SUBJECTIVE WELLBEING AMONG WOMEN WITH FATHER ABSENCE EXPERIENCE IN MASVINGO: DEPRESSION, ANXIETY AND RELATIONSHIP STRATEGIES

by

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ABSTRACT

Father absence is a developing trend globally and locally. Its impact is felt in the lives of children at a very young age and even in adulthood. This quantitative study sought to ascertain the impact of father absence on the subjective wellbeing of women who grew up in father absent homes. This was achieved by making comparisons between women who grew up without fathers against those that grew up with a resident father. The comparison was made in terms of their anxiety and depression levels; sexual partner preference and relationship strategies. An exploration of how the type and duration of father absence influences the adult life of fathers was also done. The study was guided by the father absence theory and the psychosocial acceleration theory. The ex post facto design was employed and a one stage cluster sampling strategy was used to select 392 women who participated in this study. Of the 392 participants, 168 were women who had grown up in father absent homes and the remaining 224 had grown up with a resident father. This research made use of a combined standardized close ended questionnaire that was adapted from three standardized instruments namely the Burns anxiety inventory, the Burns depression inventory; and the Mate preference questionnaire. The study revealed that the type or nature of father absence has an effect on anxiety and depression levels. This effect extended to relationship strategies. Women who came from father absent homes due to abandonment expressed more extreme forms of anxiety and ranked higher in divorce when compared to other groups of women. The duration of father absence was also found to be influential in anxiety and depression levels of father absent women. This study further established that women who grew up without fathers expressed more anxious feelings, negative thoughts and physical symptoms of anxiety than women who grew up with fathers ($u = 15075.5$, $p<.01$). It was also found that father absence influenced depression symptoms among women as depression levels of women who grew up in father absent homes significantly differed from those of women who grew up with resident fathers ($u = 12605.5$, $p<.01$). Another outcome of the study was that there were significant differences in the sexual partner preferences of women from father absent homes as compared to those of women who grew up with their fathers. A number of recommendations were proffered. Future research should explore the role of father involvement in children's lives. This is critical as father presence alone is not important without father involvement. Moreover, this study proposes that a voluntary organisation that promotes fatherhood programs be set up to raise awareness on the importance of fathering and drive fatherhood programs. This recommendation was presented in a detailed form in a father absence coping mechanism model presented in this thesis.

Key Words: Father absence, subjective wellbeing, anxiety, depression, adult life, relationship strategy, sexual partner, women

DECLARATION

I, Herbert Zirima hereby declare that this is my original work and has not been presented for any award in this or any other University or Institution of higher learning.

Signature…… Date……..

DEDICATION

In memory of Professor Pilot Mudhovozi, my co-supervisor and mentor. Your fingerprints are everywhere in this thesis. You departed just when this thesis was completed for submission. You will always be remembered.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Father absence has been on the surge in the past two decades and beyond. This is due to several reasons which include but not limited to the fact that a number of marriages have been ending in divorce. Parents; especially fathers have been migrating to foreign lands in search of greener pastures and there has been a growing preference for new families which lack a strong father (Popenoe, 2009; Centre for Disease Control, 2015). The trends are leading to a disappearance of fathers in children's lives. This separation is not only physical but psychological and more specifically, emotional. This scenario has effects on the child as they grow into adulthood. Boothroyd and Perrett (2008) define father absence as a term referring to a situation in which a child has lived for part or all of their childhood in a house without their biological father. The effects of an absent father can be felt during childhood but largely and probably irreversibly can also be felt in adulthood. Research has shown that women, who grew up without their fathers encounter life differently from those who grew with them (Makow, 2014). Father absence moderates mate and sexual partner preferences, onset of puberty, levels of poverty and education levels (Nielsen, 2005; McLanahan, 2010; Krohn & Zoe, 2013).

This study deliberately focused on the girl child because they appear to be more affected by the absence of a father than boys (Thomassin & Suveg, 2014). Moreover, most researches in the past decades have been focusing on mothering and the effects of an absent mother. As a result, more is known about mothering than fathering (Nordahl, Zambrana & Forgatch, 2016). Young women and girls who live or have lived with an unreliable father figure appear to be prone to unintended pregnancies, poor self-concept, poor grades at school and dropping out of school or college (Dowd, 2010).

The focus of the study was on assessing the impact of father absence on the subjective well-being of women who grew up in father absent homes. This was achieved by comparing the subjective well-being of women who grew up without fathers against those that grew up with fathers. Subjective wellbeing (SWB) defined as a person's cognitive and affective evaluations of his or her life (Diener, Lucas & Oshi, 2012) is increasingly indispensable for positive psychological health although not a sufficient condition for it. The present thesis focused on three aspects of subjective well-being which are depression, anxiety and relationship strategies.

The absence of a father figure in childhood can have ripple effects for a female child as they reach adulthood. Women who grew up without their fathers are prone to live in poor economic conditions, divorce and are highly likely to indulge in premarital sex and irresponsible sexual behaviour (Thomassin & Suveg, 2014).

Studies carried out in the West indicate that about 40% of children in the Western world will go to sleep in homes in which their fathers do not live (Osborne & McLanahan, 2007). According to the United States Census Bureau, (2015), 24 million children in America -- one out of every three -- live in biological father-absent homes. Popenoe (2014) argues that absenteeism of an inhabitant natural father throughout early childhood is linked with earlier age of sexual maturity and first sexual dealings. Furthermore, research has shown that women who would have been voluntarily abandoned by their fathers experience life differently from those who grew up with both biological parents. Howard, Burke Lefever, Borkowski and Whitman (2013) posit that in allusion to the broader populace, persons raised up in father absent backgrounds exhibit five times the ordinary suicide ratio, intensely amplified proportions of depression and anxiety, low levels of education and high dropout rates and considerably bigger rates of substance abuse.

Makow (2014) suggests that, females with absent fathers feel rootless and are not sure about their belonging. They choose to emotionally close themselves up and are disposed to have unsteady romantic relations. "Most of these daughters tended to test the men in their lives, starting fights, finding flaws, expecting to be abandoned, or looking for excuses to walk out themselves." (Makow, 2014, p. 87). On the other hand, father presence and a steady early environment may influence children to cultivate a style to relationships which rely on stable pair-bonds and high levels of male investment (that is a long-term strategy). Popenoe, (2009) proposed a developmental model which suggests that father absence is in itself one of the sources of psycho-social stress which in turn affects development especially through the attachment process. Precisely, Popenoe (2009) posited that psycho-social stress leads to poor attachment and to a more opportunistic approach to relationships.

Findings in the Western world on the absence of a resident father have been interesting. They have revealed a link between insecure attachment caused by parental divorce in childhood and poor health later in life (Lopez & Corona, 2012). Moreover, Boothroyd and Perrett (2006) found that women who grew up with parents who had an unstable relationship were perceived as less healthy than women who grew up with parents who had a stable relationship. In addition to that, they also found out that women from father absent homes were perceived as less attractive than women from father present homes.

The type or nature of father absence is another important moderator of the psychological effects. Shenk, Atarkweather, Kress and Allam (2013) argue women who emerge from families where the father abandoned the family or divorced the mother consistently marry quite early and give birth early as well as compared to women who emerged from intact families. On the other hand, daughters who emerge from families where the father was a labour migrant tend to marry late

and also give their first birth at a later age. Women whose fathers died when they were children tend to marry at an older age and give their first birth at an older age than women with divorced/deserted fathers and women who grew up with their fathers.

In the developing world, father absence may be economically functional. Research in developing countries has also shown that children of migrant parents may generally be well off economically compared to those children who stay with their parents (Asis, 2003; Zirima & Mtemeri, 2016). This is because people go for greener pastures in foreign lands to sustain their families and as such end up providing better economic fortunes. However, this economic prosperity may not compensate for the psycho-social implications of father absence.

Father absence has also been on the rise in Africa, with Namibia having the biggest number of non-resident fathers in Africa followed by South Africa. In Namibia, only about a third of pre-school children co-reside with their fathers (Makusha & Richter, 2015). Here in Africa, the causes of father absence are more or less related to those in the Western world with a few more factors that point to the peculiarities of this continent. Labour migration, violence, abandonment, AIDS, civil wars, poverty and unemployment have been the leading causes of father absence in Africa (Hosegood & Madhavan, 2010). Research findings in Africa show divergent views on the effects of father absence on children. Makusha and Richter (2015) argue that when children are not staying with their biological fathers particularly as a result of working outside the country, it does not translate to neglect or abandonment because most fathers who are working outside their countries send money back to their families. They further argue that father absence does not translate to a termination of social connection between the father and the child.

In South Africa 61.8% of children are brought up in father absent homes (Statistics South Africa, 2018). Clearly, the indication is that such children will develop differently from those who are raised by their fathers. However, Makofane (2015) argues that the place of a father in the family should not be understood in relation to his physical absence or presence bearing in mind that father presence does not translate to father involvement. Nevertheless, father involvement is a very difficult variable to measure because of its subjectivity. In a study in Cape town, South Africa, Madhavan, Townsend and Garey (2012) posit that the physical or emotional absence of a father in a child's life can seriously affect a child later in life as they tend to be susceptible to a number of societal ills such as substance abuse, promiscuity, early and unwanted pregnancies crime and violence.

Africans generally believe that women who emerge from father absent homes are not capable of having sustainable relationships with men. As a result it has been noted that some African parents discourage their sons from marrying women from such families (Makofane, 2015). Mokgoatsane (2014) endorses the statement, emphasizing that the fear of parents stems from the possibility that some of these women may not have had role models to observe the communication and interaction between husband and wife.

Zimbabwe has not been spared from this father absence trend. The economic meltdown which Zimbabwe has been experiencing in the last decade has led to migration of mainly adults and this trend has created 'Diaspora orphans' (Zirima, 2012; Zirima 2016). Emigration in Zimbabwe has generally been on the rise, with emigration statistics showing a 19,9% increase in outflows between 2005 and 2012, 58 346 people emigrated legally in 2012, compared to 11 620 in 2005 (ZIMSTAT, 2015). These statistics do not include those that cross the border illegally. Historically, men from Zimbabwe have always been migrating to mainly South Africa to seek

employment in casual jobs in the mines and work as gardeners and cooks (Njanjaya & Masango, 2012). The departure of parents has usually been psychologically detrimental. Njanjaya and Masango, (2012) posit that the psychological cost of the absence of fathers cannot be equated with the physical paybacks the children may enjoy, for the paybacks are overshadowed by the trauma that children may suffer in the absence of their fathers. One closely related study carried out in Chipinge has revealed that children who look after themselves when their parents are engaged mostly at work, known as latchkey children, experience material deprivation, however such children learn to be independent and responsible beings (Ganga & Chinyoka, 2013).

In Zimbabwe, poverty rates are much more likely to be higher in women who grew up without their fathers especially in those daughters who grew up in split families and were completely raised by mothers. This is largely because they are not likely to have managed to get a proper education and as such, good preparation for life. This is particularly so as fathers in this patriarchal society are usually the breadwinners and most mothers (women) live in poverty (Zirima & Gadzikwa, 2017). Previous research has shown that university students who grew up in father absent homes experience unstable romantic relationships; however the same students tend to be resilient and focused in their lives (Zirima & Gadzikwa, 2017).

This study sought to ascertain the effects of father absence on the subjective wellbeing of women living in Mucheke, a high-density suburb in Masvingo. Children who for the past two to three decades had been growing up without their fathers are now adults and it is necessary to assess the impact of that upbringing in their adult life. Masvingo was chosen in this research because it is highly affected by migration, a major cause of father absence due to emigration especially to neighbouring South Africa in the past two decades (Zanamwe & Devillard, 2009). According to the last census held in 2012, Masvingo has the lowest number of males compared to females in

Zimbabwe (46,5%) (ZIMSTAT, 2012). This trend could be explained by the fact that men in this province usually opt to migrate to neighbouring South Africa because of its proximity and also because the province is usually affected by droughts which make basic survival difficult. In Masvingo town, men who migrated and continue to migrate to neighbouring South Africa are unskilled and economically disadvantaged inhabitants of high-density suburbs of which Mucheke is one of them (Zanamwe & Devillard, 2009).

This research was inspired by the need to break the jinx and find the truth about the impact of father absence on the girl child in Zimbabwe. This is so because there are divergent views on the effects of father absence on children. Western literature generally point to negative psycho-social effects for the girl child whilst literature from Africa presents opposing views, some African scholars have downplayed the importance of a father figure in nurturing the girl child (Meintjies & Hall, 2010; Mokomane, 2012; Ratele, Shefer & Clowes, 2012; Makofane, 2015). Makofane argues that the presence of a father is not significant because most fathers are not emotionally involved with their daughters. The author argues that father involvement is more important than father presence and she further posits that most fathers in South Africa may be just present but not involved emotionally and economically in their children's lives. In line with that, some literature shows that in other developing countries, the emigration of fathers and male siblings often results in improvements in the education of children left behind (Kuhn, 2006). However, other researches in Africa point to psycho-social problems for children left behind by absent fathers (Hosegood & Madhavan, 2010; Njanjaya & Masango, 2012). The argument posited by these scholars is that there can be no replacement for the presence of a biological father in a child's life and that absence of father leads poor psycho-social adjustment in the development of a child. These contradictory findings clearly shows the need to ascertain the nature of father

absence (whether it is due to divorce, emigration or incarceration) and the socio-economic status of the absent father and the resident mother as these have variable effects on the adult life of the girl who grows up with an absent father.

The focus of this study was on female adults whose parents split up, had never lived together or whose father left the country or died when they were still children. This research builds on my MSc dissertation, (Zirima, 2012) and is based on the father absence theory as originally proposed by Draper and Harpending (1982), developed by Boothroyd and Perrett (2008) and further developed by Nordahl, Zambrana and Forgatch, (2016).

This study was partly inspired by the rise in the number of girls in Zimbabwe who grow up in father absent homes. Furthermore, it is intended to contribute to knowledge on the effects of fathers' absence on women in Zimbabwe.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

In 'ideal' situations, children should be raised by both parents, that is, the father and the mother. However changing demographic patterns, divorce, migration and other socio-economic changes in the late 20^{th} and 21^{st} century have led to the disappearance of fathers in children's lives. The net effect of this is that children have been left exposed to adapt to life without a father. Some children may adapt well however others may find difficulties as they grow into adulthood. Children who fail to adapt will be plunged into psychosocial distress and general negative subjective wellbeing.

There is a general dearth of literature on father absence effects on the quality of life of the girl child as they grow into adulthood. In boys, it is known that father absence may lead to criminality during adulthood (Bhana & Nkani, 2014). In addition, studies have shown the effects

of absent parenting on children, (Nordahl, Zambrana & Forgatch, 2016; Makofane, 2015; Makusha & Ritcher, 2015; Nyanjaya & Masango, 2012). Among university students, research has shown that father absence affects the social relationships of female students (Zirima & Gadzikwa, 2017), however, no quantitative research, known to the researcher in Zimbabwe and probably a few in the region has specifically focused on how the effects of father absence during girl-childhood can be felt in adulthood among women in the general population. This study therefore attempts to fill in that gap in knowledge.

1.3 Significance of the Study

This study is important as it aims to gather data on the previously neglected impact of the absence of a father on the psychological well-being of children, specifically daughters. There is a dearth of literature on the effect of an absent father on the girl child in Zimbabwe. This study sought to lay a foundation on understanding the psychological well-being of women raised in a father absent family by focusing on Masvingo, a town in Zimbabwe. The study will be beneficial to:

- Existing Body of Knowledge – the research will complement valuable information to the existing literature regards absent parenting in Zimbabwe.
- Parents – parents especially fathers will gain insight on the implications of their absence on their daughters. The study will provide knowledge on how fathers can be involved in their daughter's lives and help in their psychological development.
- Academics – fellow academics will gain new insights on this topic especially with regards to how it is related to developmental psychology.

- Policy makers – this study will provide valuable knowledge to policy makers to guide them on appropriate responses to make in relation to the issue of absent parenting.

1.4 Aim

The purpose of this study was to ascertain the impact of father absence on the subjective wellbeing of women who grew up in father absent households.

