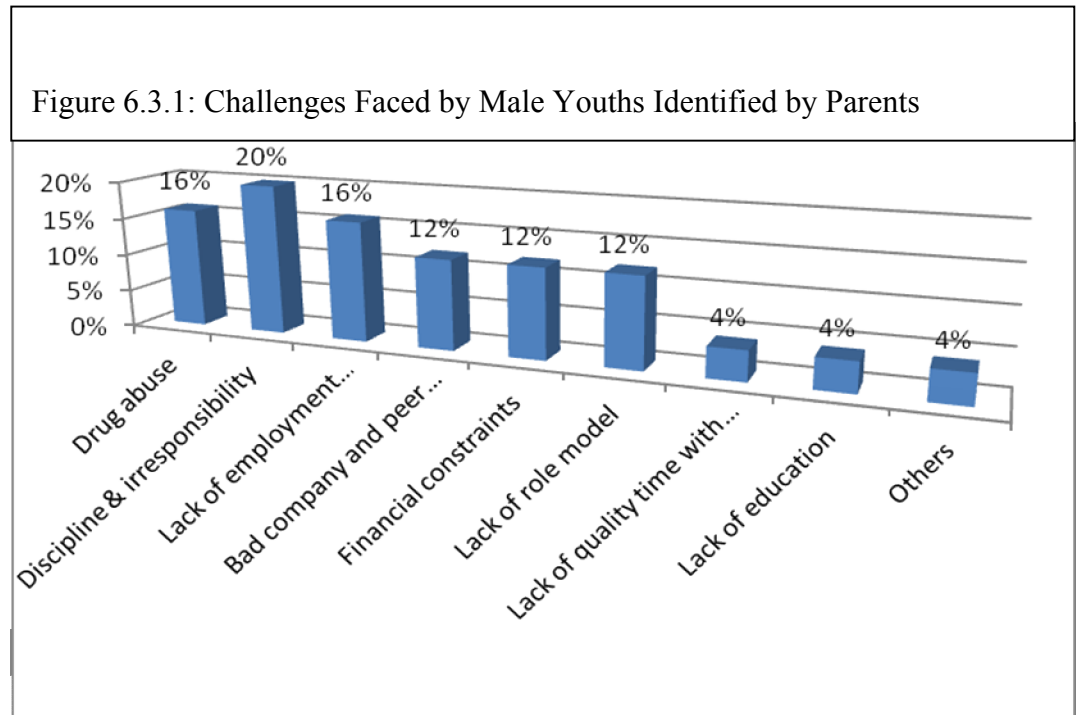
Figure 6.2.3: Causes of Male Youth Deaths Identified by All Respondents



6.2.4 Causes of Male Youth Deaths Identified by All Respondents

A combined analysis data show that the highest contributor to the death of the male youths is alcohol (36%), followed by sickness (24%), drugs(20%), crime(8%), road accidents (6%), suicide(3%)and natural death (3%).

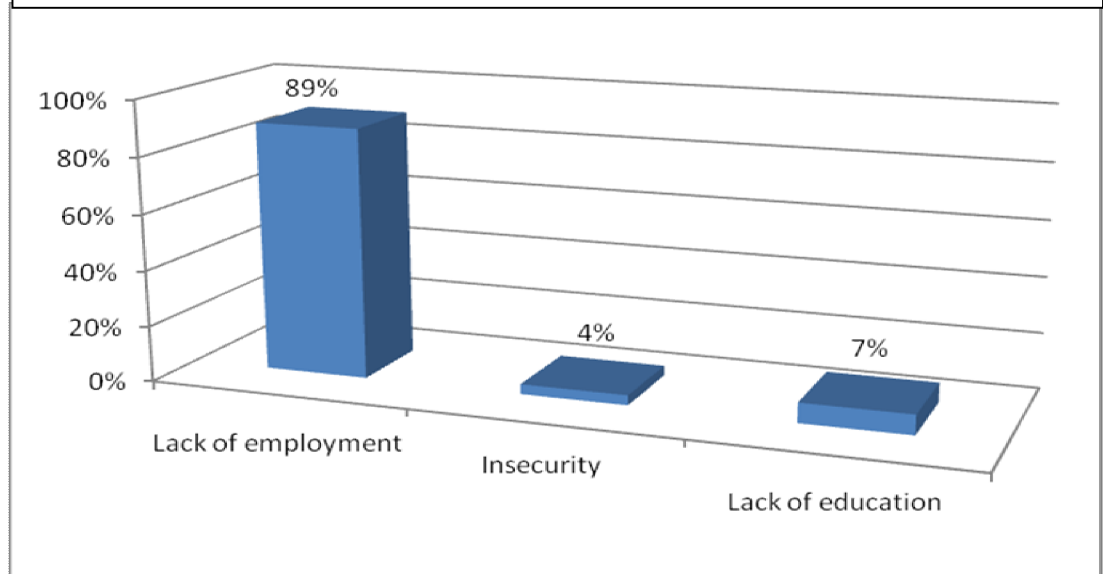
6.3 Challenges Faced by The Karūri Male Youth



6.3.1 Challenges Faced by the Karūri Male Youths Identified by Parents

The parents involved in the Study identified the following as the challenges that face the male youth: indiscipline and irresponsibility (20%), drug abuse and alcohol (16%), lack of employment (16%), financial constraints (12%), lack of role model (12%), bad company and peer pressure (12%), lack of education (4%), lack of quality time with parents (4%) and others at (4%).

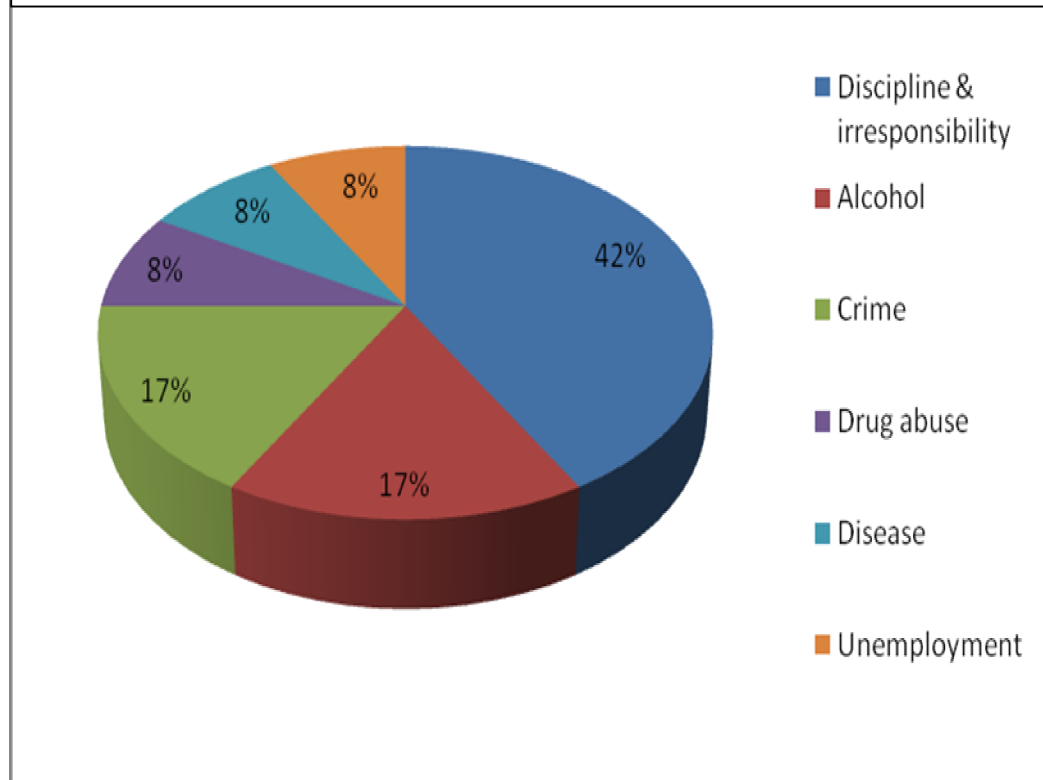
Figure 6.3.2: Challenges Faced by Male Youths Identified by Youths



6.3.2 Challenges Faced by the Karūri Male Youths Identified by the Youths

The youths respondents (89%) identified lack of employment as the major challenges they are facing. Insecurity and lack of education were identified as the other challenges at 4% and 7% respectively.

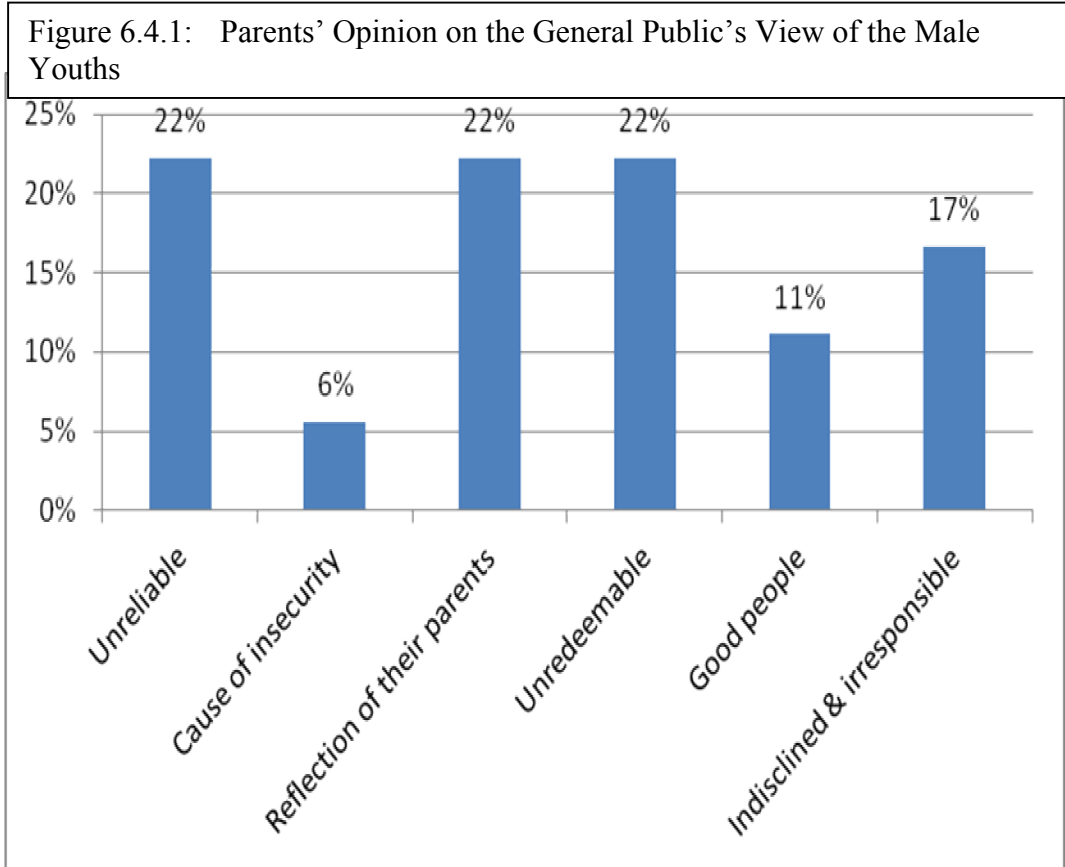
Figure 6.3.3: Challenges Faced by the Karūri Male Youths Identified by the Administrators



6.3.4 Challenges Faced by the Karūri Male Youths Identified by Administrators

The respondents from the administration (42%) identified discipline and irresponsibility as the major challenge facing the youths followed by alcohol at 17%, crime at 17%, abuse of drugs at 8%, diseases at 8% and unemployment at 8%.

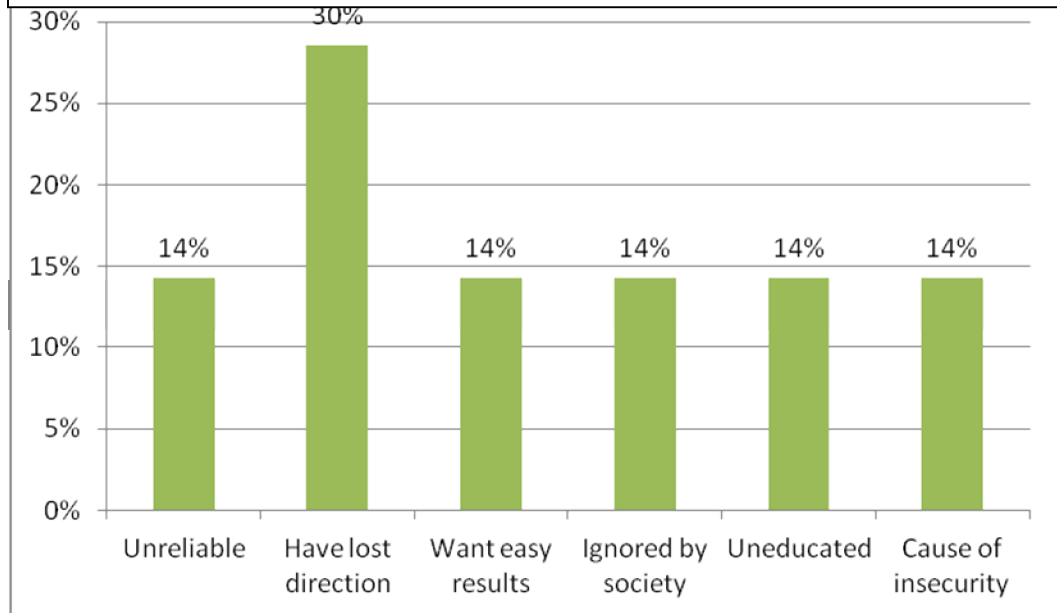
6.4 General Public’s View of the Male Youth



6.4.1 Parents’ Opinion on the General Public’sView of the Male Youth

When asked their opinion on what the public thinks of the male youths, 22% of the parents responded that the public sees the youths as unreliable, 22% said that the public views them as a reflection of their parents and 22% of respondents felt that the public sees the youths as having reached a point where they are unredeemable. 17% of the parents indicated that the public views the youths as undisciplined & irresponsible while 6% indicated that the public views the youths as part of the insecurity experienced in the area. However 11% of the respondents felt that the public views the youths as good people.

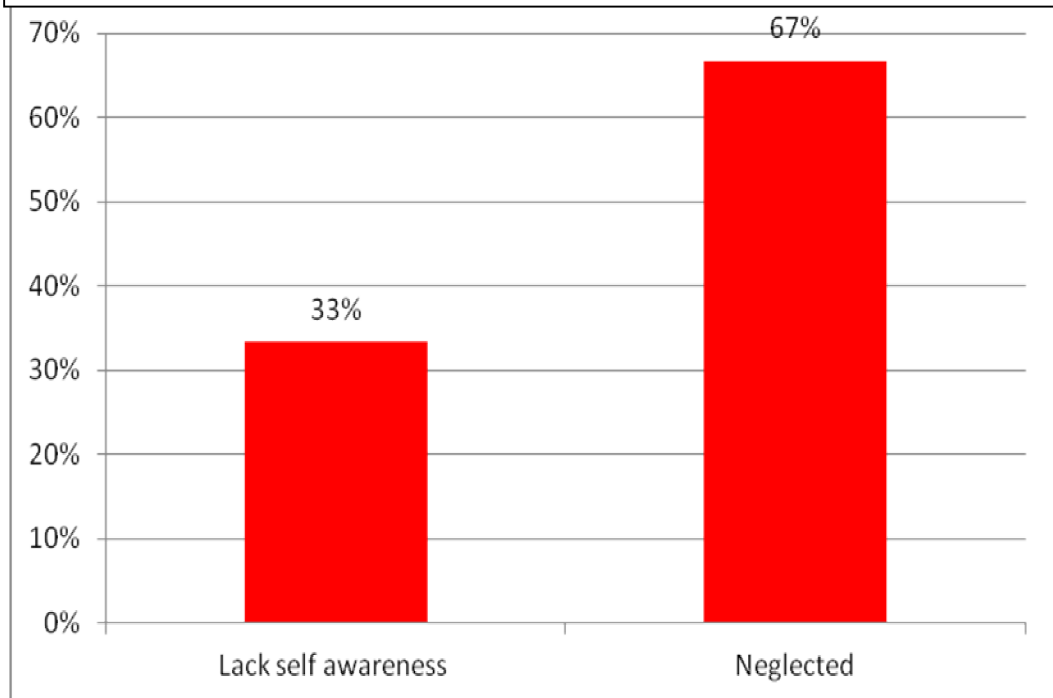
Figure 6.4.2: Administrators' Opinion on the General Public's View of the Male Youths



6.4.2: Administrators' Opinion on the General Public's View of the Male Youth

Thirty percent (30%) of the administrators that took part in the Study felt that the public views the youths as having lost direction while 14% of the respondents think that the public views the youths as unreliable. 14% of the administrators indicated that the public views the youths as uneducated and an equal percentage felt that the public views the youths as part if not the cause of insecurity in the area. Fourteen percent (14%) of the administrators felt that the public has ignored the youths while another 14% felt that the public sees the youths as an impatient lot looking for quick results.

Figure 6.4.3: Priests' Opinion on the General Public's View of the Male Youths



6.4.3: Priest's Opinion on the General Public's View of the Male Youths

The respondents, at 67%, felt that the public sees the youth as neglected while 33% of respondents felt that the public views the youths as people who lack self-awareness.

6.5. The Parents' Parenting Role

Table 6.5.1: The Parents' Role of Bringing up the Male Youths		
	Type of Respondents	
	Priests	Administrators
No	2	6
Yes	0	0
Total	2	6

Table 6.5.1: The Parents' Role in Bringing up the Male Youth

There was a unanimous agreement by all respondents that the parents are not playing their role of parenting.

6.6 Measures Taken by Parents to Address the Impact of the Challenges

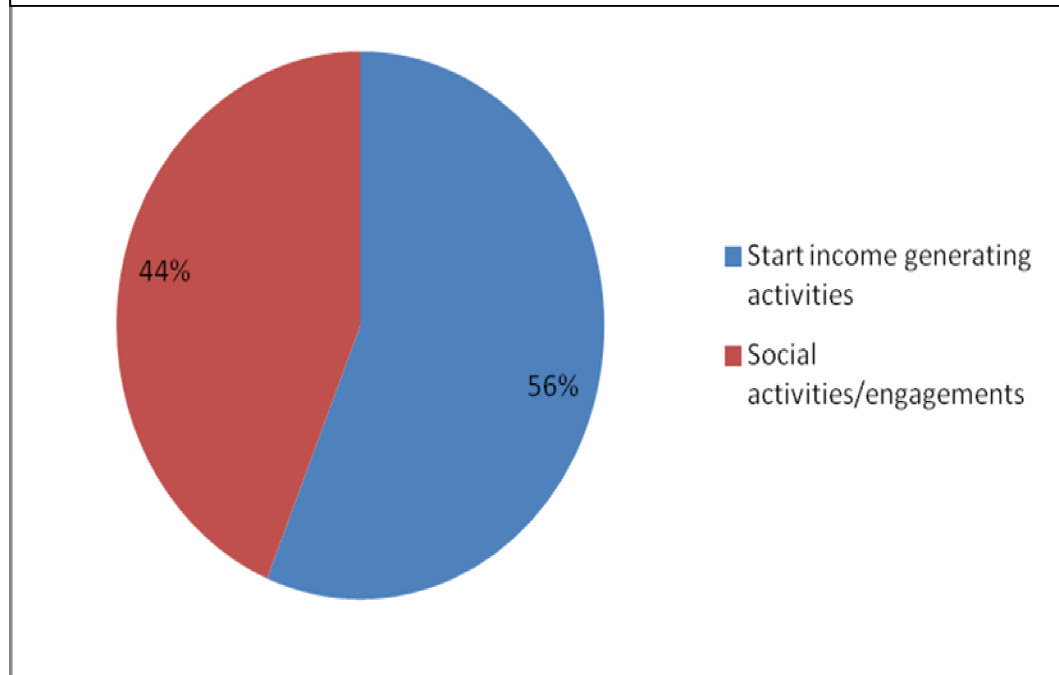
Table 6.6.1: Measures Taken by Parents to Reduce the Impact of the Challenges		
Measure to reduce address the challenge	No. of respondents	%
Counseling and guidance	9	45%
Show love	3	15%
Participate in Church activities	3	15%
Participate in family affairs	2	10%
Praying for them	2	10%
Assist with finances	1	5%
Total	20	100%

6.6.1 Measures Taken by Parents to Reduce the Impact of the Challenges

Forty five percent (45%) of the parents who responded indicated that they have resorted to counseling and guiding the male youths on the challenges facing him, 15% show love, 15% encourage the youths to attend Church and participate in Church activities, 10% pray for them, 10% encourage the youths to participate in family affairs and 5% try to assist with finances.