1.5 Objectives

The specific objectives of this study were to:

1.5.1 Explore the types of father absence and their varied psychological effects on the adult life of daughters;

1.5.2 Explore how the duration of father absence influences the subjective wellbeing of women who grew up in father absent households;

1.5.3 Assess if anxiety levels of women who grew up in father absent households differ from those of women who grew up with their fathers;

1.5.4 Assess if depression levels of women who grew up in father absent households differ from those of women who grew up with their fathers;

1.5.5 Ascertain if sexual partner preference and relationship strategy of women who grew up in father absent household differ from those of women who grew up with their fathers; and

1.5.6 To develop a model that will be used to help girls growing up in father absent families.

1.6 Hypotheses

1.6.1 Type of father absence does not have a significant psychological effect on women who grew up without fathers;

1.6.2 Duration of father absence does not have a significant psychological effect on women who grew up without fathers;

1.6.3 Women who grew up with their fathers do not significantly differ in their anxiety levels with those who grew without a resident father;

1.6.4 Women who grew up with their fathers do not significantly differ in their depression levels with those who grew without a resident father;

1.6.5 Sexual partner preference of women who grew up with their fathers does not significantly differ from that of women who grew up without their fathers; and

1.6.6 Coping mechanisms adopted by women who grew up in father absent families do not significantly differ from those adopted by women who grew up with their fathers.

1.7 Delimitations of the Study

The study was carried out in Mucheke suburb in Masvingo town, Zimbabwe. Masvingo is located 293km south of Harare the capital of Zimbabwe and virtually the same distance from Beitbridge which is the border point with South Africa. Mucheke is a high-density suburb in Masvingo which is located 3km south west of the city centre.

The study only focused on the psychological effects of father absence on women. The focus of the study was therefore women who had grown up for a larger part of their lives without fathers. However, the control group for this study was selected women who grew up with fathers. Males were not be part of this study as the study deliberately focused on women who as explained in the background appear to be under-researched.

1.8 Assumptions of the Study

Before engaging in the study, the researcher assumes that:

1.8.1 Women who grew up without their fathers experience life differently from those who grew up with their fathers;

1.8.2 A significant portion of the young adult female population grew up without their fathers; and

1.8.3 Respondents will be willing to provide information.

1.9 Definition of Key Terms

Absent father – In this research, an absent father refers to a father who is not physically available to participate in the raising of his/her child. The parent fails to maintain contact with their child because of either divorce, denial of responsibility, immigration or any other reason.

Anxiety – This refers to intense, excessive and persistent worry and fear about everyday situations.

Depression – in this research, depression will be defined as a mood that is marked by low mood, a feeling of sadness, a general loss of interest in things, feelings of low self-worth or guilt and a reduced ability to enjoy life.

Fatherhood – The definition proposed by Dowd, (2006) was adopted. He suggests that fatherhood should be defined as the manner of caring for children which relates to the physical, emotional, intellectual and spiritual care (Dowd, 2006).

Daughter – a biological female child

Subjective well-being – is defined as people's cognitive and affective evaluations of their lives (Diener, 2000)

1.10 Summary

This chapter introduced the thesis by way of giving the background to the study, the aim and objectives. A statement of the problem was given so as to clearly show the problem that motivated this study. Hypothesis which will be tested in chapter four were also given. The next chapter will explore existing literature on father absence and as such expose the knowledge gap that this study seeks to fill. An analysis of the theories that guide this study will also be done in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter is categorized into three major sections, which are:-

(i) Conceptual framework,

(ii) Empirical review

(iii) Theoretical framework

2.2 Conceptual Framework

This section will analyse the major concepts in this study.

2.2.1 Father absence

There has been a number of differing and sometimes conflicting definitions of the term father absence. The bone of contention has largely been on issues to do with the length of time that warrants a condition to be labelled father absence as well as the reason of the absence of the father. Another issue which raises considerable debate is whether or not father presence is equivalent to father involvement. Fathers who are physically present but not involved may just as be as good as absent fathers, (Makofane, 2015). It is also worth mentioning that father absence may be defined differently depending with cultures. In most traditional African societies, father absence is less pronounced because the role of father is quickly taken over by the relatives of the biological father usually upon death or any other absences. Father absence will also need to be carefully defined especially in light of the fact that some fathers may be physically away from their children but are in constant communication with their children through the various mediums that technology has provided. According to Mancini (2010), absent fathers either do not usually stay with their children or stay far away for extended periods of time. This includes

those fathers who may be divorced, incarcerated, separated, highly mobile and are absent at home much more than they are present.

The definition of father absence is also moderated by the definition of the term father. A more pronounced definition of father absence is likely where the definition of father refers to a biological relationship between a male parent and his off-spring. However, in traditional African societies, a lose definition of father is usually adopted which means that cases that will be categorized as father absent will be fewer than in Western communities. In Black South African society for example, the term "father' is not necessarily exclusive to the biological father but can also apply to other males from the extended family such as the younger and older brother of the father (Mkhize, 2006).

Pougnet, Serbin, Stack, Ledingham and Schwartzman (2012), further postulate that the absence of the adoptive or biological father at or before the child has reached the age of five is *early onset of father absence*, while *late onset of father absence* is defined as occurring when the child is between the age of six and thirteen years. On the other hand, Shenk, Starkweather, Kress and Alam, (2013) postulate that father absence can be distinguished between non-normative (stigmatised) and normative (non-stigmatised) father absence. In certain communities, particularly in the United States, father absence is usually stigmatised or defamed because it is usually found among people of low socio-economic status and typically linked with undesirable results for children.

Fathers in many modern communities may be absent for reasons other than the typical ones of divorce or death. Father absence may instead be a result of labour migration or military service. In such instances, even though fathers are physically not at home, they will usually be financing their children's education through remittances and participating in upbringing the children by

keeping contact through telephone, social media and visits on holidays. Such explanations for absence are also unlikely to be stigmatised in a similar fashion that divorce usually is.

2.2.2 Types of father absence

Types of father absence have been extensively studied and research has focused on father absence due to divorce, due to abandonment or other types of father absence which are voluntary and often stigmatised in the cultures in which they are studied.

2.2.2.1 Father absence due to death

A Father's death variable, has been analysed by a number of scholars. Bereczkei and Csanaky (1996) found that women with divorced fathers married at an earlier age than women who stayed with their fathers. This group also conceived but lost more children, although number of births were not significantly different. Women with deceased fathers had the same numbers of children as women who lived with their fathers and in actual fact married at older ages, on average, than women who stayed with their fathers (22.09 years and 21.34 years, respectively). Virtually the same pattern was found for behavioural outcomes by Hetherington (2012) who revealed that women in the United States with deceased fathers exhibited behavioural outcomes that were closely alike to those of women who lived with their fathers than women with divorced fathers. He proposed that this could be explained by the fact that mothers hold similar attitudes towards present and dead fathers.

The death of a father may not have detrimental results for children in some societies. Sear and Mace (2008), for example, found out that father's death had no substantial impact on children's survival in 68% of Asian societies studied. The research therefore proposed that the death of a father may not necessarily have the same accelerating negative effects on the life history of daughters as divorce seems to have.

Women who lost their fathers to death whilst they were still children get married and have their first birth at older ages than women with divorced/deserted fathers and even women with fathers who were present throughout childhood (Sear & Mace, 2008). The researchers suggested that there could be a number of mediating factors to these effects. It is important to note that, a good socio-economic status and high levels of parental investment among children of labour migrants in contrast to a combination of low investment, high psychosocial stress and low parental investment among women who grew up in father divorced/deserted homes could as well explain the varied effects of father absence in this research. In this instance, the dead father may have been absent in his daughter's lives due to labour migration.

2.2.2.2 Father absence due to migration

Fathers in many cultures, particularly in the developing world, may be absent from homes for reasons other than divorce or death. In some African and Asian societies, fathers may be absent from home because of such factors as labour migration or military service. In some of these cases, even though fathers are not physically present at home, they may often still invest in their children through sending money home and maintaining contact with their children through telephone or regular home visits on holidays (Zirima, 2012). These explanations for absence are also unlikely to be stigmatized in the same way that divorce often is. In some instances, father absence due to labour migration is highly regarded as it is seen as a source of high income. In line with that, Zirima (2016) found out that children of migrant parents had or perceived themselves as having better physical health than those with locally based parents.

Similarly, Chandra et al. (2010) found that children with fathers in the US military may achieve marginally poorer educationally than average, but this study does not stipulate how they perform

in other aspects of life or how their educational achievements equate with those of girls whose fathers are absent for other reasons. However, literature from the West may provide information which may not be informative to our African settings especially in as much the impact of migration on subjective wellbeing is concerned. Due to high poverty rates in most African countries, migration of a parent is seen as a gateway to a better life and as such positive subjective wellbeing.

Father absence due to labour migration is less stigmatised in Bangladesh, as a positive effect on education was found by Joshi (2004) for children of labour migrants in rural Matlab, Bangladesh. However, most researches that bring out positive educational outcomes for children of labour migrants usually just focus on educational outcomes disregarding other life history events and as such they should be treated with caution. Schuler, Bates, Islam, and Islam (2006), submits that labour migration coupled with constant paternal investment is not linked with faster life history trajectories in daughters, and in some cases may be associated with slower ones. Precisely, constant investment from the father will lessen the impact of father absence on the girl child. A similar positive effect on education was found in South Africa. Lu and Treiman (2007) found out that children of black South African labour migrants, who send remittances back home to their families, receive better education than even those with present fathers. In contrast, to women who lost their fathers due to divorce, women who had labour migrant fathers consistently get married at an older age and give their first birth much later.

2.2.2.3 Father absence due to abandonment

Father absence due to abandonment has been found to be highly detrimental in the adult life of affected daughters. Abandoned girls usually express anger and resentment against the father this was revealed by a study done by Makofane (2015:71) which concluded that "…any lesbian

relationships result more from a daughter's outright rejection by her father rather than from her identification with his masculine role". This position is also supported by Zirima and Gadzikwa (2017) who found that girls who were abandoned by their fathers may express feelings of anger at higher proportion than other girls who would have failed to stay with their fathers due to other factors such as migration or death. Abandonment by a father in this instance refers to cases where biological father denies responsibility of a child either in a marriage set up or out of marriage.

In Zimbabwe, there are many cases of unmarried mothers who get rejected by their boyfriends and as such end up having 'fatherless children'. Children who emerge from such backgrounds are usually filled with both anger and confusion. The confusion emanates from not having a family of origin to belong to. In some instances, such children are raised in maternal homes where they are regarded as strangers, (Zulu, 2014). This confusion is sometimes heightened by the fact that such children may be wrongly given totems and surnames of fathers who are not theirs.

Survival analyses showed that women who grew up in father divorced homes or father abandoned homes consistently get married at an early age and give their first birth at an early age as well.

2.2.2.4 Father absence due to divorce

Shenk, Starkweather, Kress and Allam, (2013) postulated that divorce of parents is one of the most detrimental childhood events that negatively affects the subjective wellbeing of women. Survival analyses showed that women who grew up in father divorced homes or father abandoned homes consistently get married at an early age and give their first birth at an early age as well.

Fagan and Churchill (2012) argued that divorce raises the risk of negative outcomes such as depression and anxiety after the age of 23. Their contention was that parental divorce could set in motion events such as early childbearing or limit schooling that, in turn affect adult outcomes. The challenges to emotional development among women from divorced families could arise due to the fact that children from divorced families receive less emotional support and practical help from their fathers. Divorce and separation result in less caring and more over protective parenting during the adolescent years.

2.2.3 Subjective wellbeing

Subjective wellbeing (SWB) is defined as people's cognitive and affective evaluations of their lives (Diener, Lucas, & Oshi, 2002). The cognitive aspect refers to what one thinks about his or her life satisfaction in global terms (life as a whole) and in domain terms that is to say in specific areas of life such as work and relationships. The affective element refers to emotions, moods and feelings. Affect is considered positive when the emotions, moods and feelings experienced are pleasant for example joy. Affect is deemed negative, though, when the emotions, moods and feelings experienced are unpleasant for example depression, anger, anxiety, guilt, shame.

This study sought to understand how father absence impacts on subjective wellbeing of women raised in father absent households. The argument of this thesis is that the understanding of the potential consequences of father absence on the wellbeing of the people concerned, their own perspectives should be considered as central, that is the crux of subjective wellbeing.

Past studies posit that parental absence for a long period of time is negatively related to SWB, it has negative consequences for children in the dimensions of social, psychological and academic functioning. The impact on children can have long lasting consequences into adulthood (Litcher, 1997).

Closely related to that, Jordan and Graham (2012) found that children of migrant fathers and of migrant mothers are less likely to be generally happy when compared to children living with both parents. In addition, their study finds that the migration status of parents is not significantly associated with children's enjoyment of school, and they conclude that in the school setting, children of migrant parents do not significantly differ from their peers who have both parents currently at home.

A person who has a high level of satisfaction with their life, and who experiences a greater positive affect and little or less negative affect, would be deemed to have a high level of SWB or in simpler terms, be very happy (Diener, Lucas, & Oshi, 2002).

The concept of SWB falls within the 'hedonic' perspective that defines well-being or happiness as being fundamentally about maximising pleasure and avoiding or minimizing pain. This differs from the 'eudaemonic' perspective which, as Waterman (1993) stated, is where one lives in accordance with one's 'daimon' (daemon), or 'true self'. This perspective places focus on meaning in life and self-realization, and the extent to which a person fully integrates this into his or her life.

When psychologists measure SWB, they are measuring how people think and feel about their lives (Portner, 2016).

The three components of SWB are:

1) life satisfaction
2) positive affect
3) negative affect

These are independent factors that should be measured and studied separately. Thus, the presence of positive affect does not mean the absence of negative affect and vice versa.

SWB is measured by self-report scales such as ones used in this study. However, self-report measures have raised some concerns to many positive psychologists such as Schwartz and Strack (1991). They showed that SWB scores can be influenced by a number of factors such as situational factors, the type of scales that are used, the order in which the items are presented, and the mood of the respondent at the time when the measurement was taken. This study attempted to cancel out the effects of such biases by having a large sample of respondents.

2.2.4 Father absence and daughter adult life anxiety

Anxiety refers to a persistent emotional state characterized by intense, excessive and persistent worry and fear about everyday situations (Rapee, 1997). There is increasing interest in the manner parents cause anxiety progression in vulnerable children. Parents, especially fathers, can influence the development of anxiety in children in a number of ways, such as: overprotection, reassurance, modelling, intrusiveness or control, support, acceptance, rejection, validation of emotions, expressed emotion, attachment, marital conflict and parental psychopathology as an underlying factor (Bögels & Brechman-Toussaint, 2006; Ginsburg & Schlossberg, 2002; Rapee, 1997; and Wood, McLeod, Sigman, Hwang, & Chu, 2003). From these studies, it appears therefore that different behaviours or attitudes in fathers than in mothers could promote anxiety in children or could protect a child against anxiety. For example, since a father more often play the role of providing limits on the child and mothers of providing comfort; paternal unlimited behaviour and maternal lack of proper comfort giving could produce anxiety in the child. A child can therefore experience heightened risk of anxiety, if one parent is incapable of covering up for the dysfunctional behaviour of the other parent.

Boys who emerge from families that lack a father figure are highly likely to be depressed, unhappy, dejected, overly reliant and overactive. On the other hand, girls who emerge from father-absent homes are likely to become highly dependent (Carlson, 2006) and experience internalising complications such as depression and anxiety (Kandel, Rosenbaum & Chen, 1994).

Moreover, the co-existence of poor father connection and heightened anger and frustration in the father-daughter relationship has been linked to harmful social and psychological results for adolescent girls (Coley & Burgess, 2003).

Adolescent girls who grew up with mothers who had divorced and stayed single and those girls born to unmarried mothers had the highest anxiety and emotional challenges when matched with their colleagues with married biological parents (Carlson, 2006). Most of these studies however do not show the specific components of anxiety that are influenced by father absence. Anxiety is a broad term and it would be necessary to ascertain how father absence influences the thoughts, feelings and physical symptoms of anxiety.

2.2.5 Father absence and daughter adult life depression

Depression is a serious and pervasive mood disorder which causes feelings of sadness, hopelessness, helplessness and worthlessness, (Ghosh, 2016). Research carried out at the University of Bristol indicates that girls who emerge from families where the father was absent during the first five years of life are more likely to experience depressive symptoms in adolescence than girls whose fathers left when they were aged five to ten years or than boys in both age groups (0-5 and 5-10), even after factors such as level of education and economic status were taken into account (Culpin, Heron, Araya & Melotti Joinso, 2013).

The child's gender and the age of the child when a father left have been found to be important factors in determining the psychological adjustment or maladjustment to the effects of father absence. The significance of the child's age at exposure to father absence, however, is still vague as little research has studied the varying effects of early versus later father absence on depressive symptoms in adolescence (Amato, 2000).

Ghosh (2016) posits that depression in children and adolescents can interfere with normal development tasks such as forming relationships, mastering social and academic skills and achieving independence. This has implications as the child grows to adulthood as they may carry the negative symptoms with them.

Culpin, Heron, Araya and Melotti Joinso (2013) study found that girls who did not stay with their fathers during the early years of life were likely to have higher rates of sexual activity, premature parenthood and maternal antenatal depression. Fathers who were less loving and more violent to the mother during the antenatal phase were also likely to be absent during the first five years of the child's life. However, girls in both father-present and father-absent groups reported higher levels of depressive symptoms than boys. This is consistent with findings by Størksen, Røysamb, Holmen and Tambs (2006), who established that girls endured more lasting depressive symptoms in mid-adolescence following parental divorce than boys. Girls who emerged from homes where they had been exposed to father absence during the first five years of life were highly likely to report high levels of depressive symptoms. Current research has earlier emphasized girls' particular susceptibility to adverse life events, particularly those in a relational and familial context (Rudolph, 2002).

2.2.5 Father absence and daughter sexual partner preference and sexual strategy

Father-daughter relationships are important in the nurturing of a female child. Besides modelling behaviour that his daughter will expect from other men in her life, the communication between the father and his daughter facilitates the creation of her identity and what she perceives as normal roles for a man and a woman (Makow, 2014). The negligent or abusive characteristics of a father or his absenteeism can impact negatively the adult life of her daughter.

Boothroyd and Perrett (2008) postulate that father absence and/or early psycho-social stress are associated with the development of a more short-term relationship strategy in females. The short-term relationship strategy is closely linked with low investment in relationships. They further predicted that women who grew up in father absent homes or those who grew up in families with poor family relationships grow up to prefer more masculine men than women who grew up with their father or those who had warm family relationships.

Research evidence shows that girls who emerge from father absent homes or those who had poor attachment with their fathers may develop or are regarded as of lower value by potential suitors due to poor health. For instance, Flinn and England (1997) found in rural Dominica that, irrespective of socio-economic status, children with absent biological fathers had considerably more days of illness than those living with both parents (even if a co-resident father was often away from the home, for example. for work). Likewise, studies in the Western world have shown that insecure attachment and parental divorce in childhood can be linked to poorer health later in life (Walen & Lachman 2000; Flinn, 2015). Moreover, Boothroyd and Perrett (2006) concluded using ratings of facial photographs that women who emerged from families where parents had an unstable relationship were seen as less healthy than women whose parents had a good

relationship. In the same vein, women from homes which had parents with a poor relationship or where the father was absent were both seen as less attractive than other women.

The sexual strategies perspective envisages that father absence causes the embracing of a short-term strategy to relationships and as such an increased interest to male facial masculinity, the Condition dependence perspective forecasts that father absence will be linked with poorer 'condition' and reduced interest in engaging in affairs with more masculine men (Boothroyd & Perrett, 2008).

Boothroyd and Perrett's (2008) findings supports a relationship between childhood upbringing and face preferences in adulthood. Early father absence was linked to considerably stronger masculinity preference in women likely to be ovulating and insignificantly weaker masculinity preference in women likely to be in the luteal stage of their cycle.

Women who lacked a stable father during childhood exhibited romantic emotions that can be categorised into any of the four:-

(i) a constant source of hurt,

(ii) father as a stranger,

(iii) negative view of negotiating relationships with men, and

(iv) a need for relationship reconstruction (East, Jackson & O'Brien, 2007).

Categories of emotions 1 up to 3 may lead to negative perspectives of commitment and love in a romantic affair and as such reducing the desire for them. The fourth category may lead to a yearning for relationship rebuilding and this may be exhibited through desires of sex and pregnancy in an effort to strengthen a relationship with a romantic partner.

According to Horne (2015), adolescents with an absent father preferred to exert less commitment to their romantic partner and desired to take part in unsafe activities such as unprotected sex and sometimes pregnancy in their ideal relationship. This was common even when all other factors such as mother's socio-economic status, the child's age and race were controlled. Horne (2015) further found out living without a father all the way through one's entire life is more harmful than living without a father partially in life. Furthermore, it is explicitly the absence of a father, rather than a stressful life event, that stimulates risky romantic desires among adolescents.

2.3 Empirical Review

2.3.1 Relation between father connectedness and child outcomes

A study by Vogel, Bradley, Raikes, Boller and Shears (2006) examined the link between the presence of a father in homes and their children's early development outcomes making use of data from Early Head Start. The researchers (Vogel, Bradley, Raikes, Boller & Shears, 2006) clustered 1 930 children into five classes making use of maternal reports of fathers' presence and connectedness with the child. They established five mutually exclusive categories based on biological relatedness, residence in the home or frequency of contact, and stability of the relationship over time. The researchers then regressed six child outcomes on these classes of father connectedness (controlling for covariates). They also scrutinised differences based on race and ethnicity and ran the same regression models within three major racial and ethnic classes. Findings revealed that children with resident or involved natural fathers displayed developed levels of self-regulation and lower levels of aggression than children with unstable father connections. Relations seemed most straightforward for European Americans and somewhat for Latin Americans, among whom a reliable biological father presence was linked with positive child developmental outcomes. Children with involved non-resident biological fathers were

better off than children who had short-lived relationships with their fathers. Father-daughter relations were generally unstable among African Americans (Vogel et al., 2006)

The general conclusion of this research was that regular interaction with a biological father is helpful to children's development; however, relations tended to differ by race and ethnicity. Furthermore the research suggested that models that are valid and predictive for families from all racial and ethnic groups are needed to validate its findings. The suggestion for further validation of findings is critical in light of the racially biased findings that the study revealed.

This study sought to find the link between father connection and children outcomes in general. However, the current thesis specifically looked at the impact of father absence on the girl child in Masvingo. Moreover, this study focused on the African population which appear to have received a biased analysis in the above described study.

2.3.2 Reciprocal positive affect and well-regulated, adjusted children

Thomas and Suveg (2014) investigated emotion dysregulation as a mediator between reciprocal positive affect and children's symptoms of psychological illness. The study investigated real time sequential exchanges of emotion in both mother-child and father-child pairs within a triadic context. Fifty-one mother–father–child (aged seven to 12 years) triads participated in an emotion discussion task, and behavioural observations were coded for negative and positive affect. Parents completed measures of child psychopathology symptoms and emotion regulation skills.

The findings indicated that although mothers showed superior levels of positive emotional reciprocity than fathers, father–child reciprocal positive affect was uniquely associated with child symptoms of psychopathology. Across gender, results showed that emotional reciprocity with fathers is important in the emotional socialisation process for both boys and girls. Put simply, the

interaction with the father was found to be significant in shaping the emotional development of children than the interaction with the mother (Thomassin & Suveg, 2014).

This study therefore points to the importance of fathers in the emotional development of children. The study was significant in that it investigated real-time sequential exchanges of emotions, however, it lacked the important element of appreciating how these interactions affected adult life as intended in the current study.

2.3.3 Risk and protective factors related to fathers' positive involvement and negative reinforcement

Nordahl, Zambrana and Forgatch, (2016) study investigated potential predictors of fathers' positive involvement and negative reinforcement as observed during fathers' interaction with their one-year olds. The study specifically sought to find how father involvement or non-involvement affects child development during the first year of life. In this study, researchers analysed parenting behaviours in 726 Norwegian fathers with one-year olds of which 49.3% were girls and 51.7% boys. The fathers were assessed by both micro social coding and global ratings from direct observation of structured interactions. The study found out that fathers' positive involvement was associated with positive emotional development among the one-year olds. Fathers' positive involvement was linked to children's sustained attention during interactions. On the other hand, father non-involvement was associated with children's communicative risk, low birth weight and development difficulties.

Although this study highlights the importance of fathers at a very early age, it however did not explore the impact of father involvement beyond infancy. Nevertheless, it offers fresh insights into the importance of father involvement as an adjunct to father presence. Research findings

reviewed so far have shown that father presence without father involvement may just be close to father absence (Makofane, 2015; Zirima & Gadzikwa, 2017).

2.3.4 The influence of the absence of fathers and the timing of separation on anxiety and self-esteem of adolescents

Luo, Wang and Gao did a research in 2011 which sought to explore the impact of father absence on the anxiety and self-esteem levels of children and adolescence with respect to the period and timing of separation from a father in China. Due to the nature of work that men in rural China engage in, which compels them to spend an average of only two weeks per year at home, the study generated a new operational definition of father absence. Father absence was defined as a situation in which a child, younger than fourteen years old, lived without their fathers for more than six months.

The study was carried out over four years and covered five provinces of China. A total of 2 233 rural students with age ranges of eleven to twenty-three took part in the study. Results of this study revealed that participants who lived without their fathers have high state anxiety ($t=5.80$, $P<0.001$) and lower self-esteem ($t=39.54$, $P<0.001$) when compared with other participants (Luo et al., 2011). The above results could also be influenced by gender and level of education. Neither the period of father absence nor its timing had an effect on the general mental health of participants.

The study revealed that the timing of father absence does affect the level of anxiety of children at different ages. This study found that the father absence event appear to be more emotionally precarious if the father left home between seven and twelve years of children's age. This can also be explained by the fact that children in China start school at the age of seven and seven to twelve years mark the elementary school years.

While this study produced meaningful results with respect to the impact of father absence on children, its relative weakness was that the focus was just on rural children. The effects of father absence in rural children may be significantly different to the effects of father absence in urban children. An analysis of urban children may produce completely different results.

2.3.5 Father absence and reproduction-related outcomes

Sheppard, Snopkowski and Sear (2014) did a study which explored the impact of father absence on daughters' age at menarche, first marriage and first birth, parity progression rates and preferred family size in Malaysia. The findings revealed that there is no significant relationship between father absence and the timing of menarche. In some instances, father-absence effects may be influenced by availability or lack of resources, however, in this study, researchers found no link between parental socio-economic status and age at menarche.

According to this study, there is a significant relationship between father absence and faster progression to both marriage and first birth. Further analysis showed that losing a father at an older age was more significant than losing him early. Girls who had lost fathers at an older age exhibited heightened levels of anxiety and general psychological instability which manifested in faster progression to marriage and first birth. Marriage in this instance was viewed by the women who grew up without a father as a means to find a father figure and also relieve stress. Another explanation could be that for poor families, father absence subjects the household to immense economic strain, which elder daughters are compelled to relieve by getting married sooner. Sheppard (2014) inferred that, if fathers become absent during early childhood, then the household may be able to rejuvenate some wealth, especially if the mother is able to remarry relatively soon.

In the final analysis, this study proposed four hypotheses to explain the relationship between fathers and sexual reproduction related behaviour:-

(i) father absence may be an indicator of a stressed early environment

(ii) father absence may be a mortality cue.

(iii) father absence may predict the extent to which a woman can anticipate paternal investment in a future productive career and

(iv) paternal investment may directly impact on the reproductive behaviour of his offspring.

The relative weakness of this study is that it attributes the timing of menarche (a biological event) to a purely psychosocial event which is father absence. There could be a number of more powerful biological factors that may influence the timing of menarche.

2.3.6 Experiences of African women from families with absent fathers

Makofane (2015) did a study in South Africa which sought to gain insights into the lived experiences of young women who grew up in father absent families.

The study established that the majority of participants who grew up in father absent homes were raised by uncles and grandparents who more often than not, fulfilled the role of a father. Father absence was as such not adversely felt as Western literature indicates. Participants also revealed that even though they were angry that they did not grow up with their fathers, they had gained some positive attributes from living without a father. Findings suggest that women who grew up in father absent homes tend to be self-reliant, strong and assertive. However, further interrogation into the exhibition of such attributes into their intimate heterosexual relationships is needed to understand their construction of relationships with men.

This study is important because it gives insight into one mediating factor in the father absence – daughter adult life equation, which is the existence of strong social relations in Africa. The effects of father absence may not be so pronounced in Africa as it is in the Western world due to the existence of a strong social fabric which provides safety nets to the children left behind.

2.3.7 Non-resident Black fathers in South Africa

Makusha and Richter (2015) explored the prevalence of father absence as well as its causes in South Africa. The research revealed that South Africa has the highest number of non-resident fathers in Africa after Namibia. The research concluded that absent fatherhood among black men in South Africa is largely attributed to labour migration, violence, poverty, cultural values and paternal deaths due to HIV and AIDS. The study also revealed that black children who grow up in father absent homes receive care and support from multiple adults who fulfil the father's role. The researchers also argued that being a non-resident father does not equate to non-involvement. However, the study concluded that a married biological father remained indispensable as he (in African culture) provided the child with a family or clan name which provided the child a significant source of social capital and status which is all that is necessary in the boosting of self-esteem and a sense of identity for the child.

The study was however too general and touched on many aspects related to father absence such that it failed to give attention to detail which would have been informative in the understanding of father absence within a South African context. This could have been done by exploring the types of father absence as well as assessing how duration of father absence moderates the quality of life of the affected children.

2.3.8 Fatherless female students

Zulu (2014) explored how female students who grew up in father absent homes portrayed themselves and the value that they attached to relationships with men. The participants from this study viewed themselves to be resilient to victimisation that emanated from fatherlessness. Results also revealed that the women were or at least portrayed themselves as self-sufficient and empowered in relation to their identities, relationships and attitudes towards men.

Most women who participated in the study had been raised by mothers with the assistance of uncles and relatives of their fathers. This therefore entailed that the role of the father was at times fulfilled by a relative. The participants largely expressed anger towards their fathers for having abandoned them early in life. Another common revelation that emerged from this study is that women who had grown without biological fathers and raised in maternal homes developed confusion as they were growing up. The confusion arose from the fact that they were not regarded as bona fide members of their maternal roots at the same time did not have any paternal home to talk about. However, in spite of all this the study concluded that the participants were resilient, self-sufficient and had a positive relation with men in general.

This study continues to highlight the trend that emerge from most South African studies that father absenteeism does not breed psychological illnesses and poor social relations as is espoused by most Western and Asian studies. This is a critical point that this study seeks to interrogate by assessing subjective wellbeing of women who were raised in father absent homes.

Related to the above study, Zirima and Gadzikwa, (2017) sought to explore the experiences of female university students at a selected university in Zimbabwe who grew up largely without their biological fathers. They found out that the majority of female students who grew up in

father absent homes turned out to be resilient as they had gone through difficult periods in their lives.

The nature of father absence had varying effects on the female students with those who were abandoned by their fathers expressing anger and sometimes even hatred towards the father. A common feature among all the participants was that they had unstable romantic relationships and some looked up to their boyfriends to fill the void left by their absent fathers. This research revealed out that participants who emerged from father absent homes were anxious, distressed and worried due to the situations they experienced. Growing up without a father generated some insecurities within the students.

This study was however a qualitative study and such did not provide an opportunity to make comparisons and measure the impact of father absence. It is unknown for instance, if the feelings of insecurity expressed by the participants who emerged from father absent homes is unique to them or is a common feature among university students.

Zirima, Nyanga and Ajagun (2012) sought to analyse the psychological implications of parental migration on young adults who happened to be students. Specifically, the research intended to examine if any difference existed in the depression levels of young adults who grew up in absent parent homes compared to young adults who grew up with both parents. The researchers administered the Burns depression checklist to two groups of students, one group who grew up with both parents and the other group who had parents who migrated to a foreign country. The results showed that the students who had absent parents experienced a number of negative psychological conditions which include low self-esteem, sadness, feelings of inadequacy and inferiority. This was in contrast to their counterparts staying with both parents who did not reveal

these negative psychological conditions. On the whole, in line with the Burns depression scale classification, young adults living without parents had 'mild depression' while a few was 'normal but unhappy'. On the contrary, young adults living with both parents had 'no depression' while a few were 'normal but unhappy'. This 2012 study therefore brings to the fore the issue of psychological illness that emanate from parental absence which include father absence. This study however, does not specifically explore the impact of father migration but looks at parental migration in general. The effects of parental migration of one or both parents may not necessarily be the same as those of father absence.

2.4 Theoretical Framework

This study is premised on the father absence theory and the psycho-social acceleration theory. Both theories explain that a father's absence in a girl's early life will influence their adult life. Father absence is viewed as a form of stress that needs strategies to adjust to as detailed below.