6.7 Measures the Youths Would Wish to Take to Address the Challenges

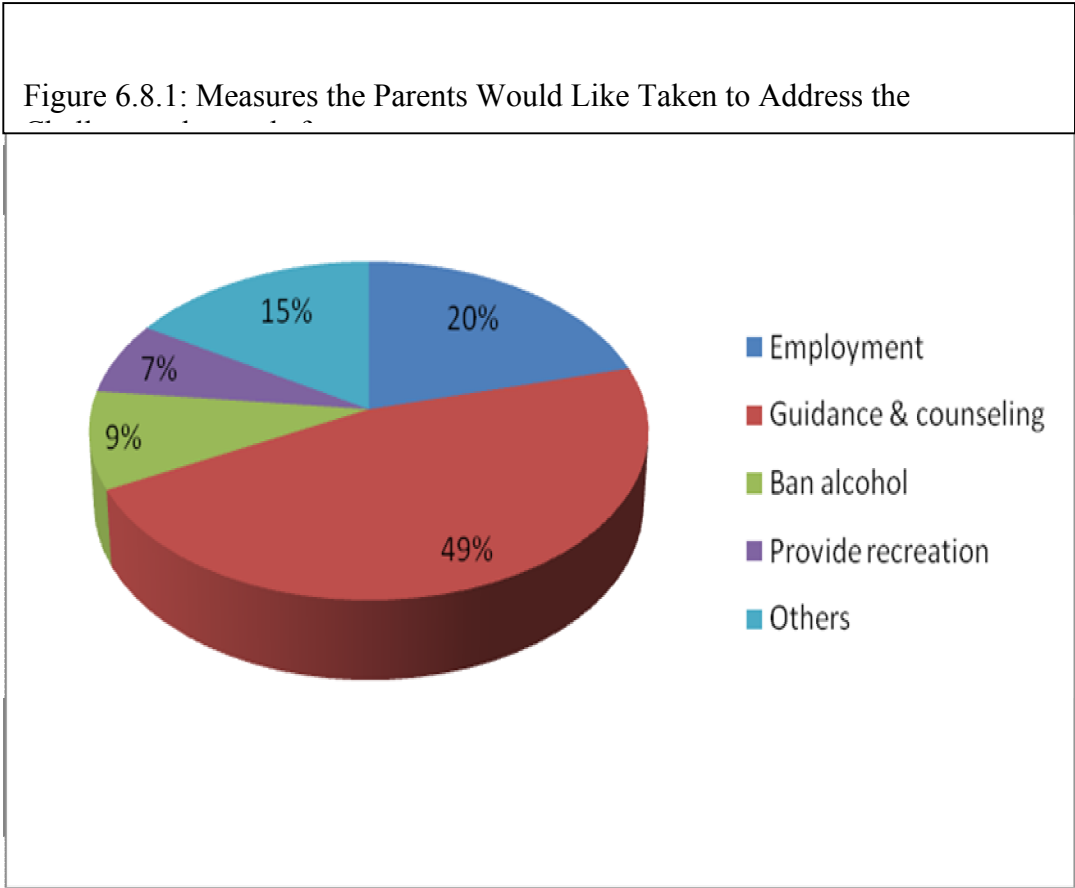
Figure 6.6.1: Measures the Youths Would Wish to Take to Address the Challenges



6.7.1: Measures the Youths Would Wish to Take to Address the Challenges

Fifty six percent (56%) of the male youths respondents indicated that they would wish to start some income generating activity while 44% indicated that they would like to engage in some social activities as a way of addressing the challenges they face.

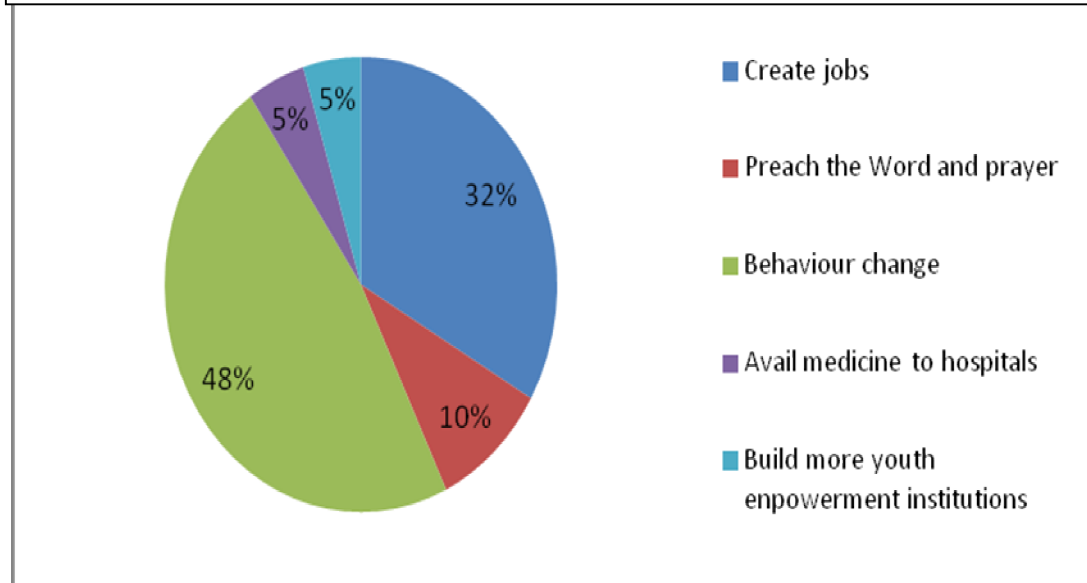
6.8: Recommendations to Address the Challenges



6.8.1: Measures the Parents Would Like Taken to Address the Challenges

Of the parent’s respondents, 49% would like to see guidance & counseling services provided while 20% would like to see the youths employed, 9% would like alcohol to be banned while 7% would like recreation programs to be provided to the youth. 15% of the respondents felt the challenges faced by the youths could be addressed in other ways.

Figure 6.8.2: Measures the Youths Would Like Taken to Address the Challenges Facing Them



6.8.2: Measures the Youths Would Like Taken to Address the Challenges Facing Them

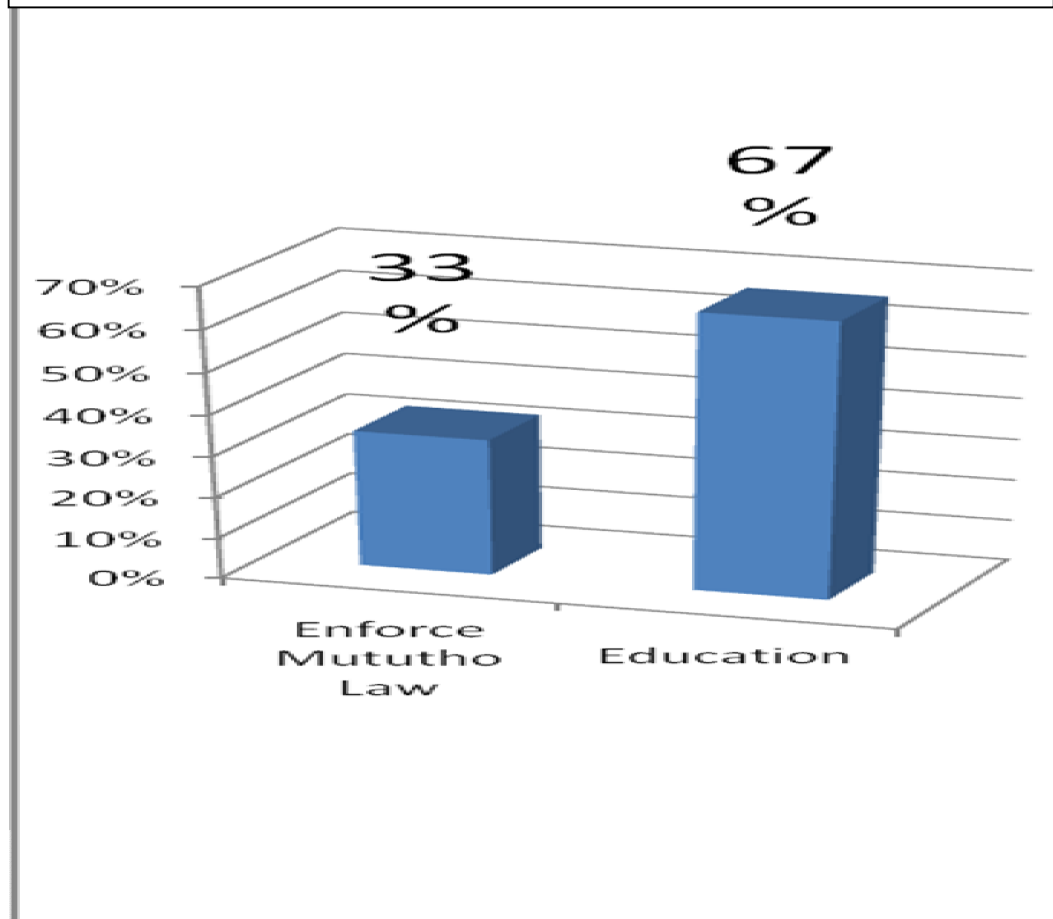
A 48% of the youth's respondents would like to see a behavior change among the youths as the first line address to curbing the challenges they are facing. Another 32% would like to see the creation of jobs for them, 10% would like to be preached to and prayed for, 5% would like to see more medicine availed to hospitals and 5% would like to see more youths empowerment institutions built in Karūri.

Table 6.8.1: Measures Administrators Would Like Taken to Address the Challenges Facing the Youth	
Measure/action required	%
Proper parental care	22%
Employment	11%
Build rehabilitation centre	11%
Counseling & guidance	22%
Road safety measures	11%
Respect rights of the youth	11%
Health education	11%
Total	100%

6.8.3: Measures Administrators Would Like Taken to Address the Challenges Facing the Youth

The percentage of the administrators that would like to see parents taking proper care of their male youths was 22% the same as those who would like to see counseling and guidance services being given to the youth. 11% of the respondents felt that employment was the best option to address challenges faced by the youths while the same percentage of respondents felt that the best measures to be taken should be building rehabilitation centers offering health education road safety measures and respecting the rights of the youths each at 11% advocacy.

Figure 6.8.3: Measures RCC Priests Would Like See Taken To Address The Challenges Facing The Youth

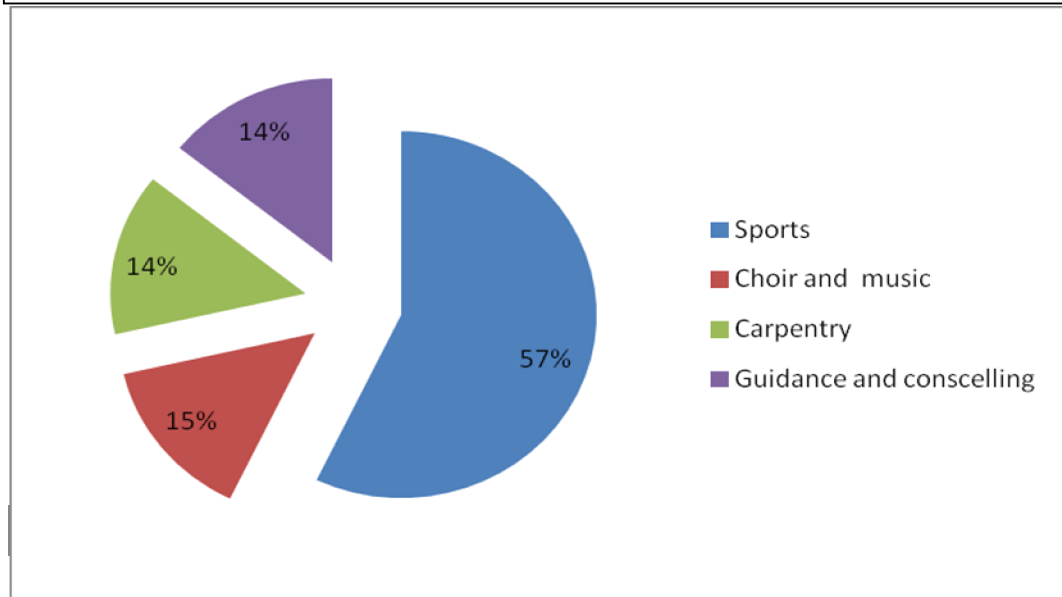


6.8.4: Measures the RCC Clergy Would Like Taken to Address the Challenges Facing the Youth

67% of the RCC priests that took part in the Study indicated that they would like to see the youths receiving education while 33% indicated that they would like to see Mūtutho Law enforced.