2.4.1 Father absence theory

The father absence theory was originally proposed by Draper and Harpending (1982), developed by Boothroyd and Perrett (2008) and further developed by Nordahl, Zambrana and Forgatch, (2016). Draper and Harpending (1982), as cited in Bothroyd and Perrett (2008), projected that the absence of a biological father from home during childhood is linked with a developmental shift in a person's approach to relationship and parenting such that daughters who grew up without their fathers develop low investment (that is, short term relationship 'strategy') in which paternal care of offspring is not expected. Alternatively, father presence and a stable early environment should lead children to develop an approach to relationships which relies on stable pair-bonds and high levels of male investment (that is, a long-term strategy). This current study seeks to verify this theory by exploring the relationship strategies used by young women in a

Zimbabwean context. This is critical because the theory was developed in the Western world and there are chances that what obtained there may not apply in an African context.

Belsky, Steinberg and Draper (1991) as cited by Bothroyd and Perrett (2008) further proposed a developmental model in which parental divorce and father absence were a form of psycho-social stress which disrupts the attachment process and as such affected development. Precisely, the theorists postulated that psychosocial stress leads to poor attachment and a more opportunistic approach to relationships, and an accelerated life history trajectory. The assumption is that girls who grow up with psychosocial stress are more likely to find relationships as a way of 'escaping' the stress and may end up getting involved in relationships without due consideration. Moreover, the accelerated life trajectory usually associated with early psychosocial stress is likely to lead girls to pseudo-maturity and hence higher chances of engaging in early sexual relationships.

A number of studies have shown that the absence of a resident biological father throughout early childhood is linked with earlier onset of puberty and first sexual intercourse and increased chances of marital breakdown in the following generation (Bothroyd & Perrett, 2008). Nordahl, Zambrana and Forgatch (2016), further confirm this perspective by arguing that children's developmental difficulties are associated with lower levels of a father positive involvement.

There is evidence to suggest that the absence of a father influence's daughters towards fast-tracked development, sexuality and reproduction. Scholars have consistently revealed that early paternal investment is a significant indicator of pubertal timing. Daughters of less involved fathers undergo earlier menarche unlike those growing up with more involved fathers (Ellis et al., 2003; Quinlan, 2007). Furthermore, daughters from father absent homes show a number of symptoms usually observed in early developing girls. These encompass heightened sexual

promiscuity, higher rates of teen pregnancy, earlier first sexual intercourse and reproduction, and struggle with establishing stable long-term relationships – with the most noticeable impact being seen among girls whose fathers were absent from an early age (Chisholm, Quinlivan, Petersen & Coall., 2005; Draper & Harpending, 1982; Quinlan, 2007). These observations were confirmed by Scelza (2010) who examined the association between father absence and girls' sexual behaviour in a demographically diverse sample of girls over a 13-year span. The findings showed that adolescent girls who lived in father absent homes early in life were twice as likely to have had sexual intercourse and seven times more likely to have been pregnant by age 17 in comparison to girls whose fathers were present during their early development. Furthermore, these effects seem to be particular to girls whose fathers are voluntarily absent, with daughters of widows being spared from these outcomes (Draper & Harpending, 1982; Shenk & Scelza, 2012). This theory guided the research in examining the impact of father absence on the relationship styles, preferred sexual partner and sexual strategies of women who grew up in father absent homes.

2.4.2. Psychosocial acceleration theory

This theory was developed by Belsky, Steinberg, Houts and Halpern-Felsher in 2010. The theory postulates that a stressful or negative psychosocial experience in early childhood will condition women to pursue faster life history strategies. In line with this perspective, women who grew up in families characterised by divorce, abandonment, constant and serious parental conflicts, inadequate resources, social stigma and other stressors will be habituated for faster life histories whilst women who are exposed to positive upbringing will have lower levels of psychosocial stress and as such will opt for slower life histories, (Shenk, Starkweather, Kress & Allam.,

2013). It is envisaged that faster life history trajectories are a way of adjusting to the stress imposed by the negative family background.

Psychosocial acceleration theory is articulated through five critical life history strategies which are: family context, childrearing, psychological and behavioural development, somatic development and reproductive strategies. A harsh family setting encompasses marital disharmony, parental abuse, divorce, death of a parent and inadequate economic resources. Such factors, including parental and particularly father absence and inconsistent parenting often contribute to increased child stress and anxiety (Belsky, 2012). Children reared in families where fathers are present typically have access to more resources, better stability over time in resources and more harmony in marriage. Such family set ups encourage normal or delayed timing in sexual maturation and the development of quality sexual strategies in later adulthood (Belsky, Steinberg & Draper, 1991)

Building upon the observations of Paternal Investment theorists, Chisholm (2003) and Belsky, Steinberg, Houts and Halpern-Felsher (2010) extended the theory from a principal emphasis on fathers to encompass various forms of stress as triggers for life history strategies adopted by girls. This approach has been termed Psychosocial Acceleration theory (Ellis & Del Giudice, 2004; Neberich, Penke, Lehnart & Asendorpf, 2010). This model recognises the influence of many types stressors within the family system that may lead to psychosocial stress for the girl child, these include but are not limited to father absence, marital disagreements, mother having multiple male lovers, intra-household economic stress (such as unemployment or unstable employment) and general environmental stress. Belsky, Steinberg and Draper (1991) argue that if girls experience high levels of stress during their critical formative years (five to seven years of age) they will accelerate their maturation process. However, Chisholm (1993) proposes that the

critical formative years are ten years of age and below. The propositions seem plausible especially considering that the age range is generally viewed as critical in child development.

The accelerated maturation process will biologically manifest as earlier menarche and general acceleration of all secondary sexual characteristics. The Psycho-social Acceleration Theory further explains that this early maturation will present psycho-socially by way of early ages at first sexual intercourse, age at first marriage (depending upon the cultural manifestation of marriage), and age at first birth Belsky et al. 2010). Early maturation and the associated social components are the primary reasons behind some of the sexual preferences and relationship strategies that are adopted by women who grew up in father-absent homes. These strategies include low investment in relationships and a preference for masculine men.

The key principle of the Psychosocial Acceleration Theory is that early life stress will evolutionarily influence human beings to adjust life history strategies with the ultimate aim of enhancing total lifetime fitness. Although levels of environmental stress and types of stressors have varied during human evolution, humans measure stress through multiple indictors, and any stress that indicates earlier than normal tends to accelerate the maturation process (Belsky et al., 2010; Chisholm 2003; Ellis & Del Giudice, 2004). This approach therefore views relationship strategies adopted by women who emerge from father absent homes as a means of adjusting to psychosocial stresses of childhood. However, some of these relationship strategies can also become a source of depression and anxiety or alternatively, failure to properly adjust to childhood psychosocial stress and may lead to depression and anxiety.

The early life stress explained above may however not be experienced in all societies. Shenk, Starkweather, Kress and Allam, (2013) argue that cross-cultural studies need to be done in

cultures where father absence is the norm or where parenting by relatives might substitute direct care by fathers and thus reduce the stress of father absence. This is especially true in most African societies in which members of the extended family may take up roles to fill in the gap that may have been left by a father as a result of death or voluntary means (Mokomane, 2012; Makofane, 2015).

Shenk, Starkweather, Kress and Allam, (2013) carried out a study which focused on the impact of father absence on the adult life of rural women in Bangladesh. Their results are in line with the Psychosocial Acceleration Theory especially in the link between early life stresses caused by father absence to life histories such as marriage and giving birth. The study goes further linked and distinguished the type of father absence to specific life events. Therefore, this research indicated that father absence in and of itself may have little effect on the life history strategies of Bangladesh women as long as key correlates of father absence are controlled. This was shown by the fact that women who grew up without their fathers due to labour migration had life history strategies which was almost similar to that of women who had fathers present. The study however, did not give an explanation as to why women with deceased fathers have delayed life histories compared with women whose fathers are present.

This model guided the research in exploring the potential link of early father absence to the depression and anxiety states of women who grew up in father absent homes in Masvingo. Whilst studies in the Western world and parts of Asia have authenticated this model, it remains to be seen whether the model is confirmed in the Zimbabwean situation where parenting by kin may moderate the effects of father absence.

2.5 Conceptual Model

The concepts explained in the two theories can be diagrammatically presented in the model below. The two theories explain father absence largely emanating from divorce, abandonment and death. Father absence leads to five major outcomes related to subjective wellbeing. Women who emerge from father absent homes opt for short term a relationship strategy which in turn leads to a preference for masculinity or physical features in a potential partner. Faster life history trajectories which lead to early sexual relationships are also common among women who emerge from father absent households (Belsky, Steinberg, Houts and Halpern-Felsher, 2010). Father absence as theorised by the Psychosocial Acceleration Theory leads to psychosocial stress, anxiety and depression. This is all shown in the model below.

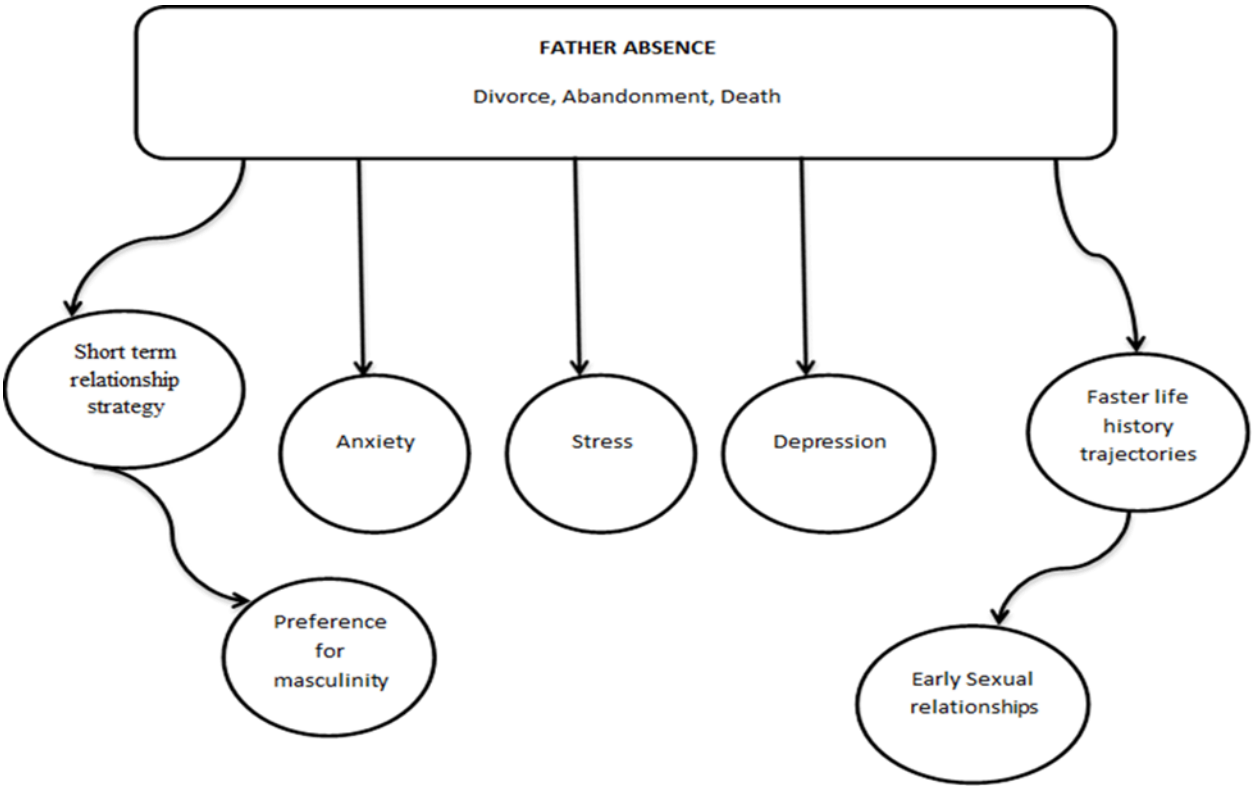

Figure 2.1: Conceptual Model

2.6 Summary

This chapter detailed the concepts that build up the study, the theoretical framework and a review of related studies. The studies and concepts discussed in this chapter have presented contrasting positions with regards to the impact of father absence on daughter adult life. Western literature suggests more negative repercussions of father absence on the girl child whereas South African literature points to a more positive picture. In Zimbabwe, the literature available is not conclusive and in fact very little to no literature available analyses the impact of father absence on daughter adult life. This therefore justified the need to engage in this study. The next chapter details the methodology that was used in this study.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter describes the research methodology that was used to collect data for this thesis. The focus is on the research approach, design, the sampling strategy and research instruments. The chapter will also describe the pretesting that was done on the instrument to test for reliability and validity. An outline of the research procedure and ethical considerations will also be given.

3.2 Research Paradigm

This research on the impact of father absence on daughter adult life was informed by positivism. The researcher used this paradigm because the thrust of this research was to get objective data empirically using a standardized questionnaire. The positivist paradigm asserts that real events can be observed empirically and explained with logical analysis (Collins, 2010). The researcher intended to measure levels of anxiety and depression in the participants and as such the positivist paradigm was appropriate. According to Collins (2010), as a philosophy, positivism adheres to the view that only 'factual' knowledge gained through observation including measurement is trustworthy. The research findings of this study were analysed through statistical analysis and hence the choice of positivism. Crowther and Lancaster (2008) posited that, positivism depends on quantifiable observations that lend themselves to statistical analysis.

3.3 Research Approach

This research took a quantitative approach. Quantitative research is the numeric representation and manipulation of observations for the purpose of describing and explaining the phenomena that those observations reflect, (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011). The Quantitative approach enabled the researcher to access as many participants as possible to get wider perception of the

issues under study. Quantitative techniques were much more applicable in the measurement of depression and anxiety levels of the women who participated in this study.

3.4 Research Design

This research made use of the *ex-post facto design*. Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2000) define ex-post facto research design as that in which the independent variable has already occurred and in which the researcher starts with the observation of a dependent variable. The researcher then studies the independent variable in retrospect for their possible relationship to, and effects on, the dependent. According to Simon and Goes (2013), the *ex-post facto design* is ideal for conducting social research when it is not possible or acceptable to manipulate the characteristics of human participants. The design was chosen because it best suits the variables that this research seeks to investigate. The independent variable in this research has already occurred (father absence) and the researcher sought to find its relationship or its influence to a number of dependent variables, most of which have already occurred.

Ex-post facto design was also chosen because its underlying method of investigation is appropriate for this research. It tries to explain a result based on preceding factors, understand the effect of a variable on another variable and test an assertion using statistical hypothesis testing methods. In this particular research, the researcher sought to find the influence of father absence which is the independent variable on daughter adult life. Simon and Goes (2013) explained that in the context of scientific investigation an *ex-post facto design* seeks to show probable associations by noting a current state and probing from the past for possible causal influences. For instance, in this study, the current state may refer to depression and anxiety levels as well as relationship strategies used by women under study and the study then aims to probe for possible causal influences which could be father absence/presence.

The *ex-post facto* research design was also chosen because it suits the characteristics of the sample population. The targeted population is already different in some respects, that is, there is a group of women who grew up with fathers and there is another group whose fathers were absent. Barker, Pistrang and Elliott (2015) noted that instead of choosing clusters that are the same and exposing them to different conditions to find differences in the dependent variables, an *ex-post facto design* starts with clusters that are already different in some way and examines in retrospect for aspects that gave rise to those differences.

An inherent weakness in the *ex-post facto design* is that the researcher cannot manipulate the independent variable (Myers & Hansen, 2006). In this case, the researcher has no control over father absence/presence, it is something that has already occurred. This weakness is then managed by having a control group (father present women) which is then used for comparison with the actual experimental group (father absent women) later on in order to analyse the cause of an already occurred event which in this case is father absence. Another weakness of this design is that the researcher cannot randomly assign participants to different groups, this will then affect the number of participants that will be assigned in the experimental and control group. In this research, the researcher counteracted that weakness by having a large number of participants until such a level where the number of participants who naturally fit into the experimental group was almost the same as those who were in the control group.

3.5 Population

The population for this study consisted of all women in Mucheke suburb aged between the ages of 18 to 39. The 2017 Inter-Censal Demographic Survey (2018) indicates that there are 35 650 women between the ages of 20 to 39 in the whole of Masvingo urban of which Mucheke is only a section of Masvingo urban. According to the Inter-Censal Demographic Survey (2018), there is

an estimated 4 500 households in Mucheke suburb. The exact number of women residing in Mucheke suburb in the age group sought by the researcher was unknown. This is because the statistics that come from official statistical agencies do not specify population by suburbs but rather by constituencies.