6.9 Youths Programs Initiated by the Church

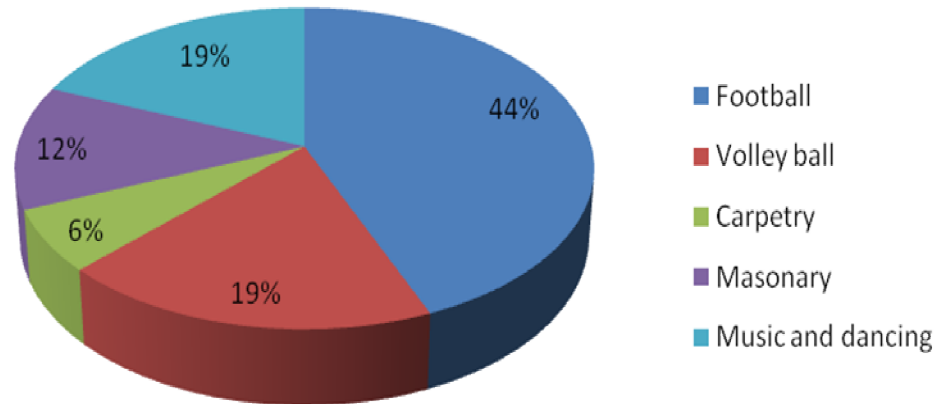
Figure 6.9.1: Youths Programs Initiated by the Church Identified by the Youth



6.9.1: Youths Programs Initiated by the Church Identified by the Youth

The youths identified sports, choir and music, carpentry and guidance and counselling as the programs started by the Roman Catholic Church in Karūri with 57% of them pointing out sports as the major activity which is mainly football, 15% of the respondents pointing that choir and music is the second major Church activity for the youth, 14% indicated guidance and counselling, and 14% mentioned carpentry.

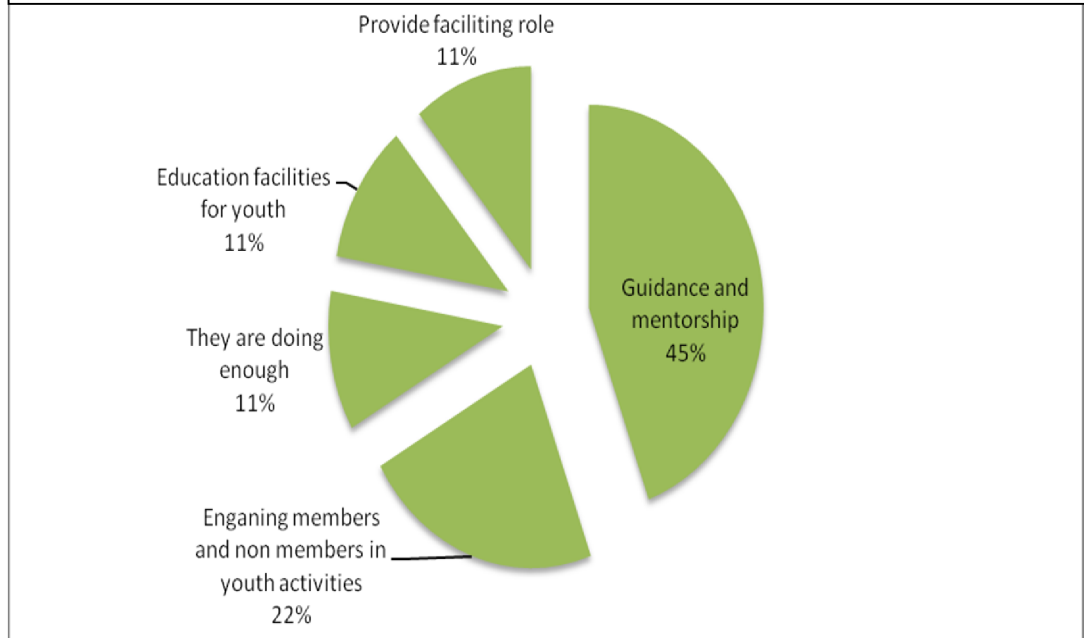
Figure 6.9.2: Social Activities That the Male Youths Engage in Outside Church



6.9.2: Social Activities That the Male Youths Engage in Outside Church

Football again is the main activity which the youths engage in outside the Church. This was identified by 44% of the respondents. Other activities are volleyball at 19%, music and dancing at 19%, masonry at 12% and carpentry at 6%.

Figure 6.9.3: What the Youths Would Like the Church To Do in the Future



6.9.3 What the Youths Would Like to the Church To Do in the Future

In future the youths would like to see the Church concentrating more on guidance and mentorship at 45%. Secondly, the youths want to see the Church being more inclusive by engaging non- members in youth activities at 22%. At the same level of 11%, the youths felt that the Church can provide education facilities like youths polytechnics and take a facilitative position within the society while other youth respondents felt that the Church is already doing enough.

Table 6.9.1: Parents' View on the Church's Contribution to the Youth

Contribution	No. of respondents	%
Guidance & guidance	6	30%
Coming up project to occupy the youth	1	5%
Youths seminar and spiritual nourishment	5	25%
Building recreational centers	1	5%
Attract them to Church/evangelism	1	5%
Preaching against vices	1	5%
Not much	5	25%
Total	20	100%

6.9.4 Parents' View on the Church's Contribution to the Youth

Of the parent respondents, 30% pointed out that the Church contributes more to the youth by guidance and counseling more than any other programs followed by youths seminars and spiritual nourishment at 25%. The rest of the programs have equal contribution to the youths at 5% each. Interestingly a significant 25% of the respondents felt that the Church is not doing much.

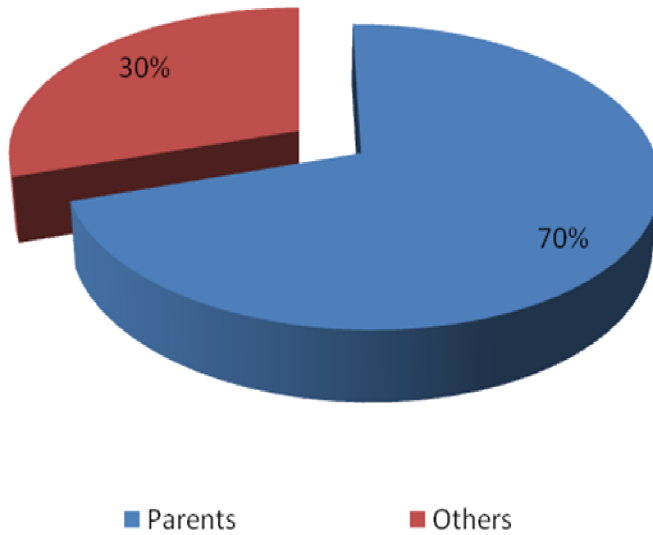
6.10 The Relationship Between Parents and Youth

Table 6.10.1: Type of Authority Exercised at Home by Parents		
Authority	No. of respondents	%
Punishment and rewards	6	30%
Democracy	6	30%
Economic and social	8	40%
Total	20	100%

6.10.1 Type of Authority Exercised at Home by Parents

When answering to the question of what kind of authority they exercise at home, 40% of the parents said they concentrate in fulfilling economic and social needs of the family members, 30% said that they apply democratic power by engaging the youths in family decision making and another 30% said that they exercise their authority by use of punishment and reward.

Figure 6.10.1: Youths' Mentors as Identified by the Youth



6.10.2: Youths' Mentors as Identified by the Youth

The youths indicated that they receive mentorship with 70% of the youths being mentored by the parents especially the father and 30% receiving mentorship from other people like elder brothers, grandmother and uncles.

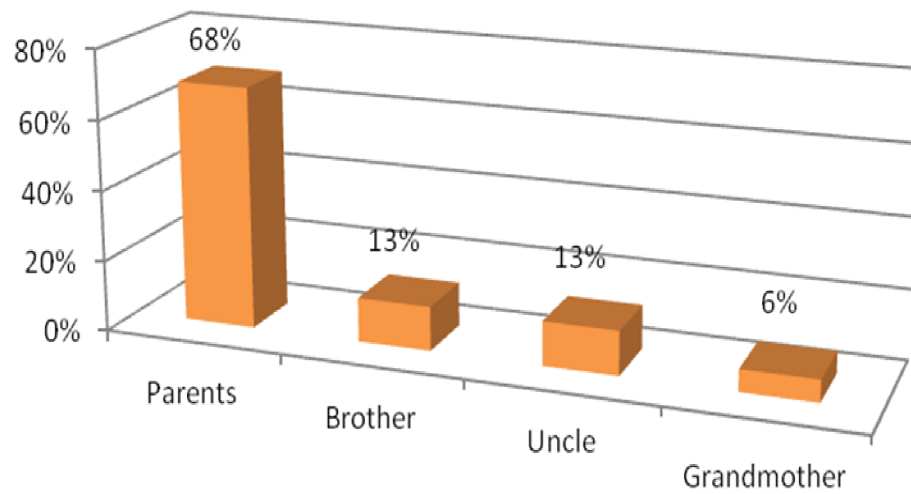
Table 6.10.2: Question to the Parents -Who Normally Mentors the Male Youths in Your Family?

Mentor	No. of respondents	%
Father	11	55%
Mother	3	15%
Other	6	30%
Total	20	100%

6.10.3: Question to the Parents -Who Normally Mentors the Male Youths In Your Family?

When asked who mentors the male youths in their families, the parents pointed out that the father was the number one mentor at 55%, 30% said other mentors while 15% said it is the mother.

Figure 6.10.2: Youths' Answer to The Question - Who Educates You on Male Roles?



6.10.4: Youths' Answer to the Question - Who Educates You on Male Roles /Responsibilities?

The youths said the following while answering to the question of who educates them on male roles, they are taught by their parents at 68%, big brother at 13%, uncle at 13% and grandmother at 6%.