3.6 Participants and Sampling Strategy

A total of three hundred and ninety-two (392) participants took part in this study. The number of participants to sample for this study was derived from Cochran formula for infinite populations

$$n_0 = \frac{Z^2 pq}{e^2}$$

(Bartlett, 2001).

Where Z = 1.96, P= 5, Q = -5 and e = 0.5

Therefore sample size $= \frac{(1.96)^2 (5)(-5)}{(0.5)^2} =$ ***385***

Using this formula meant that the current study was expected to use a sample size of 385 participants proportionally distributed across all the strata. However, the actual number of participants exceeded Cochran's minimum by seven giving total number of 392 participants. Participants were aged between 18 to 39 years. The distribution of participants in terms of age is shown in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1: Age of Respondents

	Frequency	Percent
18-21 years	93	23.7
22 - 25 years	89	22.7
26 - 29 years	87	22.2
30 - 33 years	61	15.6
34 years & above	62	15.8
Total	392	100.0

About 43% of women who participated in this study grew up in father absent homes as shown in Table 3.2 below:

Table 3.2: Father Absence / Presence during the First 18 Years of Life.

	Frequency	Percent
Women who grew up with fathers	224	57.1
Women who grew up without fathers	168	42.9
Total	392	100.0

Participants were selected using one stage cluster sampling. Cluster sampling involves selection of groups of study units (clusters) instead of the selection of study units individually (Punch, 2004). Cluster sampling is used in situations where the exact size of the target population is unknown. In this study the exact population of women within the specific age group targeted was unknown. The researcher opted for cluster sampling also because the method is time efficient and cost efficient especially bearing in mind the large geographical area of about 4 500 households that had to be covered. One stage cluster sampling is also easy from a practicality

viewpoint especially considering the limited economic and time resources available to the researcher.

Cluster sampling is used when mutually homogeneous yet internally heterogeneous groupings are evident in a statistical population (Saiffudin, 2009). In one stage cluster sampling strategy the total population is divided into groups (known as clusters) and a simple random sample of the groups is selected. All elements in each sampled cluster are sampled (Saiffudin, 2009; Jackson, 2011).

Women who participated in the study were selected from five sections of Mucheke which are Mucheke A, B, C, D & F. The researcher randomly selected two streets per section and these streets formed the clusters. A total of ten (10) streets were randomly selected for the study. All women aged 18 to 39 living in the selected streets were research participants as shown in Table 3.3.

Table 3.3: Streets (clusters), Number of Households and Number of Participants

Section	**Street (Cluster)**	**Total number of households in the cluster**	**Number of respondents in selected cluster**
Mucheke A	1	102	47
	2	93	38
Mucheke B	1	86	36
	2	84	38
Mucheke C	1	100	43
	2	110	41
Mucheke D	1	96	36
	2	92	43
Mucheke F	1	80	36
	2	84	33
TOTAL		**2140**	**392**

3.6.1 Inclusion criteria

Participants who took part in this study were women aged between the ages of 18 to 39. The women were residents of Mucheke suburb during the period of data collection which was between September and November 2017. Women who have grown up with their fathers and those who have not grown up with them participated in the study.

3.6.2 Exclusion criteria

Those who were excluded from this study were women who are illiterate or those who did not have basic understanding of the English language as the questionnaire was administered in English.

3.7 Instruments

This research made use of a combined standardized close ended questionnaire. The questionnaire was adapted from three standardized instruments which are the Burns Anxiety Inventory (Section B); the Burns Depression Inventory (Section C); and the Mate Preference Questionnaire (Section D). The combined questionnaire was named the Psychological Assessment Inventory.

Section A of the questionnaire probed biographical data about the participants. Section B comprised of the Burns Anxiety Inventory which is an assessment instrument used to measure anxiety. The checklist can be self-administered or administered by a clinician. By giving a numeric rating to overall anxious symptoms, the anxiety inventory enables the researcher to quantify the feelings of the respondents. The instrument consists of thirty-three symptoms related to anxiety. They are summarized into three classifications namely anxious thoughts, anxious feelings and physical symptoms. Section C which is the Burns Depression Inventory is a standardized scale measuring levels of depression or happiness in people. The checklist is a

twenty-five (25) question rating scale for depression originated by David Burns in 1984 and revised in 1996.

Section D is the Mate Preference Questionnaire and explores factors that were considered by people in choosing a sexual and marriage partner. The Mate Selection Questionnaire required participants to rate eighteen characteristics on how important or desirable each would be in choosing a mate and a four-point scale was used. The scale also lists a set of characteristics that are preferred in a potential mate or marriage partner. Respondents were then asked to rank those characteristics from most to least preferred. This instrument was particularly used to address the fourth objective which sought to ascertain if sexual partner preference and relationship strategy of women who grew up in father absent households differ from those of women who grew up with their fathers.

These instruments were developed in the West and as such their inherent weakness is that they may not suit in the African context for two basic reasons. The first one being the issue of English, a foreign language used in the tests, the second reason being the issue of different cultural definitions of anxiety and depression. To deal with the issue of language, participants who were literate were included in the study; moreover research assistants were engaged to help in interpreting some words that participants may have found difficult to comprehend. The issue of different cultural definitions of anxiety and depression was dealt with by subjecting the instrument to a pre-test so as to adjust the items that may not be relevant to the Zimbabwean setting.

Standardized questionnaires were chosen because of their reliability. Reliability in this instance refers to the dependability of the instrument and it also refers to the consistency of the responses

to the questions. All the three standardized questionnaires used in this research had proved to have high reliability co-efficient. According to Walliman, (2011), standardized questionnaires have been shown to be more reliable than similar homegrown questionnaires. The researcher also chose standardized questionnaires because of their sensitivity. Sensitivity refers to how well the questionnaire can discriminate between good interfaces and bad ones (Walliman, 2011). In this case it was necessary to find an instrument which was sensitive enough to detect the ways in which women who will take part in this study could have been affected by father absence and the differences in their experiences.

The standardised questionnaires were also preferred in this research because they allow the researcher to gather responses more objectively. This is also supported by Barker, Pistrang and Elliott (2015) who argue that standardized allow practitioners to independently verify the measurement statements of other practitioners. Therefore, the anxiety and depression scores obtained can be compared to findings from previous researches. Questionnaires were also chosen because they enabled the researcher to collect information from a large sample. In this research, the researcher targeted at least three hundred and fifty participants and the standardized questionnaire was appropriate for such a big number.

Quantification is the strength of standardized questionnaire which prompted the researcher to use it as it suits the study objectives and hypothesis. Standardization allows for better scientific reporting and rigorous statistical analysis than subjective conclusion.

3.8 Validity and Reliability of Instruments

Burns claims 90-95% reliability for both the anxiety and depression checklists and that the instruments have excellent convergent and discriminant validity and are highly correlated with well-established instruments (Burns, 1999). The Burns Depression Inventory is positively

correlated with the Beck's Depression Inventory with a Pearson r of 0.73 (Craven, Rodin, Littlefield, 1988). The test was also shown to have a high one-week test-retest reliability (Pearson r = 0.92), suggesting that it was not overly sensitive to daily variations in mood. The test is also high in internal consistency (α=.91). Buss's Mate Preference Questionnaire was successfully tested in thirty-seven (37) different cultures including three Southern African cultures. It was pre-tested for validity with the local culture.

3.9 Pre-Test

A pre-test of the instruments was done with a group of eleven participants who were undergraduate students at a university in Masvingo. The students were aged between nineteen and twenty-three years. The participants were randomly selected from a second-year psychology class. Six of the participants had grown up with their fathers whilst five had not stayed with their fathers for a period ranging between six and nine teen years. The instruments were the adapted Burns anxiety inventory, Burns depression checklist and the Mate preference questionnaire. Split half reliability, correlation between tests as well validity checks were done on all three.

3.9.1 Reliability

Split half reliability was checked for all the three instruments. The results are as follows:

3.9.1.1 Adapted Burns anxiety inventory

The Cronbach's alpha on this instrument was 0.886 and 0.932 whilst the Guttman split half coefficient was 0.782. Based on these coefficients, the internal consistency was reasonably high and showed good levels of internal consistency (De Vellis, 2012). The results are shown in Table 3.4.

Table 3.4: Reliability Statistics for the Adapted Burns Anxiety Inventory.

Cronbach's Alpha	Part 1	Value	.886
		N of Items	17[a]
	Part 2	Value	.932
		N of Items	16[b]
	Total N of Items		33
Guttman Split-Half Coefficient			.782

3.9.1.2 Burns depression inventory

The Cronbach's alpha on this instrument was 0.913 and 0.865 whilst the Guttman split half coefficient was 0.842. The coefficients were very high and showed very good levels of internal consistency.

3.9.1.3 Mate preference questionnaire

The Cronbach's alpha on this instrument was 0.703 and 0.677 whilst the Guttman split half coefficient was 0.722. The coefficients were fairly high and showed acceptable levels of internal consistency. The results are shown in Table 3.5.

Table 3.5: Reliability Statistics for Mate Preference Questionnaire.

Cronbach's Alpha	Part 1	Value	.703
		N of Items	8[a]
	Part 2	Value	.677
		N of Items	7[b]
	Total N of Items		15
Guttman Split-Half Coefficient			.727

3.9.2 Correlations

The results of this pre-test showed that the adapted Burns Depression Inventory is positively correlated with the adapted Beck's Depression Inventory with a Pearson r of 0.996 and 0.850 with two different groups of participants.

3.9.3 Adjustments after the pre-test

Minor adjustments were made after the pre-test to enhance the validity and reliability of the instruments. The three instruments were conflated into one questionnaire, to avoid continuous probing of participants' biographical data. The titles Burns Depression Checklist, Burns Anxiety Inventory and Mate Preference Questionnaire were removed from the instruments to reduce bias of responses as respondents may deliberately want to expose themselves as "depressed" or probably "not depressed". These were replaced by one title Psychological Assessment Inventory which sounded more neutral.

3.10 Validity

The three tests were assessed by three local psychologists and two psychology lecturers for content and construct validity. Minor adjustments were made to the instruments particularly removing some items that could be difficult to understand in the Zimbabwean context because they are not commonly used. For example, phrases like "down in the dumps" and "apprehension" were replaced by much simpler words. A few items were added to the instruments to enhance the construct validity of the instruments these include items probing whether the participant had stayed with their fathers or not, marital status and age. All the three tests were then successfully administered to the eleven participants with no missing data recorded.

3.11 Research Procedure

Permission was sought from the Great Zimbabwe University, Research and Post graduate office to conduct the study. The researcher contacted Masvingo City Council to get the population estimates and map of Mucheke residential area. The researcher engaged four student research assistants who were paid using a research grant from the Great Zimbabwe University Research Board. These research assistants were trained on how to collect the data a week before field work. The researcher collected data together with the research assistants. One of the student research assistants was an intern with Masvingo City Council and he provided valuable knowledge and experience in navigating the streets of Mucheke.

The researcher and research assistants entered houses in the randomly selected streets and asked for permission to administer a questionnaire to women who suited the criteria for this research. Participants were asked to fill in a participant consent form and then they were given the questionnaires. Some participants requested assistance in filling in the questionnaires whilst others requested some time to fill in the questionnaire. All women were requested to fill in the same questionnaire. The questionnaires were then separated between those of women who grew up with fathers and those who did not grow up with fathers at the data analysis stage.

3.12 Data Analysis

The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 21.0 was used to analyse data. Hypotheses 1, 5 & 6 were tested using the Chi-Square test for Independence. Hypotheses 3 & 4 were tested using the Mann-Whitney U-test. Linear regression analysis was used to test hypothesis 2. The Mann-Whitney U-test as a non-parametric test was chosen because it allowed comparison between the two independent groups of women who are numerically different (224 and 168). Chi-square test for independence was chosen as it allowed comparison of responses

between the two groups of women on categorical data. Linear regression analysis was done to determine the influence of duration of father absence on depression and anxiety levels of women who grew up without fathers. Outcomes of interest were modelled in terms of specific type of father absence and relationship strategy or anxiety or depression levels.

3.13 Ethical Considerations

Ethical principles were observed in carrying out the study. Respondents were fully informed about the research problem. They were told before the study that they will not be forced to take part in the research and that the information they provide will strictly to be used for academic purposes only and therefore confidentiality will be maintained. In this regard, participants were kindly asked to fill in a participant consent form which among other things clearly highlighted their rights as they participated in the study. The principle of confidentiality was fully maintained in this study as the research findings will not be shared with the public except professionals and key stakeholders but even then, names of participants will not be revealed.

3.14 Summary

This chapter discussed the methodology that was used in this research. Explanations to justify the choice of the Ex Post Facto design, the standardised tests, one stage cluster sampling were given. The chapter also explained the pre-test that was done to test the validity and reliability of the instrument. The next chapter will outline the findings of the study.

CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents results of the study. Data was analysed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences version 21 (SPSS v 21) and different statistical tests were employed to test for significance in differences and relationships of variables. Data will be presented in themes that are related to the objectives of this study. These themes are:-

(i) Type of father absence

(ii) Duration of father absence

(iii) Father absence/presence and anxiety

(iv) Father absence/presence and depression

(v) Father absence/presence and sexual partner preference and relationship strategy.

4.2 Type of Father Absence and Psychological Effects on Adult Life

In this study, four types of father absence emerged. The types are derived from the causes of father absence, namely death, divorce, migration and abandonment. The death of a father was the prominent cause of father absence followed by divorce. These types of father absence and their respective frequencies in this study are shown in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1: Frequency Distribution of Types of Father Absence.

	Frequency	Percent
Death	60	35.7
Divorce	43	25.6
Migration	35	20.8
Abandonment	30	17.9
Total	168	100.0

One of the objectives of this study was to ascertain if type of father absence had an influence on the adult psychological lives of the participants particularly their anxiety and depression levels as well as their romantic relationship strategies and preferred partners. The study therefore sought to test the following hypothesis:

Ho: Type of father absence does not have a significant psychological effect on women who grew up without fathers

The hypothesis was tested using the Chi-square test of independence. In order to test for any significant differences on the four types of father absence, participants' scores on the three sections of the questionnaire were computed in line with their type of father absence and comparisons were made among the four categories. The results are shown in Table 4.2.

Table 4.2: Summary of Chi-square Values for Impact of Types of Father Absence on Three Psychological Variables

Variable	Value	Df	P
Anxiety	75.167	20	.00
Depression	94.797	20	.01
Relationship strategy and preferred partner	27.705	12	.041

The results in the table above show that type of father absence had a significant impact on the anxiety and depression levels as well as relationship strategies expressed by participants. The null hypothesis is therefore rejected in favour of the alternate hypothesis. The research therefore concludes that the type or nature of father absence does have an effect on anxiety and depression levels as well as the relationship strategy of women.

4.2.1 Type of father absence and anxiety

This study found that women who were abandoned by their fathers during childhood exhibited

the most extreme forms of anxiety followed by those that had migrating fathers. Women who had dead fathers exhibited minimal anxiety during adulthood. The results are shown in Table 4.3.

Table 4.3: Type of Father Absence and Degree of Anxiety.

Type of father absence	No anxiety	Low anxiety	Mild anxiety	Severe anxiety	Total
Death	9	34	3	14	60
	15.0%	56.6%	5.0%	23.3%	100.0%
Divorce	3	8	7	25	43
	7.0%	18.6%	16.3%	57.1%	100.0%
Migration	0	3	10	22	35
	.0%	8.6%	28.6%	62.9%	100.0%
Abandonment	0	6	9	15	30
	.0%	20%	30.0%	50%	100.0%
Total	12	51	29	76	168
	8.4%	40.1%	14.3%	37.2%	100.0%

The researcher sought to test if the differences in degrees of anxiety across the types of father absence were significant. This test was done using the Chi-square test of independence. The results are shown in Table 4.4.

Table 4.4: Association between Type of Father Absence and Degrees of Anxiety.

	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	75.167[a]	20	.000
Likelihood Ratio	87.250	20	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	.280	1	.596
N of Valid Cases	168		

The severity of anxiety differed by type of father absence, $X^2(20, N = 168) = 75.167$, $p < .01$. The research therefore concludes that anxiety levels of women who were abandoned by fathers during childhood are significantly higher than that of the other three types of father absence.