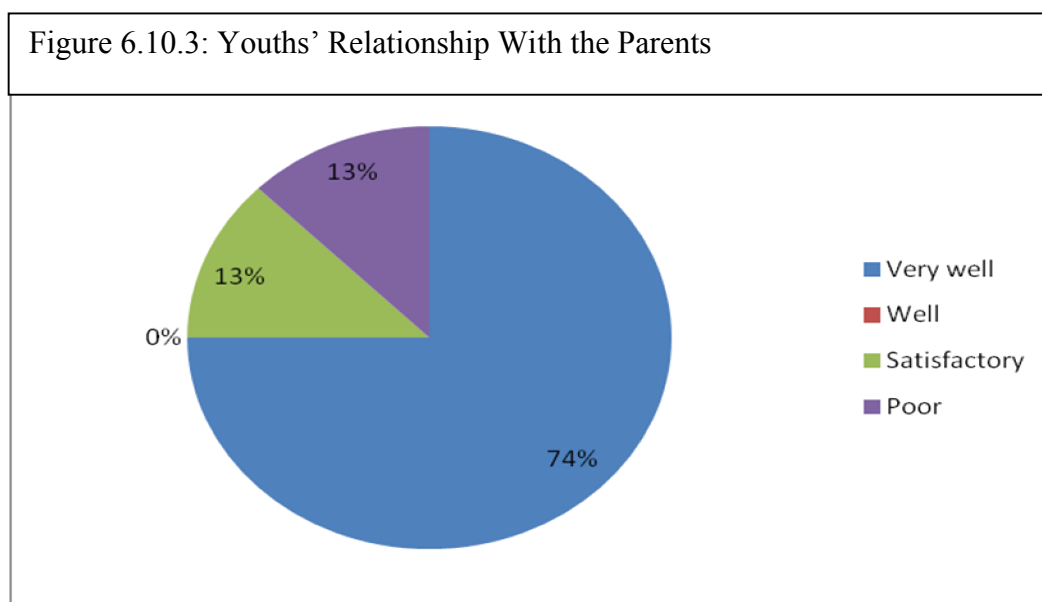


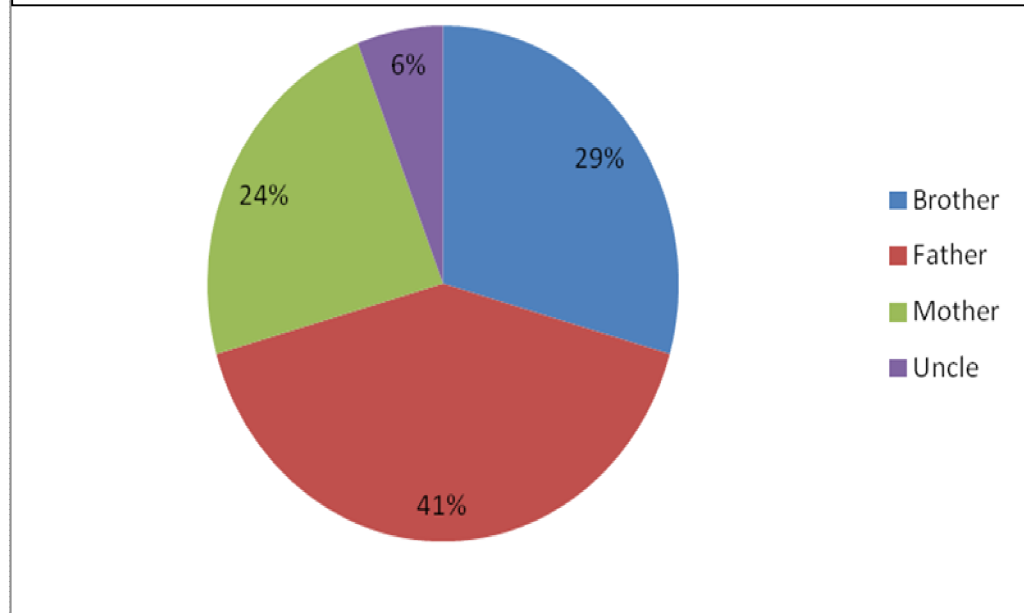
Table 6.10.3: Youths' Relationship With the Parents

Response	No. of respondents	
	Mother	Father
Very good	13	13
Good	0	0
Satisfactory	3	1
Poor	0	4
Total	16	16

6.10.5: Youths' Relationship With the Parents

When the youths were asked to describe their relationship with their parents, a whopping 74% said the relationship is very good, 0% said it is good, 13% said it is satisfactory and another 13% it is poor. When asked to rate the relationship between them and their mother, 81% said their relationship is very good, and 19% said it was satisfactory. No respondents said the relationship was poor. Regarding the state of relationship with their fathers, 69% said it is very good, 25% said it was poor, 6% said it was satisfactory and none said it was good.

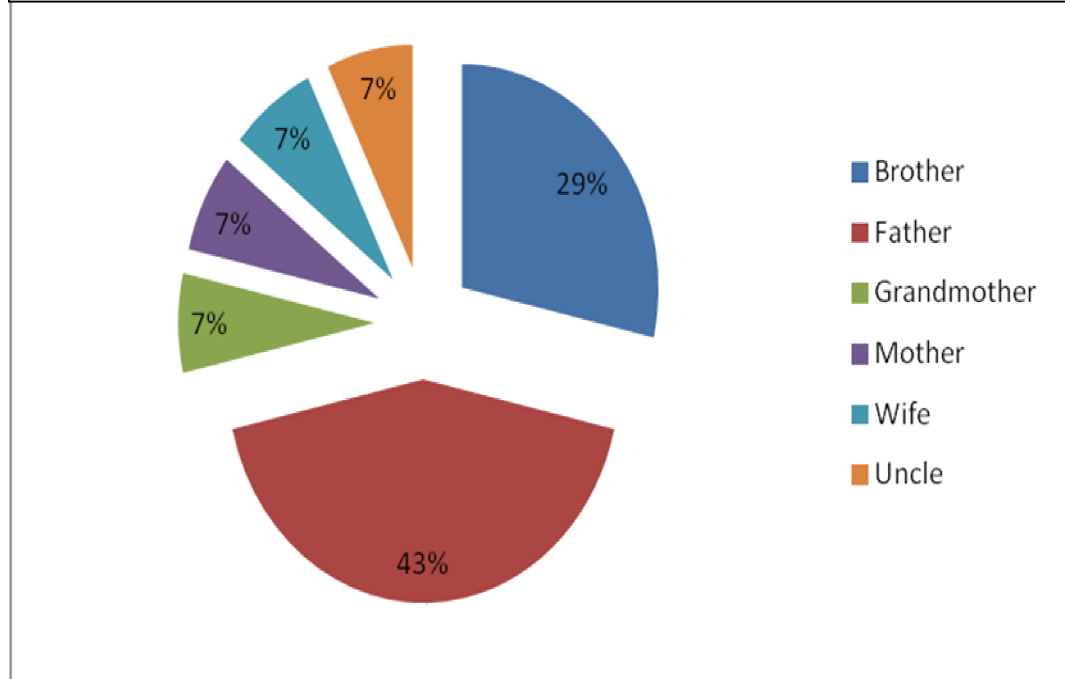
Figure 6.10.4: Who Is Your Role Model In The Family?



6.10.6: Who Is Your Role Model In The Family?

On identifying who their role models are within the family, 41% of youths said it is their father, 29% the big brother, 24% the mother and 6% are mentored by the uncle.

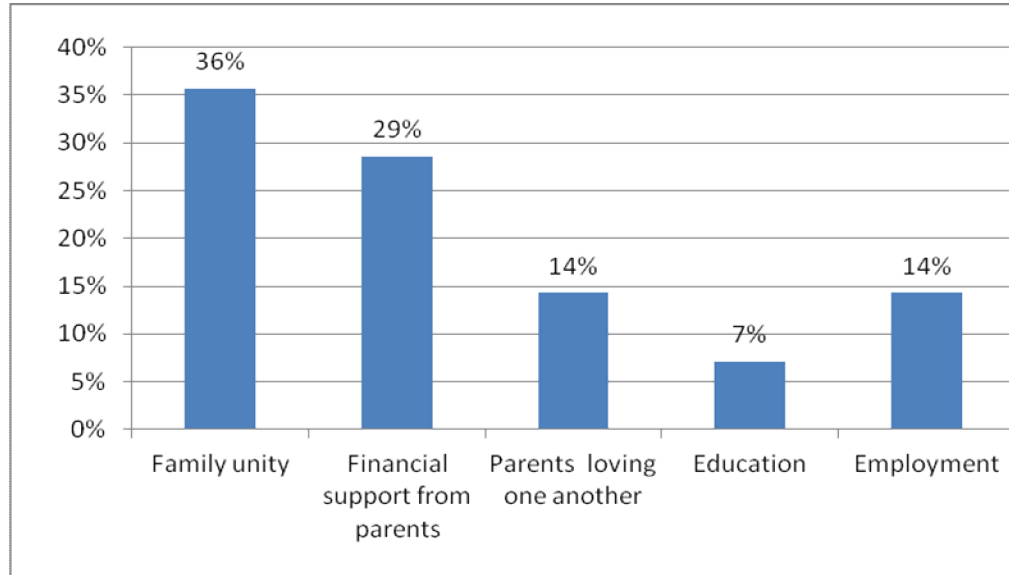
Figure 6.10.5: Whom Do You Share Your Problems With?



6.10.7: Whom Do You Share Your Problems With?

The youths share their problems with a certain person. They singled out that person as father (43%), big brother (29%), mother (7%), wife (7%), uncle (7%) and grandmother (7%).

Figure 6.10.6: Ways to Improve Youth's Relationship With Their Parents



6.10.8: Ways to Improve Youth's Relationship With Their Parents

The youths have the following opinion on the ways the relationship between them and their parents can improve; The family unity being strengthened by standing together when confronted by issues (36%), parents financial support (29%), finding employment (14%), unity of parents showing love towards one another (24%) and acquiring education(7%).

Table 6.10.4: Areas Where Parental Support Is Required by the Youth		
Support required	No. of respondents	%
Financial support	2	13%
Education	1	6%
Parental care, love and moral support	8	50%
None	1	6%
Guidance and ideas	4	25%
Total	16	100%

6.10.9: Areas Where Parental Support is Required by the Youth

The youths are clear on what area they need their parents to support them without fail. The respondent mentioned parental care, love and moral support at 50%, guidance & counseling at 25%, financial assistance at 13%, education at 6%, and another 6% said they do not require any support.

Table 6.10.5: The Family Member the Male Youths Interact With Most

Area of interaction with the youth	No. of respondents							Total
	Father	Mother	Brother	Grand-mother	Uncle	Auntie	Other	
Sharing problems	7	2	4	1	1	0	1	16
Role model	7	4	4	0	1	0	0	16
Mentor	11	3	0	0	0	1	1	16
Total	25	9	8	1	2	1	2	48
Percentage	52.0%	18.6%	16.8%	2.1%	4.2%	2.1%	4.2%	100%

6.10.10: The Family Member the Male Youth Interacts With Most

The father of the youths is the person that the youths considers as the most appropriate member of the family to role model, share their problems with and to mentor them. This was at 52.0% while the mother comes at 18.6%, big brother at 16.8%, grandmother 2.1%, uncle at 4.2%, auntie at 2.1% and other at 4.2%.

6.11 Chapter's Concluding Remark

This Chapter set out to analyze and document the collected research data in figures and diagrams and to draw the relationships between the various data elements in the following manner: Introduction; Causes of premature deaths among the Karūri male youth; Challenges faced by the Karūri male youth; General public's view of the male youth; The parents parenting role; Measures taken by parents to reduce the impact of the challenges; Measures the youths take to address the challenges; Recommendations to address the challenges; What should be done to address the challenges faced by the youth; Youth programs initiated by the Church; The relationship between parents and the youth and the Chapter's concluding remarks. This Chapter and the previous ones have laid the foundation for the next Chapter which deals with the summary and implications of the Study.

CHAPTER SEVEN

SUMMARY, IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUDY, EMERGING RECOMMENDATIONS, AREAS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH AND GENERAL CONCLUSION

7.1 Introduction

The previous Chapter set out to analyze and document the collected research data in figures and diagrams and to draw the relationships between the various data elements. On the basis of what the previous Chapters have elaborated, this last Chapter draws out: Summary; Pastoral implications of the study; Spiritual implications; Catechetical implications; Emerging recommendations; Contribution of the Study; Areas for further research; and General conclusion.

7.2 Summary

The Study set out to investigate the factors leading to premature deaths of male youths in the predominantly RCC Karũri Village of Kĩambu County in the light of Christian Liberation theology, geared towards making recommendations for a more useful ministry to the endangered youth.