4.2.2 Type of father absence and depression

This study revealed that women who grew up without fathers due to divorce and those who had migrating fathers were more affected by depression when compared to the other two groups of women (father died and father abandoned). A larger proportion of those who reported extreme depression were women who grew up without fathers due to divorce (16.3%) whilst a larger proportion of those who reported severe depression were women who did not grow up with fathers due to migration (25.7%). The results are shown in the cross-tabulation in Table 4.5.

Table 4.5: Relationship between Type of Father Absence and Degree of Depression.

	No depression	Minimal depression	Moderate depression	Severe depression	Total
Father died	5	33	13	9	60
	8.3%	55%	21.7%	15%	100.0%
Father divorced	1	15	17	10	43
	2.3%	34.9%	39.5%	23.3%	100.0%
Father migrated	0	14	8	13	35
	.0%	40%	22.9%	37.1%	100.0%
Father abandoned us/me	3	4	13	10	30
	10.0%	13.4%	43.3%	33.3%	100.0%
Total	9	66	52	42	168
	9.2%	47.9%	29.8%	33%	100.0%

The severity of depression differed by type of father absence, $X^2(20, N = 168) = 94.797$, $p = .01$.

The researcher therefore concludes that depression levels of women who did not grow up with fathers due to divorce and those who had migrating fathers during childhood is significantly higher than that of women whose fathers died or those who were abandoned.

4.2.3 Type of father absence and sexual partner preference and relationship strategies

4.2.3.1 Preferred age of marriage

This study revealed that women abandoned by fathers during childhood preferred to be married at an older age than other groups of women. 31.6% of father abandoned women preferred to be married after the age of 30 as compared to an average 4% of women across the other groups of women who preferred to be married after the age of 30. A significant proportion of women who grew up without fathers due to death and due to divorce preferred to be married early. 35% of women who grew up without fathers due to death of the father and 33% of women who grew without fathers due to divorce preferred to be married before the age of 23.

4.2.3.2 Actual age of marriage

A significant number of married women who grew up without fathers due to divorce married early. Slightly more than half (54.5%) of women who had divorced fathers married before the age of 20 and in total 86% married before the age of 23. More than three quarters (78%) of women who had migrating fathers married before the age of 23.

4.2.3.3 Marital status

The highest percentage of divorced women is among the father abandoned group. A higher percentage of women who lost their fathers due to death are married whilst a greater proportion of women who have divorced fathers and migrating fathers are single and dating. The type of father absence had a significant effect on the marital status of the respondents, $X^2(16, N = 392) = 39.896$, $p < .01$. The results are shown in the cross-tabulation in Table 4.6.

Table 4.6: Type of Father Absence and Marital Status

	Marital status of respondents					Total
	Single & not Dating	Single & Dating	Single & Engaged	Married	Divorced	
Father died	4	11	2	34	9	60
	6.7%	18.3%	3.3%	56.7%	15.0%	100.0%
Father divorced	3	19	4	14	3	43
	7.0%	44.2%	9.3%	32.6%	7.0%	100.0%
Father migrated	6	14	2	8	5	35
	17.1%	40.0%	5.7%	22.9%	14.3%	100.0%
Father abandoned us/me	9	6	3	6	6	30
	30.0%	20.0%	10.0%	20.0%	20.0%	100.0%
Not applicable	32	66	9	101	16	224
	14.3%	29.5%	4.0%	45.1%	7.1%	100.0%
Total	54	116	20	163	39	392
	13.8%	29.6%	5.1%	41.6%	9.9%	100.0%

4.2.3.4 Preferred characteristics in a romantic partner

Women who did not grow up with fathers due to migration of the fathers preferred romantic partners with a good financial prospect (88% indicated this preference compared to an average 51% in other groups of women). The majority of women whose fathers died during childhood (58%) expressed a preference for a romantic partner with no previous sexual relationships. 83.8% of father divorced and 82.9% of father migrated women preferred good looking romantic partners. 83.3% of women who were abandoned by their fathers during childhood thought that sex is very important and necessary, this is in contrast to the other three groups who had an average of 36% expression of sex being important and necessary.

4.3 Duration of Father Absence and Psychological Effects on Adult Life

This study revealed that the duration of father absence had varying effects on the psychological lives of participants. Almost half of all women who did not grow up with their fathers indicated that they had not lived with their fathers for a period of 14 years or more. An insignificant proportion of participants (1.8%) indicated that they had not lived with their fathers for a period of less than 2 years. The duration periods of father absence gathered from participants in this study are shown in Table 4.7.

Table 4.7: Grouped Frequency Distribution of Duration of Father Absence.

	Frequency	Percent
Less than 2 years	3	1.8
2 - 5 years	30	17.9
6 - 9 years	24	14.2
10 - 13 years	34	20.2
14 years and above	77	45.8
Total	168	100.0

The study therefore sought to test the following hypothesis:

Ho: Duration of father absence does not have a significant psychological effect on women who grew up without fathers

The hypothesis was tested using linear regression and the results are shown in Table 4.8.

Table 4.8: Impact of Duration of Father Absence on the Anxiety and Depression Levels of Women

Variable	R	R square	Adjusted square
Anxiety	.485	.314	.322
Depression	.251	.063	.060

The regression analysis in Table 4.8 shows that the duration of father absence had an impact on the anxiety and depression levels of women who grew up without fathers. The research therefore concludes that the duration of father absence has an effect on the psychological lives of women who grew up without fathers.

4.3.1 Duration of father absence and anxiety

This study found that the duration of father absence during childhood had an impact on the levels of anxiety expressed in adulthood. This is confirmed by the regression analysis in Table 4.9.

Table 4.9: Relation between Duration of Father Absence and Degree of Anxiety

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.485[a]	.314	.322	1.405

a. Predictors: (Constant), Duration of father absence

b. Dependent Variable: Degree of anxiety

The R square of .314 indicates that about 31% of the anxiety expressed by participants could be accounted as an influence of the duration of father absence.

Women who had not grown up with their fathers for a period of two to five years (2-5 years)

reported the most severe anxiety when compared to other groups of women. 70% of women who reported that they had not lived with their fathers for a period of two to five years (2-5 years) had severe to extreme anxiety when compared to an average of 30% in other groups of women.

The study further revealed that women who had not stayed with their fathers for a period of 10 to 13 years experienced nervousness or worry a lot of times compared to other groups of women. 41.2% of women who had not stayed with their fathers for 10 to 13 years reported that they experienced nervousness, worry or fear a lot of times compared to an average 5% among all other women.

Women who had not lived with their fathers for a period of 14 years or more indicated that they experienced a fear of criticism or disapproval at a higher proportion compared to the other groups of women. 28.6% of women who had not live with their fathers for a period of 14 years and above reported that they had a fear of criticism or disapproval a lot compared to an average 14% among other groups of women.

4.3.2 Duration of father absence and depression

This study found that the duration of father absence during childhood was not a significant factor in influencing the degree of depression that is experienced in adulthood. This is shown in regression analysis in Table 4.10.

Table 4.10: Relationship between Duration of Father Absence and Depression.

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.251[a]	.063	.060	1.134

a. Predictors: (Constant), Duration of father absence

b. Dependent Variable: Level of depression

The R square of .063 indicates that 0.6% of the depression felt by participants who grew up in father absent homes could be accounted to be an influence of the duration of father absence.

This study revealed that women who had not stayed with their fathers for a period of 14 years or more experienced feelings of sadness a lot compared to other groups of women. 25% of these women reported that they felt sad extremely in comparison to an average 7% among other groups of women.

Women who had not stayed with their fathers for 10-13 years and for 14 years and above indicated that they had a loss of interest in sex at a higher proportion compared to other groups of women. More than a third (39%) of women who had not stayed with their fathers for a period of 14 years and above and 37% of women who had not stayed with their fathers for a period of 10 to 13 years reported that they had extremely lost interest in sex as compared to an average 11% among other groups of women.

Loneliness was highly reported among women who had not stayed with their fathers for a period of 6-9 years. Slightly more than a (36%) of women in this group reported that they felt extremely lonely compared to an average 13% among other groups of women.

4.3.3 Duration of father absence and sexual partner preference and relationship strategies

The duration of father absence had impact on some aspects of partner preference and relationship strategies of the study population. The majority of the women (74%) who had not stayed with their fathers for a period of two to five years (2-5 years) preferred a masculine romantic partner as compared to women who had not lived with their fathers for a period of 14years or more who indicated that masculinity of a romantic partner is irrelevant or unimportant.

80% of women who had not stayed with their fathers for a period of two to five years (2-5 years) married before the age of 20 compared to an average of 30% who married before the age of 20

across the other groups in the study. Majority of women (53%) who did not stay with their fathers for a period of 14 years or more preferred a potential mate who is a fatherly figure. 75% of women who did not stay with their fathers for ten to thirteen (10-13) years indicated that possessiveness of a partner as a relationship strategy is very important and necessary compared to an average 50% who indicated that in other groups of women.

4.4 Father Absence or Presence and Anxiety

This study sought to find out if anxiety levels of women who grew up in father absent homes differ from those of women who grew up in father present homes as one of the objectives. As such, one of the hypotheses of the study is:-

Ho: Women who grew up with their fathers do not significantly differ in their anxiety levels with those who grew without a resident father.

The hypothesis was tested using the Mann-Whitney U-test and the results are shown in Tables 4.11 and 4.12.

Table 4.11: Mann-Whitney U Ranks for Comparison of Anxiety Scores.

Father presence or absence during the first 18 years of life		N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
Anxiety scores of participants	Women who grew up with fathers	224	179.80	40275.50
	Women who grew up without fathers	168	218.76	36752.50
	Total	392		

Table 4.12: Mann-Whitney U-test for Father Absence and Anxiety.

Test Statistics	
	Anxiety scores of participants
Mann-Whitney U	15075.500
Z	-3.371
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.001

The Mann-Whitney U-test indicated that anxiety levels of women who grew up in father absent homes significantly differ from those of women who grew up with resident fathers, u = 15075.5, p < .01. Women who grew up without fathers had a higher mean rank (218.76) than women who grew up with fathers (179.8) on anxiety scores. This means that women who grew up without fathers expressed more anxious feelings, thoughts and physical symptoms than women who grew up with fathers. Simply put, the results indicate that women who grew up without fathers are more prone to anxiety than women who grew up with fathers. The researcher therefore rejects the null hypothesis in favour of the alternate hypothesis. The researcher concludes that father absence is a factor influencing the anxiety of women.

4.4.1 Father absence and degree of anxiety

This study revealed that father absence has a significant impact on the degree of anxiety experienced by women. The degree or classification of anxiety presented by participants differed significantly between the two groups of women with father absent women reporting more extreme anxiety than father present women. The cross-tabulation in Table 4.13 shows these differences.

Table 4.13: Father Absence/Presence and Anxiety.

	No anxiety	Low anxiety	Mild anxiety	Severe anxiety	Total
Women from father present homes	21	106	27	70	224
	9.4%	47.3%	12.1%	31.2%	100.0%
Women from father absent homes	12	51	29	76	168
	7.1%	30.3%	17.3%	45.3%	100.0%
Total	33	157	56	146	392
	8.4%	40.1%	14.3%	37.2%	100.0%

The cross-tabulation in Table 4.13 shows that women who did not grow up with resident fathers had more severe anxiety when compared to those who lived with their fathers, which is 45.3% against 31.2%. A chi-square test was done to test this difference. The results are shown in Table 4.14.

Table 4.14: Association between Father Absence and Severity of Anxiety.

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	15.754[a]	5	.008
Likelihood Ratio	15.862	5	.007
Linear-by-Linear Association	11.331	1	.001
N of Valid Cases	392		

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 14.14.

The severity of anxiety significantly differed by father absence or presence during the first eighteen (18) years of life, $X^2(5, N = 392) = 15.754, p < .01$. The results show that women from father absent homes expressed severe anxiety more than women from father present homes. It was therefore concluded that the degree of severity of anxiety differed between women who grew up with fathers and those who did not grow up with fathers.

4.4.2 Father absence/presence and anxious feelings

This study revealed that both father absence and father presence during the first eighteen years of life have an influence on feelings of anxiety in grown women. 8.9% of women who grew up without fathers against 1.8% women who grew up with fathers reported that they feel detached from all or part of their bodies a lot of time. This difference was significant and was tested with Chi-square for independence and the results are shown in Table 4.15.

Table 4.15: Father Absence and Anxious Feelings.

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	12.338[a]	3	.006
Likelihood Ratio	12.651	3	.005
Linear-by-Linear Association	2.213	1	.137
N of Valid Cases	392		

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 8.14.

Thirteen percent (13%) of women who grew up without fathers against 6.7% women who grew up with fathers reported feeling that things around them were strange or unreal a lot of time.

Further, results indicated that 8.3% of women who grew up without fathers against 3.1% women who grew up with fathers experienced sudden panic spells a lot of time. This difference was significant and the significance was tested using the Chi-square test of independence, $X^2(3, N = 392) = 10.007$, $p = .02$.

Women who emerged from father absent homes expressed a sense of impending doom more than women who grew up with their fathers. Thirteen percent of women who grew up without fathers against 4.5% women who grew up with fathers reported that they felt a sense of impending death a lot of time. The details are shown in the cross-tabulation in Table 4.16

Table 4.16: Father Absence/Presence and Specific Anxiety Feelings, Thoughts and Physical Symptoms.

		Not at all	Somewhat	Moderately	A lot	Total
Women who stayed with fathers during first 18 years	Sense of impending death	163	25	26	10	224
		72.8%	11.2%	11.6%	4.5%	100.0%
	Feeling tense, stressed, "uptight" or on edge	61	55	65	43	224
		27.2%	24.6%	29.0%	19.2%	100.0%
	Difficulty in concentrating	88	57	50	27	224
		39.3%	25.4%	22.3%	12.1%	100.0%
	Verge of losing control	125	55	33	11	224
		55.8%	24.6%	14.7%	4.9%	100.0%
	Pounding of the heart (palpitations)	111	52	40	21	224
		49.6%	23.2%	17.9%	9.4%	100.0%
	Frequent headaches	87	49	42	46	224
		38.8%	21.9%	18.8%	20.5%	100.0%
Women who stayed without	Sense of impending death	107	24	15	22	168
		63.7%	14.3%	8.9%	13.1%	100.0%

fathers during first 18 years	Feeling tense, stressed, "uptight" or on edge	42	30	45	51	168
		25.0%	17.9%	26.8%	30.4%	100.0%
	Difficulty in concentrating	47	45	29	47	168
		28.0%	26.8%	17.3%	28.0%	100.0%
	Verge of losing control	94	24	28	22	168
		56.0%	14.3%	16.7%	13.1%	100.0%
	Pounding of the heart (palpitations)	67	34	32	35	168
		39.9%	20.2%	19.0%	20.8%	100.0%
	Frequent headaches	52	46	36	31	165
		31.5%	27.9%	21.8%	18.8%	100.0%

There was a significant difference in terms of how women from father absent homes and those who grew up with resident fathers had a sense of impending death $X^2(3, N = 392) = 11.317$, $p = .01$.

There was no significant difference in terms of how women from father absent homes and those who grew up with resident fathers experienced nervousness, worry or fear $X^2(3, N = 392) = 3.127$, $p = .372$. However, there was notable difference in how the two groups expressed feeling tense, stressed, uptight or on the edge. The differences are shown in Table 4.16. More women who did not grow up with fathers reported feeling tense, stressed and "uptight" or on the edge, a lot more often than women who grew up with resident fathers.

4.4.3 Father absence/presence and anxious thoughts

The cross-tabulation in Table 4.16 shows that a higher percentage of women who grew without fathers reported difficulty in concentrating when compared to women who grew up with resident fathers. The responses to the item on difficulty in concentrating were significantly different between the two groups of women, $X^2(4, N = 392) = 19.244$, $p < .01$.

There was a significant difference in how respondents reported the feeling that something terrible is about to happen. 19% of women who grew up without fathers indicated that they feared that something terrible is about to happen a lot of times compared to 12% of women who grew up with resident fathers. This significance was tested using the Chi-square test of independence, $X^2(3, N = 392) = 16.474, p < .01$.

It was further noted that there was no significant difference in how respondents indicated that they had racing thoughts, $X^2(4, N = 392) = 7.483, p = .112$. 16.7% of women who grew up with absent fathers against 12.1% women who grew up with resident fathers indicated that they had racing thoughts a lot of time. The same pattern was noted with regards to how participants reported frightening thoughts. There was no significant difference in how respondents indicated that they had frightening thoughts, $X^2(4, N = 392) = 9.562, p = .06$. 11.9% of women who grew up without fathers against 8.5% women who grew up with fathers indicated that they had racing thoughts a lot of time. 48.8% of women who grew up without fathers against 46.9% of women who grew up with fathers indicated that they do not have frightening thoughts at all.

The cross-tabulation in Table 4.16 shows that a higher percentage of women who grew without fathers reported that they were on the verge of losing control when compared to women who grew up with their fathers.

The difference in the response to the above item was significant as tested by the Chi-square for independence, $X^2(3, N = 392) = 12.892, p < .01$.

A higher percentage of women from father absent homes reported that they had fears of cracking up or going crazy than those women who grew up with resident fathers. 16.7% of women who grew up without fathers indicated that they feared cracking up or going crazy a lot of times

compared to 7.6% of women who grew up with fathers. This difference was significant at $X^2(3, N = 392) = 29.586, p < .01$.

A slightly higher percentage of women who grew up with resident fathers indicated that they had concerns about looking foolish or inadequate than women who grew up without fathers. Just less than a tenth (8.9%) of women who grew up with their fathers indicated that they had concerns about looking foolish or inadequate a lot of times as compared to 8.3% of women who grew up without fathers. This difference was not significant.

There was a significant difference in how respondents reported fears of being alone, isolated or abandoned. Of the women who grew up without fathers, 28.6% indicated that they feared being alone, isolated or abandoned a lot of times compared to 16.1% of women who grew up with fathers. This significance was tested using the Chi-square test of independence, $X^2(3, N = 392) = 23.175, p < .01$.

A higher percentage of women from father absent homes reported that they had fears of criticism or disapproval than those women who grew up with resident fathers. 21.4% of women who grew up without fathers indicated that they feared criticism or disapproval a lot of times compared to 12.5% of women who grew up with resident fathers. 52.9% of women who grew up with fathers indicated that they do not have any fears of criticism or disapproval compared to 31% of women from father absent homes. This difference was significant at $X^2(3, N = 392) = 8.887, p = .031$.

4.4.4 Father absence or presence and physical symptoms of anxiety

This study revealed that father absence or presence during the first eighteen years of life moderates the physical symptoms of anxiety. The cross-tabulation in Table 4.16 shows that a

higher percentage of women who grew without fathers reported that they had skipping, racing or pounding of the heart (palpitations) when compared to women who grew up with their fathers. The responses to the item on skipping, racing or pounding of the heart (palpitations) were significantly different between the two groups of women, $X^2(3, N = 392) = 11.263, p = .01$.

There was a significant difference in how respondents reported pain, pressure or tightness of the chest. Less than a quarter (23.8%) of women who grew up without fathers indicated that they felt pain, pressure or tightness in chest a lot of times compared to 12.9 % of women who grew up with resident fathers. Inversely, 56% of women who grew up with fathers indicated that they do not feel pain, pressure or tightness in the chest at all compared to 31% women from father absent homes. This significance was tested using the Chi-square test of independence, $X^2(3, N = 392) = 14.246, p < .01$.

A higher percentage of women from father absent homes reported that they felt tingling or numbness of toes and fingers than those women who grew up with fathers. More than a tenth (15.5%) of women who grew up without fathers indicated that they felt tingling or numbness of toes and fingers a lot of times compared to 8.9% of women who grew up with resident fathers. This difference was significant at $X^2(3, N = 392) = 9.291, p = .026$.

Of the women who grew up without fathers, 25.6% indicated that they had discomfort in the stomach a lot of times compared to 15.6 % of women who grew up with resident fathers. Inversely, 35% of women who grew up with resident fathers indicated that they did not suffer any discomfort in the stomach at all compared to 27% women from father absent homes.

A significant difference was noted in how respondents reported restlessness or jumpiness. Less than a quarter (19.5%) of women who grew up without fathers indicated that they were restless

or jumpy a lot of times compared to 6.7 % of women who grew up with resident fathers. This significance was tested using the Chi-square test of independence, $X^2(3, N = 392) = 8.943, p = .03$.

There was no significant difference in how respondents indicated that they experienced sweating not brought on by heat, $X^2(3, N = 392) = 4.466, p=.215$. Less than three quarters (70.5%) of women who grew up in father present homes indicated that they do not experience sweating which is not brought on by heat compared to 60.7% of women from father absent homes.

A higher percentage of women from father absent homes reported that they experienced trembling or shaking than those women who grew up with fathers. Furthermore, 16.1% of women who grew up without fathers indicated that they experienced trembling or shaking a lot of times compared to 8% of women who grew up with fathers. On the other hand, 67.4% of women who grew up with fathers indicated that they do not experience trembling or shaking at all compared to 49.3% women from father absent homes. This difference was significant at $X^2(3, N = 392) = 9.097, p = .028$. A slightly higher percentage of women who grew up with fathers indicated that they had frequent headaches than women who grew up without resident fathers. The results are shown in the cross-tabulation in Table 4.16. However, the difference was not significant $X^2(3, N = 392) = 3.421, p=.331$.

There was no significant difference in how respondents indicated that they experienced back pain with 58.5% of women who grew up with resident fathers indicating that they do not experience back pain as compared to 46.4% of women from father absent homes.

A higher percentage of women from father absent homes reported feeling tired, weak, or easily exhausted than those women who grew up with resident fathers. Of these, 23.2% indicated that

they felt tired, weak or easily exhausted oftener as compared to 17% of women who grew up with fathers. This difference was significant at $X^2(3, N = 392) = 15.753, p < .01$.

4.5 Father Absence or Presence and Depression

One of the objectives of this study was to find out if depression levels of women who grew up in father absent homes differed from that of women who grew up with resident fathers. Therefore, one of the hypotheses of the study is:-

2 *Ho: Women who grew up with their fathers do not significantly differ in their depression levels with those who grew without a resident father.*

The hypothesis was tested using the Mann-Whitney U-test and the results are shown in Tables 4.17 and 4.18 below.

Table 4.17: Mann-Whitney U Ranks for Depression Levels of Participants.

Ranks

Father presence or absence during the first 18 years of life	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
Women who grew up with fathers	224	168.77	37805.50
Women who grew up without fathers	168	233.47	39222.50
Total	392		

Table 4.18: Mann-Whitney U-test for Father Absence and Depression.

Test Statistics

	Depression scores of participants
Mann-Whitney U	12605.500
Z	-5.596
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.000

a. Grouping Variable: Have you stayed with your father during the first 18 years of your life?

The Mann-Whitney U-test indicated that depression levels of women who grew up in father absent homes significantly differed from those of women who grew up with resident fathers, that is, u = 12605.5, p<.01. Women who grew up without fathers had a higher mean rank (233.46) than women who grew up with fathers (168.77) on depression scores. This means that women who grew up without fathers expressed more depressive thoughts, feelings and physical symptoms than women who grew up with fathers. Simply put, the results indicate that women who grew up without fathers are more prone to depression than women who grew up with fathers. The researcher therefore rejects the null hypothesis in favour of the alternate hypothesis and concludes that father absence is a factor in accounting for the depression levels of women.

4.5.1 Father absence or presence and levels of depression

This study revealed that father absence has an effect on the levels of depression among women. The levels or classification of depression presented by participants differed significantly between the two groups with women from father absent homes exhibiting more extreme depression. The cross-tabulation in Table 4.24 shows these differences.

Table 4.19: Father Absence/Presence and Depression Levels.

	No depression	Minimal depression	Moderate depression	Severe depression	Total
Women who grew up with fathers	27	122	66	9	224
	12.1%	54.4%	29.5%	4%	100.0%
Women who grew up without fathers	9	66	51	42	168
	5.4%	39.2%	30.4%	25%	100.0%
Total	36	188	117	51	392
	9.2%	47.9%	29.8%	13%	100.0%

The cross-tabulation above shows that women from father absent homes exhibited more severe depression than those women who grew up with fathers (25% against 4%). A chi-square test for independence was done to test the significance of these differences. These differences were significant at $X^2(5, N = 392) = 42.122, p < .01$.

4.5.2 Father absence or presence and depressive thoughts and feelings

A higher percentage of women from father absent homes reported stronger feelings of sadness than those women who grew up with fathers. For example, 10.1% of women who grew up without fathers indicated that they felt extremely sad compared to 5.4% of women who grew up with fathers. On the other hand, 37.5% of women who grew up with fathers indicated that they do not feel sad at all compared to 28.6% women from father absent homes. This difference was significant at $X^2(4, N = 392) = 17.392, p < .01$. Table 4.20 shows that a higher proportion of women who grew without fathers reported that they had crying spells or tearfulness when compared to women who grew up with their fathers.

Table 4.20: Father Absence/Presence and Specific Depressive Feelings, Thoughts and Physical Symptoms.

		Not at all	Some what	Moderately	A lot	Extremely	Total
Women who stayed with fathers during first 18 years	Crying spells or tearfulness	145	37	19	20	3	224
		64.7%	16.5%	8.5%	8.9%	1.3%	100.0%
	Low self-esteem	121	67	20	12	4	224
		54.0%	29.9%	8.9%	5.4%	1.8%	100.0%
	Loss of motivation	125	49	22	15	13	224
		55.8%	21.9%	9.8%	6.7%	5.8%	100.0%
	Worrying about health	86	40	58	28	12	224
		38.4%	17.9%	25.9%	12.5%	5.4%	100.0%

	Suicidal thoughts	205	4	3	8	4	224
		91.5%	1.8%	1.3%	3.6%	1.8%	100.0%
Women who stayed without fathers during first 18 years	Crying spells or tearfulness	62	25	31	33	17	168
		36.9%	14.9%	18.5%	19.6%	10.1%	100.0%
	Low self-esteem	90	13	31	23	11	168
		53.6%	7.7%	18.5%	13.7%	6.5%	100.0%
	Loss of motivation	65	37	26	21	19	168
		38.7%	22.0%	15.5%	12.5%	11.3%	100.0%
	Worrying about health	57	34	27	32	18	168
		33.9%	20.2%	16.1%	19.0%	10.7%	100.0%
	Suicidal thoughts	139	4	11	10	4	168
		82.7%	2.4%	6.5%	6.0%	2.4%	100.0%

The responses to the item on crying spells were significantly different between the two groups of women, that is, $X^2(4, N = 392) = 44.377, p < .01$. There was a significant difference in how respondents reported the feeling of discouragement. 7.7% of women who grew up without fathers indicated that they felt discouraged extremely compared to only 1 % of women who grew up with fathers. This significance was tested using the Chi-square test of independence, $X^2(4, N = 392) = 29.452, p < .01$.

This study revealed that women from father absent homes indicated feelings of hopelessness at a higher magnitude compared to women who grew up with fathers. Furthermore, 11.3% of women from father absent homes reported that they felt hopeless extremely compared to 3.1% of women who grew up with their fathers. Inversely, 56.2% of women who grew up with fathers indicated that they did not feel hopeless at all compared to 36.3% of women from father absent homes.

Low self-esteem was more prevalent among women who did not grow up with their fathers. The results are shown in Table 4.26.

The responses to the item on low self-esteem were significantly different between the two groups of women, $X^2(4, N = 392) = 42.978, p < .01$.

Feelings of guilt or shame were more prevalent among women who did not grow up with fathers than among women who grew up with fathers. For example, 8.9% of women who did not grow up with fathers reported that they felt guilty or shameful extremely compared to 3.1% of women who grew up with their fathers. Furthermore, 16.1% of women from father absent homes indicated that they felt guilty or shameful a lot compared to 6.2% of women who grew up with their fathers.

There was a significant difference in how respondents reported difficulty in making decisions. 13.7% of women who grew up without fathers indicated that they had difficulty in making decisions extremely compared to 6.7 % of women who grew up with fathers. This significance was tested using the Chi-square test of independence, $X^2(4, N = 392) = 14.740, p < .01$.

On the other hand, there was no significant difference in how respondents reported the tendency to criticize themselves or blaming others, $X^2(4, N = 392) = 2.230, p = .693$. 42.9% of women in both groups of women indicated that they do not engage in criticizing themselves or blaming others whilst 8.3% of women who did not grow up with their fathers compared to 6.7% of women who grew up with fathers indicated that they engaged in self-criticism and blaming others a lot.

4.5.3 Father absence or presence and activities and personal relationships

A higher percentage of women from father absent homes reported that they had lost interest in family, friends or colleagues than those women who grew up with fathers. 14.3% of women who

grew up without fathers indicated that they had loss of interest in family, friends or colleagues extremely compared to 2.2% of women who grew up with fathers. This difference was significant at $X^2(4, N = 392) = 24.162, p < .01$.

This study established that father absence had an effect on the experience of loneliness. A significantly higher percentage of women from father absent homes reported that they felt lonely extremely than those women who grew up with fathers. Thirteen percent of women who grew up without resident fathers indicated that they felt lonely extremely compared to 4.5% of women who grew up with fathers. On the other hand, 51.8% of women who grew up with fathers indicated that they do not feel lonely at all compared to 28.6% of women from father absent homes. This difference was significant at $X^2(4, N = 392) = 30.060, p < .01$.

The cross-tabulation in Table 4.16 shows that a higher percentage of women who grew up without fathers reported that they had loss of motivation when compared to women who grew up with their fathers.

There was a significant difference in how respondents reported loss of interest in work or other activities. For example, 14.1% of women who grew up without fathers indicated that they lost interest in work or other activities extremely compared to 4.9 % of women who grew up with fathers. This significance was tested using the Chi-square test of independence, $X^2(4, N = 392) = 11.280, p = .024$.

This study revealed that father absence had an effect on how women experience pleasure or satisfaction with life. A higher percentage of women from father absent homes reported that they had lost pleasure or satisfaction in life than those women who grew up with fathers. 13.9% of

women who grew up without fathers indicated that they had loss of pleasure or satisfaction in life extremely compared to 4.2% of women who grew up with fathers.

4.5.4 Father absence or presence and physical symptoms of depression

There were generally no significant differences in how women from father absent homes and those who grew up with fathers presented with physical symptoms of depression.

There was no significant difference in how respondents reported feeling tired, $X^2(4, N = 392) = 3.882$, $p=.422$. 9.5% of women who did not grow up with their fathers compared to 5.8% of women who grew up with fathers indicated that they felt tired extremely. Participants did not present with any major differences on their sleeping behaviour. There was no major difference in how respondents reported on difficulty sleeping or sleeping too much, $X^2(4, N = 392) = 7.321$, $p=.12$. 32% of women in both groups of women indicated that they do not have difficulty sleeping or sleep too much at all whilst 13.7% of women who did not grow up with their fathers compared to 6.2% of women who grew up with fathers indicated that they had difficulty sleeping or slept too much extremely.

Respondents presented with insignificant differences on how they responded to loss of interest in sex. 43.5% of women from father present households against 42.9% of women from father absent households reported that they did not have any loss of interest in sex at all. On the other hand 17.9% of women from father absent homes compared to 14.3% of women from father present homes indicated that they had lost interest in sex extremely.

The only significant difference under physical symptoms of depression was noted on the item on worrying about health. Table 4.20 shows that a higher percentage of women who grew without

fathers reported that they worried about their health more when compared to women who grew up with their fathers. This difference was significant at $X^2(4, N = 392) = 11.372, p = .023$.

4.5.5 Father absence or presence and suicidal urges

Women from father absent homes indicated plans to harm themselves or end their lives more than women from father present homes. 5.4% of women from father absent homes indicated that they had a plan to harm themselves compared to 1.8% of women who grew up with their fathers. Inversely, 89.7% of women who grew up with fathers as compared to 78% of women from father absent homes indicated that they did not plan to harm themselves at all.

A higher percentage of women from father absent homes reported that they would like to end their lives than those women who grew up with fathers. 8.4 % of women who grew up without fathers indicated that they would like to end their lives compared to 3.6% of women who grew up with fathers. This difference was significant at $X^2(4, N = 392) = 11.128, p = .025$.

The cross-tabulation 4.20 shows that a slightly higher percentage of women who grew without fathers reported more suicidal thoughts when compared to women who grew up with their fathers. However, this difference was not significant.

4.5.6 Father absence or presence and depression coping mechanisms

This study sought to find out if depression coping mechanisms of women who grew up in father absent homes differed from that of women who grew up with resident fathers. The related hypothesis was stated as:

Ho: Copying mechanisms adopted by women who grew up in father absent families do not significantly differ from those adopted by women who grew up with their fathers

The hypothesis was tested using the chi-square test for independence and the results are shown in Table 4.21.