The Study's main objective was to investigate the factors leading to the premature deaths of male youths in predominantly RCC Karũri Village, using Christian Liberation Approach. The specific objectives were: To discuss Christian Liberation theology as a vital means for investigating the fatal challenges of male youths; To identify the causes of premature deaths among the male youths in Karũri Village Kĩambu County; To peruse RCC Doctrines and Encyclicals on and about family ministry in view of youths' service; To contrast RCC striking

instructions on family apostolate with the main items regarding premature deaths of male youths in Karūri Village Kĩambu County; To spell out the summary, implications and recommendations of the Study for a more useful ministry to the endangered male youths in Karūri Village and elsewhere.

The Study's main hypotheses was that the model of Christian Liberation theology is an effective means for a profound investigation into factors leading to fatal challenges of male youths in predominantly RCC Karūri Village and the resulting way forward. The following are the specific hypotheses: Christian Liberation theology is a vital means for investigating the fatal challenges of male youths in Karūri Village and elsewhere; Identifying the causes of premature deaths among the male youths in Karūri Village Kĩambu County is indispensable for effective youths' ministry; There is a need to peruse RCC Doctrines and Encyclicals on and about family ministry in view of fruitful youth apostolate; It is important to relate RCC striking instructions on family apostolate with the main items regarding premature deaths of male youths in Karūri Village Kĩambu County; The summary, implications and recommendations drawn from the Study will be useful for a more effective apostolate to the endangered male youths in Karūri Village and elsewhere.

Two theories guided this Study namely: Mediation Theory and Redaction Criticism Theory. Both were engaged by the Study with the view of achieving the main objective of the Study.

From the contribution of the Synod of Bishops from Africa, the Study receives a strong confirmation that the lives of the male youths cannot be destroyed even in the advent of progressive civilization or other practices that prove hostile to life, if Karūri male youth can look to the riches of their own traditions and also to the Faith and in this way find genuine freedom and Christ that leads them to the truth. This also provides our Study with a strong backing in making its contribution to

the reconciliation of the defiant male youths and their parents. The youths are not only the present but above all the future of humanity. It is thus necessary to help young people to overcome the obstacles thwarting their development. In order to meet these challenges, young people should become evangelizers of their peers. No one can do this better than they.

This Study came in handy in conscientizing the leaders that it is important to first examine the challenges confronting the male youths and after doing so, one can then take the necessary steps into transforming the oppressive aspects for the common good. The encyclical *Familiaris Consortio* (The family in the modern world), by Pope John Paul II, also proved very helpful as he defined marriage and detailed out the role of family. He helped the Study in making known that Karūri families can be able to understand their God-given roles and carry them out appropriately. He gives the Karūri family the image of the Church as the “family of God”. It is in the family where there is a total human development and all social values are taught.

The parents learn also that their education role is irreplaceable. Lack of right social values by the Karūri male youths can rightly be described as finding its root in the abandonment of the role of education on social virtues. Pope John Paul further explains the concern for the care of the children within the family. He describes the family as a community of persons where special attention must be devoted to the children by developing a profound esteem for their personal dignity, which is also true for every child.

Despite the changing face of the family, the youths of Karūri Village can grow up to be responsible citizens, with worthy, decent and authentic life. Human life has dignity and is a splendid gift from God and the Church stands for life.

Each individual Christian and every community is called to be an instrument of liberation and promotion of the poor, and for enabling them to be fully part of society. From this exhortation, the wider Christian society in Karūri Village receives the awakening that they have an obligation to make every effort in reaching out to the lost Karūri male youth. Every Lay Christian should take their responsibility to evangelize by virtue of Baptism and Confirmation they have received.

7.3 Pastoral Implications of the Study

1. The Study confirmed that Christian Liberation theology is a useful tool for investigating the premature deaths among the male youth. This theory helped the researcher insert herself into the situation of the Karūri male youth, analyze the challenges and why they occur and then relate the findings to the will of God and bring forth reflective transforming action. The Study confirmed that it is not the will of God for the youth to die prematurely. They need a re-establishment of their authenticity. The Karūri male youth has to strive for emancipation, just like *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* puts it, in fact the parents too need liberation.

In Raymond F. Collin's book titled *Introduction to the New Testament*, E. Kasemann, G. Bornkamm and others offer those concerned insights to critically source from the Bible. Christian Liberation theology and insights sourced through Redaction Criticism should be the focal point upon which the Karūri male youths reach out for the remedy to the challenges they face.

2. As the Study has learnt from *African Christian Theology-An Introduction*, the Church should be involved in the process of liberation because her role is to help in the alleviating of physical suffering as well as to guide the followers towards spiritual fulfillment. The Church needs to be viewed as a "school" where people need to realize fuller human dignity. As the good shepherd leads

His flock to greener pastures so should a priest lead his congregation towards a better life here on earth. His role is to be a facilitator – a leader who is a follower, a master who is a servant, a teacher who is a learner. The Christian faith maintains that total liberation is possible only if people take seriously their dependence on God.

3. *Evangelii Gaudium* lists some of the challenges that youths face in contemporary Africa such as poverty, idleness and drug abuse. Such youths should be evangelists to their peers, as a way of emancipating their lives from the challenges. In this case the pastor can provide the necessary training to the youth for the ministry. The challenge to the pastors is to ensure that his flock understands the essentials of Christian faith and evaluate whether they live accordingly. The theological insights need to be emphasized as the Church continues to make its contribution to the process of liberation.
4. There is a greater push to have RCC Karūri get involved in activities aimed at providing solutions to the issues affecting the male youths, among them the lack of income generating projects. While the Church may take up the challenge, she should not lose her focus; that of teaching the word.
5. In addition to the above, the pragmatic sympathy Jesus manifested in encountering the funeral procession of a young male, son of the widow of Nain, who the mother expected to live to bury her as recorded in Luke's Gospel (Luke 7:11-17) as explained earlier is something to be taken with the seriousness it deserves. It was explained that, as the best model of Liberator, Jesus took the initiative empathizing with the mother as He resurrected her son to continue playing the role a son is expected to play for the good of the family in particular and the community in general. This phenomenon serves us with a strong passion to provoke especially the Christians, more so that of

Karūri Village, to be thus concerned as Jesus was for the common good of the youth.

7.4 Spiritual Implications

1. The Karūri community faced with many life challenges has to grapple with the issue of the premature deaths of its male youth. Alcohol is the major cause of death among the male youths of Karūri. The purpose of death, as elaborated by the *Dictionary of the Biblical Theology*, has a physical and spiritual meaning and that the origin of death is sin thereby implying that the death of the male youths in Karūri does not serve any purpose. It is in vain.
2. Jesus Christ is an exemplary teacher and a liberator. According to the Gospels, He liberated the oppressed including resurrecting to life the dead son of the widow of Nain (Luke 7:11-17). Jesus Himself suffered oppression in the hands of the Roman authorities but through His death and resurrection He conquered death. The male youths of Karūri can look up to Jesus for inspiration and demonstration of life that knows no limitation that will help them live purposeful lives.
3. The Synod of Bishops tells us the youths are the future of humanity and so need to be helped to overcome their challenges. Based on this the youths should be educated for liberation. If education is the process of positive character formation and liberation is the process towards realization of total freedom, it is clear that there is intimate connection between the two. All education should be for liberation, if we think of it as extending beyond the classroom, as learnt from *African Christian Theology- An Introduction*.
4. Intimate union with Christ is maintained by the spiritual help common to all the faithful, by active participation in the liturgy. All Church members thus

including the male youths and their parents are able to receive this help as they continue in their union with Christ. Jesus Christ will never leave nor forsake his children. St. Paul advises that there is no trial encounter that has not been experienced before, thereby guaranteeing victory in Christ to the suffering no matter the situation.

5. *In African Christian Studies*, P. N. Wachege explains that the Gikũyũ world view is vitalistic. Therefore the vital challenges faced by the male youth hampers not only the social economic and political welfare, but also the youth's fullness of life. Jesus Christ experienced suffering at every level. He overcame all and also conquered death. Jesus is the liberator par excellence and a great teacher. He is an example to the Karũri male youth. The youths therefore can advance or liberate their very lives by faith and embrace the best practice of Christianity.
6. The Karũri male youths who are living un-authentically, need to reclaim their dignity, since every human has dignity even the poor, according to Church teachings. The Bible says (Gen 1:16-27) that man is made in the image of God which is of freedom and dignity. It is therefore the expectation that Karũri male youths should look upon Jesus who grew up in a humble family background and did not disappoint his parents despite the fact that they were not rich. The youths should therefore strive to have their dignified life restored. This can be the point of departure for the youth's liberation struggle.

7.5 Catechetical Implications

Catechetical implications are closely linked to spiritual and pastoral implications.

1. The Church should be aware of the rapid social change that is happening today which is affecting the youth. These changes are partly due to modernization and the Church should be active in contextualizing her teaching

on the family. In the traditional African society every family member was assigned a role that ensured that no one was idle. In the contemporary society due to the social change that has been brought about by modernization, this kind of arrangement is no longer there.

2. The major challenge facing the youths in Karūri Village is lack of employment. Because the youths are not engaged in any gainful activity they have a lot of free time on their hands. This leads them more often than not to engaging in undesirable activities such as crime. This is an eye opener and an opportunity for the pastoral team to rethink on the youth's programs and their contents, taking into consideration the above challenge.
3. Marriage has changed from the original definition by the Church over time. As it is observed in today's marriage rituals (ceremonies), there is a lot of emphasis on the ceremony itself. There is more to financial and physical planning than spiritual preparedness. The original Biblical purpose of marriage needs to be reviewed again by the Church.
4. The Church teaches that life is sacred; Africans value and protect it. Any process that promotes life carries a lot of importance with it and has to be preserved. African values taught through rites of passage, needs to be acculturated with equivalent Church teachings. Consequently the agents of the family ministry need to see this as a resource for effective family ministry.

7.6 Emerging Recommendations

1. Instructions detailed out in the Christian Liberation Theology together with Biblical insights sourced through Redaction Criticism should be the pivotal point upon which the Karūri male youths source for solutions to the fatal challenges that lead to their premature death.

2. In order to maintain moral standards the parents and the Church must understand the importance of morality and actively participate in sanctioning it. To be effective, the teaching of morality should be done as part of instructions by Church. From the Study it is clear that the youth, parents and Church have to confront the challenge that is facing the male youths and find ways to exhaustfully deal with this problem. Though adolescence can bring about defiance in young people, this should not be generalized to all the male youths in Karūri.
3. Through the contribution of H. Peschke this Study can recommend to parents to play their parenting role diligently. In doing so they contribute in a big way to the change in their son's behavior. One of the important reasons for failure in enforcing morality is lack of examples or models who young people can emulate. It is essential that parents make a serious effort to be examples of what they wish their sons to be.
4. Parents are the unique educators and protectors of their children. This is a God-given responsibility and is also a great one. It's a responsibility that should occupy them from the youth's childhood years right through to their adult life. It is one of the great privileges of being a parent and they should not allow anything to take this responsibility from them. As Catholic families they are bound to base their lives upon the Church's teaching. Therefore parents should read and have available both Encyclicals and the Catechism of the Catholic Church, and use these texts in discussion with their children. It is recommended that parents learn as much of these Church teachings as they can before their children reach their teenage years.
5. The parents should create a culture of answering teenage questions with good resources such as Encyclicals and the Catechism. This ensures both can have an informed discussion. Again Pope John Paul, in *Familiaris Consortio*, gives instructions for families to live in holiness and prayer as Catholics.

6. Concerning the moral values that their children and teenagers are being taught, the parents are advised to also read the definitive Vatican document “*The Truth and Meaning of Human sexuality*”, in order to understand what is (and is not) appropriate. The parents should strive to know exactly what material is being offered to their children, and be able to comment on it.
7. There should be a critical understanding of Catholic Church’s magisterial teachings on the sacredness and dignity of life. This understanding will conscientize the male youths to disengage themselves from life threatening activities and live as dignified people. The male youths must realize that above parents, God is. In this case hope in God should never be lost but must be kept alive. Irrespective of limitations, God is a provider. God sent Moses the liberator after hearing the cry of Israelites - consequently maintaining a constant union with God and through prayer God can answer to their situation.
8. As the Study has learnt from the book *Theology of Hope* by J. Moltmann, the youths should not abandon their hope through despair. Despair is the loss of confidence in the goodness and mercy of God in His divine assistance. Despair also drives one to seek some kind of satisfaction in form of hedonism or may lead to the loss of the will to work and live and eventually end life by suicide. The youth should embrace Faith, which is being sure of what is hoped for and certain of what is not seen (Heb. 11:1).
9. A demand is made on the Roman Catholic Church Karūri to review her approach to family ministry and as the Synod of Bishops also agrees, there is need to Inculturate teachings from African and Christian rites to ensure the right values are taught to the male youth. This is also supported by the contribution of H. Kinoti, that the Church should teach the Gikūyū ways which are good alongside the attempt to evangelize people.

10. As the Study has learnt from *African Christian Theology-An Introducti*, the Church should be involved in the process of liberation because her role will be to help in the alleviating of physical suffering as well as to guide her followers towards spiritual fulfillment. As the good shepherd leads His flock to greener pastures so should a priest lead his congregation towards a better life here on earth.
11. Christian Mission, according to St. Paul is reconstructive, heralding a new society that is built on the foundation of the old one. The minds of the male youths should be renewed and avoid the risk of becoming so conformed to the norms of this world, as to be rendered incapable of transforming it (Rom. 12:1-2).
12. The community expects the Church to play an even wider role of getting deeply concerned and going to the full length of actively and constantly engaging with the community to understand and work out solutions to nagging social problems like that of premature deaths of male youths. As Benjamin Kiriswa instructed the Study with his assessment of the image of the Church as “Family of God”, despite the shortcomings earlier observed, Lay Christians should not be too dependent on the Clergy instead of playing the witnessing role they are entitled to by virtue of their Baptism and Confirmation. This is a vivid wakeup call for getting involved in the welfare of the challenged male youths in Karūri and elsewhere and all other areas of evangelization.
13. The effect of a cash economy, corruption, dishonesty and other evils are characteristics of the modern Gikūyū society. The Church should help parents and youths recover the right attitude to material possessions to human beings and human relationships. Work should be seen as something which gives satisfaction when it is well done and when it has been used as a means of helping others.

14. The County Government of Kĩambu should institute measures to prevent substance abuse by the youth. These could include policy interventions, community educational programs on alcohol and drug use and fully operationalize the Mūtutho Law.

7.7 Contribution of the Study

Having dealt with the preceding seven Chapters, the Study enriches the reader with the following contributions:

1. This Study comes as an eye opener to the Church that the Karũri family is in crisis arising from various factors of which one is social change in society. This understanding will enable the Church to contextualize her messages and remodel her youth ministry in the contemporary Karũri society.
2. The male youth of Karũri are faced with many challenges, unemployment being the major challenge that drives them to engage in immoral and illegal activities. The Study therefore has brought out unemployment as the major obstacle in the male youths life. The Church leaders acting as liberators can use this knowledge to draw up a practical plan of action that engages the wider society in emancipating the male youth.
3. This Study informs the parents, the Church and the society at large that the parenting role in Karũri has fallen short of the expected standard. Despite the sorrow the parents experience when they lose their sons, through this Study they come to understand that, firstly they have contributed to the irresponsible behavior of their sons and secondly that as parents they have the key to direct their sons' lives to better end through proper parenting.
4. The Study uncovered that the premature deaths experienced by male youths in Karũri Village can be explained by many factors. Anybody trying to offer

solutions to solve the youth's problems should not consider any one factor in isolation.

5. Premature deaths of male youth in Karūri continue to occur despite existence of a raft of Government programs targeting the youth. They are able to drink heavily despite the existence of Mututho Law. The Study therefore has uncovered the poor methods of Government interventions in solving social problems facing the youth such as laxity in implementing the Mututho Law in Karūri Village.

7.8 Areas of Further Research

From this ending Study, the following are potent areas for further research:

The male youths in Karūri indicated that their preferred role models are their fathers. A Study is recommended with the aim of examining whether the fathers are equipped to be role models in a Christian setting.

The family, including the Christian family, is in crisis. Morals among the youth are wanting. The youths are dying prematurely. A Study is also recommended to investigate the relationship between the parenting received by the male youths and their behavior that leads to premature death.

In addition to the above, as explicated in the Study, "Family model" adopted mainly by the African Church is profoundly God-centered. God is central in Church's divine origin, mission, continuity and care. God, therefore, plays the role of the father/mother of the Church just like the African parent is connected to their families. Such a convergence of African experience and the Church, if and when deeply investigated and more comprehensively reflected upon should enable not just Karūri parents towards deeper confidence in handling premature

deaths of their male youths, but it would be invaluable for the welfare of the “Family of God” in general.

One of the other main areas triggered by the Study for further research is that of handling the two genders i.e. males and females and from a wider and more comprehensive scope using not just the Liberation Approach but also intertwining this model with Inculturation perspective. The issue here is not just limiting the Study to premature deaths among the male youths or female youths. It is that of tackling the integral family whereby the two genders complement one another using both Christian Liberation and Inculturation approaches in which the case Study is widened from Karūri Village to make the Study more comprehensive and even more significant. The rationale is that the family is the very core of people belonging to both genders where one’s beingness and socialization and all that appertains to the healthy vitality, dynamism, community, sacrality and yonder life are ordinarily taken care of. It is as a result of evil inflicted upon such family set up that challenges like the disturbing one the Study has tackled and many others originate. As such through the inspiration of our Study, a most useful area for further Study would be that on gender inclusive parenting through Christian holistic liberation and Inculturation handled, and from a wider scope. This is an area which, if all goes well and by the grace of God, the researcher intends to grapple with at Doctoral level to come up with a more comprehensive more significant contribution for the common good.

7.9 General Conclusion

The Study’s main objective was to investigate the factors leading to premature deaths of male youths in predominantly RCC Karūri Village using Christian Liberation Approach with the aim of contributing towards the youth’s redemption. Accordingly the specific objectives were: To discuss Christian Liberation theology as a vital means for investigating the fatal challenges of male youths; To identify the causes of premature deaths among the male youths in

Karūri Village Kĩambu County; To peruse RCC Doctrines and Encyclicals on and about family ministry in view of youths' apostolate; To contrast RCC striking instructions on family apostolate with the main items regarding premature deaths of male youths in Karūri Village Kĩambu County; To spell out the summary, implications and recommendations of the Study for a more useful ministry to the endangered male youths in Karūri Village and elsewhere.

The Study tested the entire hypotheses and confirmed them. The main hypothesis was that the model of Christian Liberation theology is an effective means for a profound investigation into factors leading to fatal challenges of male youths in predominantly Roman Catholic Karūri Village and resulting way forward. The following are the specific hypotheses: Christian Liberation theology is a vital means for investigating the fatal challenges of male youths in Karūri Village and elsewhere; Identifying the causes of premature deaths among the male youths in Karūri Village Kĩambu County is indispensable for effective youths' ministry; There is a need to peruse RCC Doctrines and Encyclicals on and about family ministry in view of youths' apostolate; It is important to relate RCC striking instructions on family apostolate with the main items regarding premature deaths of male youths in Karūri Village Kĩambu County; The summary, implications and recommendations drawn from the Study are useful for a more effective apostolate to the endangered male youths in Karūri Village and elsewhere.

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APPENDIX I: LETTER OF INTRODUCTION

August 15, 2013

Father-in-Charge
Roman Catholic Church
Karūri Parish

Dear Sir,

RE: PERMISSION TO CARRY OUT RESEARCH IN YOUR ZONE

My name is Florida G. Rūgendo, a student at the University of Nairobi pursuing a Master of Arts degree. I am currently conducting a research on “**Factors leading to premature deaths of male youths in predominantly Roman Catholic Church Karūri Village, Kīambu County: Christian Liberation Approach**” in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the degree.

The choice and scope of the research topic will require me to gather information from your Parish. The purpose of this letter is therefore to seek your permission and assistance in facilitating the Study.

Any information gathered during the research will be kept in confidence and will not be shared or used for any other purpose other than for the fulfillment of the Masters degree at the University of Nairobi.

Yours faithfully,

Rūgendo, Florida G.

APPENDIX II: QUESTIONNAIRES

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Do not write your name anywhere in this document.
2. These questions are meant for the Study purposes only and your cooperation will be highly appreciated.
3. Participation in the Study is voluntary.
4. The information gathered shall be held with ultimate confidentiality.
5. Tick in the provided box, , to indicate the appropriate answer or fill your response on the space provided.

1. QUESTIONNAIRE FOR THE PARENTS WITH A DECEASED MALE YOUTH

1. How are you related to the departed youth?

Father Mother

2. How old are you?

14-25years 17-35years 35-50years Above 51 years

3. Marital status

Married Single Divorced Separated Widowed

4. How many children do you have?

.....

5. Do you have any son/s of the ages between 14 and 35 years? Yes No

6. What is your occupation?

Employed Self employed Not employed Other

7. What is your education Level?

University Tertiary college High school
Primary school None

8. What is your average monthly income?

Above KShs 30,000 KShs 15,000-30,000 KShs 5,000 – 15,000
KShs 1,000-5,000 KShs 1,000 and below

9. What is your denomination?

Catholic ACK Other

10. Do you attend Church as an individual?

Yes No

11. Do you attend Church together as a family?

Yes No

12. Do you pray and read any Scripture with your children?

Yes No

13. Do you exercise your authority at home in terms of

a) Punishment and reward

b) Engaging your male youths in decision making

c) Provision of family needs

14. Who normally mentors the male youths in your family?

Father Mother Elder Brother Other

15. Do you feel the mentoring is adequately done?

Yes No

16. What would you say are the major challenges of raising a male youth?

.....
.....
17. What measures do you take to address the challenges?
.....
.....

18. What in your view is the Church doing about challenges faced by the male youth?

19. What in your view is the administration doing about challenges faced by the male youth?

20. What do you think are the main causes of death among the male youths in Karūri Village?

Rank them:

a) _____

b) _____

c) _____

21. What do you think should be done to curb the death of the male youths in Karūri Village?
.....
.....

22. In your own opinion, what is the general view of the Villagers about the male youth's behavior in the Village?
.....
.....

23. Please answer the following about your departed son

a) What caused his death?

.....
Could the death have been prevented? Yes No

b) Please explain
.....
.....

24. What was his education level?

University Tertiary college High school

Primary school No education

25. What was his occupation?

Student Farmer Businessman Employed
Not employed Other

26. Did your son have any responsibility in the Church? Yes No

27. Which responsibilities?

.....
.....

28. How would you describe your late son's social life?

.....
.....

2. QUESTIONNAIRE FOR THE CHURCH LEADERS

1. Gender

Male Female

2. How old are you?

25-35years 35-45years Above 45 years

3. Church name.....

4. Position held

5. What is the Church membership?.....

6. What is the membership of the male youth?.....

7. What does your Church believe is the role of a male youths in the society?
.....
.....

8. Did he play any role in your Church?

Yes No

9. Which role?
.....
.....

10. Does your Church have youth programs for the male youth?

Yes No

11. Briefly describe the youth ministrty in your Church
.....
.....

12. According to your experience what would you say are the major challenges of raising a male youths in Karūri?
.....
.....

13. What measures does the Church take to address the challenges?

.....
.....
14. What in your view is the administration doing about challenges faced by the male youth?
.....
.....

15. What do you think is the main cause of death among the male youths in Karūri Village?

Rank them:

a) _____

b) _____

c) _____

16. What do you think should be done to curb the death of the male youths in Karūri Village?
.....
.....

17. In your own opinion, what is the general view of the Church about the male youth's behavior
in the Village?
.....
.....

18. In your own opinion, what is the general view of the public about the male youth's behavior
in the Village?
.....
.....

19. Do you generally think the parents in Karūri have played their role well in bringing up their
male youth?

Yes

No

3. QUESTIONNAIRE FOR THE YOUTH

1. How old are you?

14-20years 19-25years 26-35years

2. What is your education Level?

University Tertiary college High school
Primary school Not educated

3. Are you in school now? Yes No

4. If not why?

.....

5. Do you smoke? Yes No

6. Do you drink alcohol? Yes No

7. Do you go to Church? Yes No

8. What is your religious denomination?

Protestant Catholic other

9. What is your role in your Church

.....

10. Did you know the departed youth?

Yes No

11. Did he play any role in your Church?

Yes No

12. If yes, Which?

.....

.....

13. Does your Church have youth programs for the male youth?

Yes No

14. Please name the programs you know of:

.....
.....

15. Which ones are you engaged in?

.....
.....

16. Do you think the Church could have assisted the male youths better than currently is the case?

Yes No

17. If yes, how?

.....
.....

18. What social activities do you and your peers engage in when you are not in Church?

.....
.....

19. What would you say are the major challenges facing the male youths in Karūri?

	Describe the challenge	Whom to blame e.g. parent, economy etc
A		
B		
C		

20. What does the male youths do to address the challenges?

.....
.....

21. What do you think is the main cause of death among the male youths in Karūri?

Please rank them below:

- a) _____
- b) _____
- c) _____

22. What do you think should be done to curb the death of the male youths in Karūri Village?

.....
.....

23. In your own opinion, what is the general view of the Church about the male youth's behavior in the Village?

.....
.....

24. In your own opinion, what is the general view of the public about the male youth's behavior in the Village?

.....
.....

25. In your view do your parents understand you?

Yes No

26. In which areas do you feel they do understand or support you well?

- a) _____
- b) _____
- c) _____

27. In your view does the Church understand the challenges facing the male youth?

Yes No

28. Do you think the parents have played their role well in bringing up their male youth?

Yes No

29. How do you relate with your father?

Very well Well Satisfactory Poor

30. How do you relate with your mother?

Very well Well Satisfactory Poor

31. Do you feel that the relationship could have been better? Yes No

32. If yes, how?

.....
.....

33. Who is your role model in your family and why?

.....
.....

34. Who educates you on male roles/responsibilities?

.....

35. Does your pastor pay individual attention to the male youth?

Yes No

36. Whom do you share your problems with as a young man and why him/her?

.....

4. QUESTIONNAIRE FOR THE DOCTOR-IN-CHARGE/OCS

- 1. Name of institution
- 2. Position held
- 3. According to your experience what would you say are the major challenges of raising a male youths in Karūri?

.....

- 5. What measures do your institution take to address the challenges?

.....

.....

- 6. What do you think is the main cause of death among the male youths in Karūri Village?

Rank them:

a) _____

b) _____

c) _____

- 7. What do you think should be done to curb the death of the male youths in Karūri Village?

.....

- 8. In your own opinion, what is the general view of the public about the male youth's behavior in the Karūri Village?

.....

- 9. Do you generally think the parents in Karūri have played their role well in bringing up their male youth?

Yes

No

APPENDIX III: STUDY BUDGET

The major expenses incurred during this research included the following:-

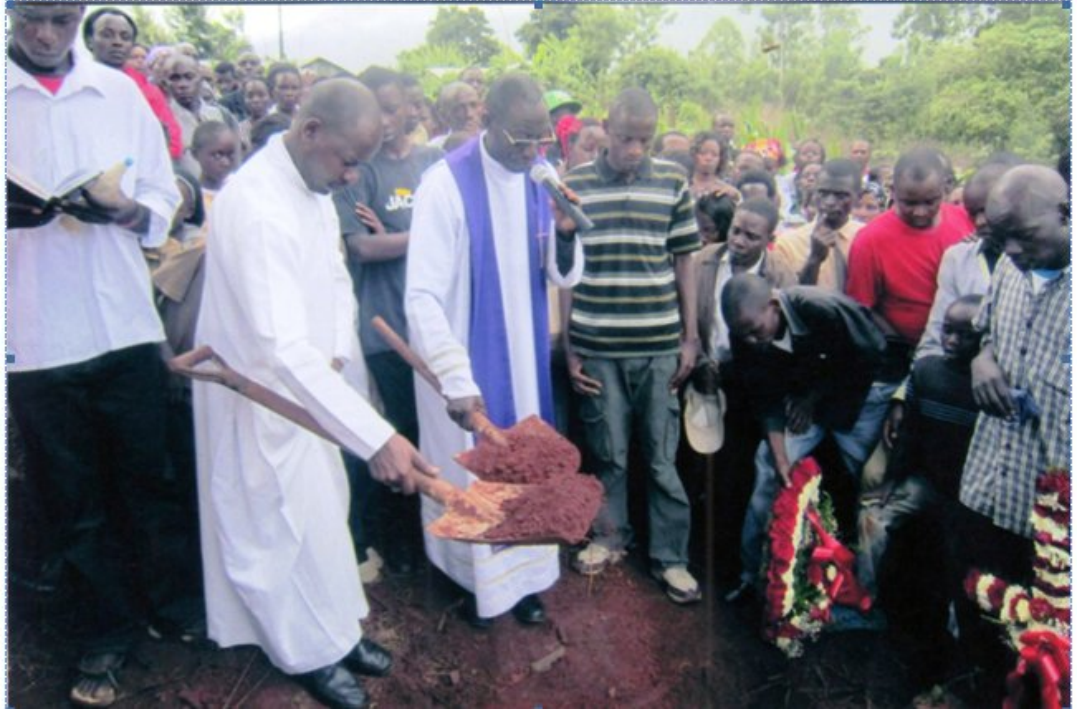
	Amount (KSHs)
Questionnaires and other documentation	2,500.00
Research assistant	5,000.00
Travel costs	5,000.00
Meals and refreshments	2,000.00
Data analysis	5,000.00
Final research report secretarial work	5,000.00
Incidentals	1,500.00
TOTAL BUDGET	26,000.00

APPENDIX IV: PHOTOS

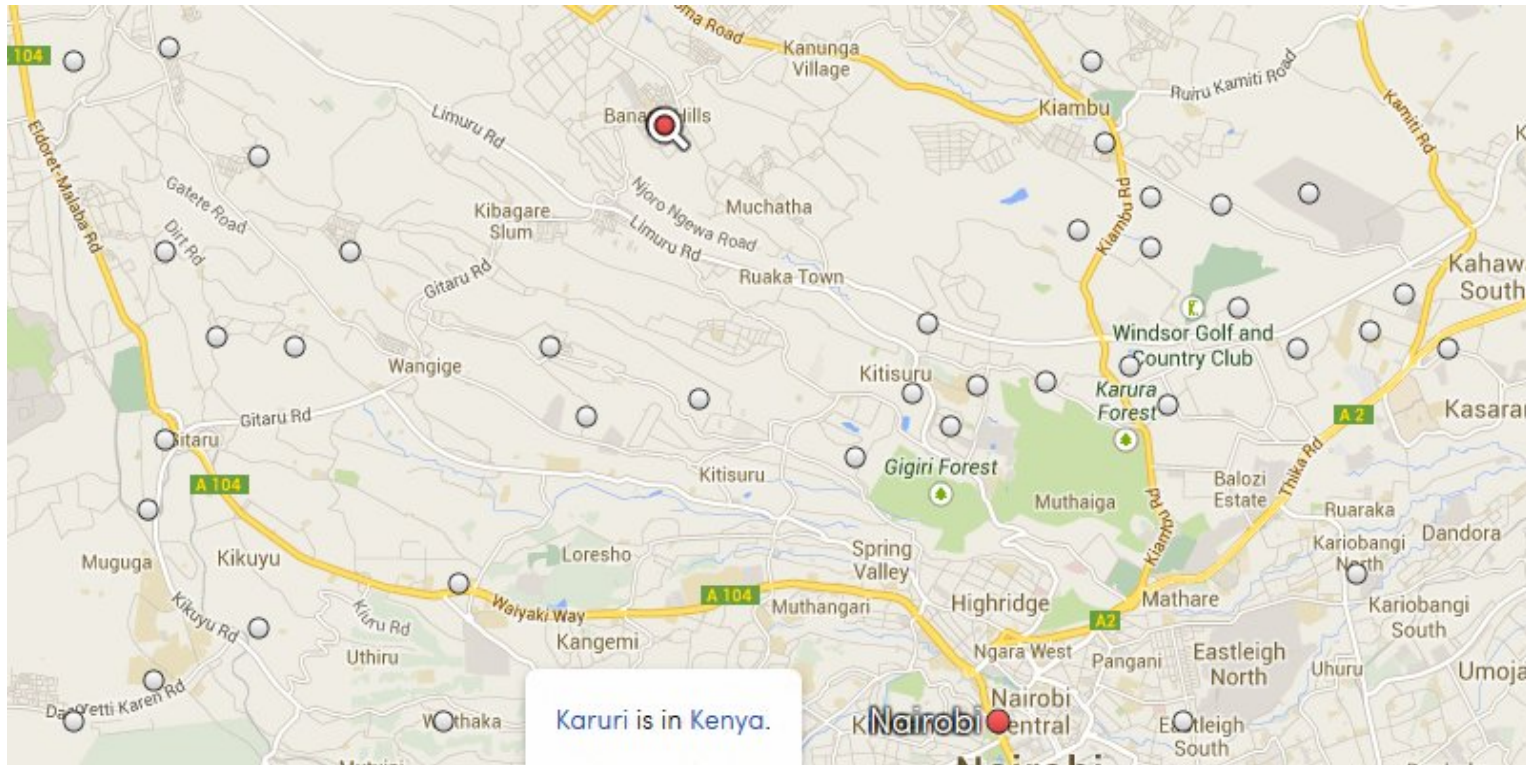
The researcher, The Chief of Karūri and a coordinator for an anti-drug Non Governmental Organization after attending a public anti-drugs Barraza in Karūri on October 26th, 2013.



Burial of a male youth in Karūri



APPENDIX V: MAP OF KARŪRI VILLAGE



- Karuri Village