Table 4.21: Summary of Differences in Coping Mechanisms between Women from Father Present Homes and Women from Father Absent Homes.

Variable	Value	Df	P
Social support	5.752	4	.218
Optimism	3.522	4	.475
Exercise	11.052	4	.026
Planning of work in advance	8.434	4	.077

The results show that except for exercise, the other three coping mechanisms are not significantly different between women from father absent homes and those from father present homes. Therefore it was concluded that there is no significant difference in the copying mechanisms adopted by women who grew up in father absent families and those adopted by women who grew up with their fathers.

On the other hand, a slightly higher percentage of women who grew up with their fathers than those women who grew up without fathers reported that they were optimistic about the future. For example, 20.1% of women who grew up with fathers indicated that they were optimistic about the future extremely compared to 16.1% of women who grew up without fathers. The difference was however not significant.

About 32% of women from both groups reported that they sought social support from friends to avoid depression. On the other hand, 50.6% of women from father absent homes compared to 45% of women from father present homes indicated that they

do not take blame for things that they do not have control over as a strategy to avoid depression. This shows that there were no significant differences in the coping mechanisms employed by the two groups, if at all; the father absent group had slightly better depression coping mechanisms than the father present group.

A higher percentage of women from father absent homes reported that they engaged in exercise regularly than those women who grew up with fathers. This is shown in Table 4.22.

Table 4.22: Father Absence/Presence and Exercise.

	I engage in exercise regularly					Total
	Not at all	Somewhat	Moderately	A lot	Extremely	
Women who grew up with fathers	51	65	55	32	21	224
	22.8%	29.0%	24.6%	14.3%	9.4%	100.0%
Women who did not grow up with fathers	39	40	27	43	19	168
	23.2%	23.8%	16.1%	25.6%	11.3%	100.0%
Total	90	105	82	75	40	392
	23.0%	26.8%	20.9%	19.1%	10.2%	100.0%

4.5.7 Relationship between depression levels and coping mechanisms

A Cramer's V, which is a measure of association, was done to ascertain the relationship between depression levels and depression coping mechanisms.

Table 4.23: Summary of Cramer's V Test Results for Association between Coping Mechanisms and Levels of Depression.

Coping mechanism	Cramer's v value	P
Seeking social support	.233	.021
Exercising regularly	.312	>.01
Optimism	.475	.095
Planning work in advance	.283	>.01

The results show a moderate to strong relationship between coping mechanism used by respondents and their depression levels. The relationship is such that the more extreme the coping mechanism is used the less the depression level.

4.6 Father Absence or Presence and Sexual Partner Preference and Relationship Strategy

This study sought to ascertain the impact of father absence on the partner preference and relationship strategies of women from father absent homes. In order to ascertain that impact, a comparison between women who grew up with fathers against those who did not grow up with fathers with respect to preferred romantic partners and relationship strategies was done.

The study therefore sought to test the following hypothesis:

> *Ho: Sexual partner preference of women who grew up with their fathers does not significantly differ from that of women who grew up without their fathers*

The hypothesis was tested using the Chi-square test of independence and the results are shown in the Table 4.24.

Table 4.24: Summary of Chi-square Values for Differences in Sexual Partner Preferences.

Variable	Value	Df	P
Age at marriage	28.081	7	<.01
Good looks of preferred partner	8.893	3	.031
Sociability of preferred partner	10.512	3	.033
Good financial prospect of preferred partner	11.917	3	<.01
Masculinity	13.150	3	.04
Most desired characteristic in a potential mate	94.221	12	<.01

The results in Table 4.24 show that there were significant differences in the sexual partner preferences of women from father absent homes as compared to those of women who grew up with their fathers. Therefore the null hypothesis was rejected and it was concluded that sexual partner preference of women who grew up with their fathers significantly differs from that of women who grew up without their fathers.

4.6.1 Preferred Marriage Age and Age Difference with Potential Sexual Partner

This study revealed that father absence or presence during the first eighteen years of life influences the age of marriage and the age difference with a potential sexual partner. There was a significant difference in the actual age of marriage between women from father absent homes and women who grew up with their fathers. Less than half (41.8%) of women from father absent homes married between the ages of 18 to 20 years whilst only 25% of women who grew up with their fathers married between the ages of 18 and 20 years. 9.5% of women who grew up with their fathers compared to 5.1% of women who did not grow up with their fathers married after

the age of 27. This difference was significant at $X^2(3, N = 392) = 28.081, p < .01$.This is also illustrated in Figure 4.1

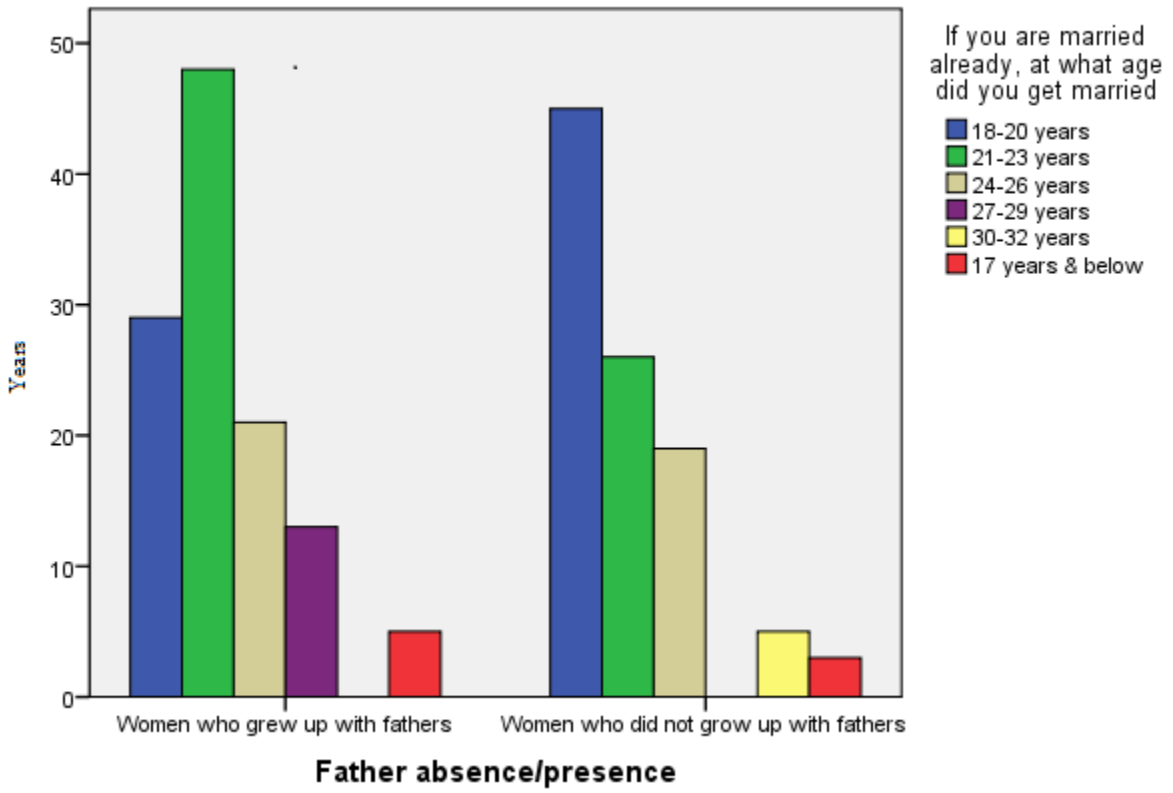

Figure 4.1: A Comparison of the Actual Age of Marriage between Women who Grew up with Fathers against Those Who Did Not Grow up with Fathers.

This study found that there was no significant difference in the preferred age difference with potential marriage partners for the two groups of women with about 97% of both groups of women preferring the potential partner to be older than them. However, slight differences were noted on the preferred actual age difference. For example, 15.4% of women from father absent homes preferred the potential spouse to be 10 years older whilst 8% of women who grew up with fathers preferred the potential spouse to be 10 years older. On the other hand, 47.1% of women from father present homes preferred an age difference with potential sexual mates of less than 4

years whilst 29.4% of women from father absent homes preferred potential sexual mates to have an age difference of 4 years or below. Generally, therefore, women from father absent homes preferred a much wider age difference with a potential mate when compared to women who grew up with their fathers.

4.6.2 Preference Concerning Romantic Partner

This study revealed that father absence or presence during the first eighteen years of life moderates a woman's preference concerning a romantic partner. This study found that there was no significant difference on the view that the preferred romantic partner should be a good housekeeper, $X^2(3, N = 392) = 3.559, p = .469$. 66.5% of women who grew up with their fathers compared to 63.7% of women from father absent households felt that it is very important and necessary for a potential mate to be a good housekeeper.

There was a significant difference in how respondents reported the preference for a sociable romantic partner. For example, 87.5 % of women who grew up with fathers compared to 81% of women who grew up without fathers indicated it is very important and necessary for a preferred romantic partner to be sociable. On the other 15.2% of women from father absent homes compared to 7.1% of women who grew up with their fathers reported that it is irrelevant or unimportant for the romantic partner to be sociable. This difference was significant at $X^2(3, N = 392) = 10.512, p = .033$.

Table 4.34 shows that a slightly higher proportion of women who grew up with their fathers reported that the preferred romantic partner should have a similar educational background with them when compared to women who grew up without their fathers. However, the difference was not significant, $X^2(3, N = 392) = 3.068, p = .381$.

Table 4.25: Father Absence/Presence and Similar Educational Background of Preferred Partner.

	Preferred romantic partner should have a similar educational background with me				Total
	Very important & necessary	Important but you can do without it	Desirable but not very important	Irrelevant or unimportant	
Women who grew up with fathers	87	57	48	32	224
	38.8%	25.4%	21.4%	14.3%	100.0%
Women who did not grow up with fathers	59	56	30	23	168
	35.1%	33.3%	17.9%	13.7%	100.0%
Total	146	113	78	55	392
	37.2%	28.8%	19.9%	14.0%	100.0%

This study found that father absence does not an impact on preference for a potential sexual mate who is refined and neat. There was insignificant difference between the two groups of women on their preference for a refined and neat potential mate. 63.4 % of women who grew up with fathers compared to 56.5% of women who grew up without fathers indicated it is was very important and necessary for a preferred romantic partner to be refined and neat.

A higher percentage of women who grew up with their fathers reported that they preferred a romantic partner with a good financial prospect than those women who grew up without fathers. This significance was tested using the Chi-square test of independence, $X^2(3, N = 392) = 11.917$, $p < .01$. This is shown in Table 4.26.

Table 4.26: Father Absence/Presence and Good Financial Prospect.

	Preferred romantic partner should have good financial prospect				Total
	Very important & necessary	Important but you can do without it	Desirable but not very important	Irrelevant or unimportant	
Women who grew up with fathers	153	28	34	9	224
	68.3%	12.5%	15.2%	4.0%	100.0%
Women who did not grow up with fathers	103	34	15	16	168
	61.3%	20.2%	8.9%	9.5%	100.0%
Total	256	62	49	25	392
	65.3%	15.8%	12.5%	6.4%	100.0%

More women from father absent homes than those from father present homes were of the view that chastity was irrelevant or unimportant. There was a significant difference between the two groups of women on their preference for a romantic partner with no previous experience in sexual intercourse. 41% of women who grew up without fathers compared to 26.5% of women who grew up with fathers indicated that it is irrelevant or unimportant for a preferred romantic partner to have had no previous experience in sexual intercourse.

There was an insignificant difference between the two groups of women on their preference for a romantic partner with a dependable character. 67% of women who grew up with fathers compared to 66.7% of women who grew up without fathers indicated it was very important and necessary for a preferred romantic partner to be a dependable character. The same trend was noted for respondents' preference for a romantic partner of a favourable social status. 56.7% of women who grew up with fathers compared to 60% of women who grew up without fathers indicated it was very important and necessary for a preferred romantic partner to be of a favourable social status.

A higher percentage of women from father absent homes than those from father present homes were of the view that the preferred romantic partner should have good looks. This is shown in Table 4.27.

Table 4.27: Father Absence/Presence and Preferred Romantic Partner's Good Looks.

	Preferred romantic partner should have good looks				Total
	Very important & necessary	Important but you can do without it	Desirable but not very important	Irrelevant or unimportant	
Women who grew up with fathers	96	46	47	35	224
	42.9%	20.5%	21.0%	15.6%	100.0%
Women who did not grow up with fathers	79	38	41	10	168
	47.0%	22.6%	24.4%	6.0%	100.0%
Total	175	84	88	45	392
	44.6%	21.4%	22.4%	11.5%	100.0%

Closely related to good looks, the study found that father absence had an effect on the preference of women for masculine romantic partner. More women from father absent homes than those from father present homes felt that it was important for a romantic partner to be masculine. There was a significant difference between the two groups of women on their preference for a masculine romantic partner. 58.3% of women who grew up without fathers compared to 48.4% of women who grew up with fathers indicated that it is important for a romantic partner to be masculine. This significance was tested using the Chi-square test of independence, $X^2(3, N = 392) = 13.150$, $p < .01$.

A higher proportion of women who grew up with their fathers when compared to women from father absent homes preferred a romantic partner who is ambitious and industrious. The results

are shown in Table 4.28.

Table 4.28: Father Absence/Presence and Preferred Romantic Partner's Ambitiousness.

	Preferred romantic partner should be ambitious & industrious				Total
	Very important & necessary	Important but you can do without it	Desirable but not very important	Irrelevant or unimportant	
Women who grew up with fathers	165	34	19	5	223
	74.0%	15.2%	8.5%	2.2%	100.0%
Women who did not grow up with fathers	103	45	8	12	168
	61.3%	26.8%	4.8%	7.1%	100.0%
Total	268	79	27	17	391
	68.5%	20.2%	6.9%	4.3%	100.0%

Both groups of women equally preferred mutual attraction with a romantic partner. For example, 85.7 % of women who grew up with fathers compared to 85.1% of women who grew up without fathers indicated it was very important and necessary for a preferred romantic partner to be mutually attracted to them. This difference was not significant, $X^2(3, N = 392) = 3.260, p = .515$. Good health of a romantic partner was equally valued by both groups of women. There was insignificant difference between the two groups of women on their preference for a romantic partner with good health. 92.4% of women who grew up with fathers compared to 87.5% of women who grew up without fathers indicated it was very important and necessary for a preferred romantic partner to be of good health.

There was an insignificant difference between the two groups of women on their preference for an educated and intelligent romantic partner. Slightly more women from father present households (77.7%) compared to 73.85 of women from father absent households indicated that it is very important and necessary for a preferred romantic partner to have education and

intelligence. This difference was not significant as tested by the chi-square for independence, $X^2(3, N = 392) = 1.952, p = .745$.

4.6.3 Most desired characteristic in a potential mate or marriage partner

Respondents were asked to rate their most desired characteristic in a potential mate or marriage partner from a list of thirteen characteristics. There were striking differences in what women from father absent homes desired when compared to women from father present households.

The most desired characteristic by women who grew up with their fathers was 'kind and understanding'. Out of the thirteen characteristics, 35% of women who grew up with their fathers compared to 22% of women from father absent homes desired a marriage partner who is kind and understanding. The second most desired characteristic among women who grew up with fathers is 'religious'. For instance, 16.5% of women from father present households compared to 4.2% of women from father absent households desired a religious marriage partner.

The most desired characteristic by women who did not grow up with their fathers was 'fatherly figure'. Out of the thirteen characteristics, 33.9% of women who grew up without their fathers compared to only 5.8% of women from father present homes desired a marriage partner who is a fatherly figure. Five of the desired characteristics are shown in the cross-tabulation in Table 4.29.

Table 4.29: Father Absence/Presence and Most Desired Characteristic in a Marriage Partner.

	most desired characteristic in a potential mate or marriage partner				
	Kind and Understanding	Fatherly figure	Religious	Wants children	Masculine
Women who grew up with fathers	35%	5.8%	16.5%	2.7%	.4%
Women who did not grow up with fathers	22%	33.9%	4.2%	6.5%	3.6%

Despite the differences in preference between the two groups of women, the desire to have a potential mate or marriage partner who is 'kind and understanding' as well as 'healthy' was common among all the respondents. Women who emerged from father absent homes exhibited a significantly strong desire for a marriage partner who is a fatherly figure. The figure 4.2 below shows all the thirteen characteristics in a potential marriage partner and how the two groups of women rated them.

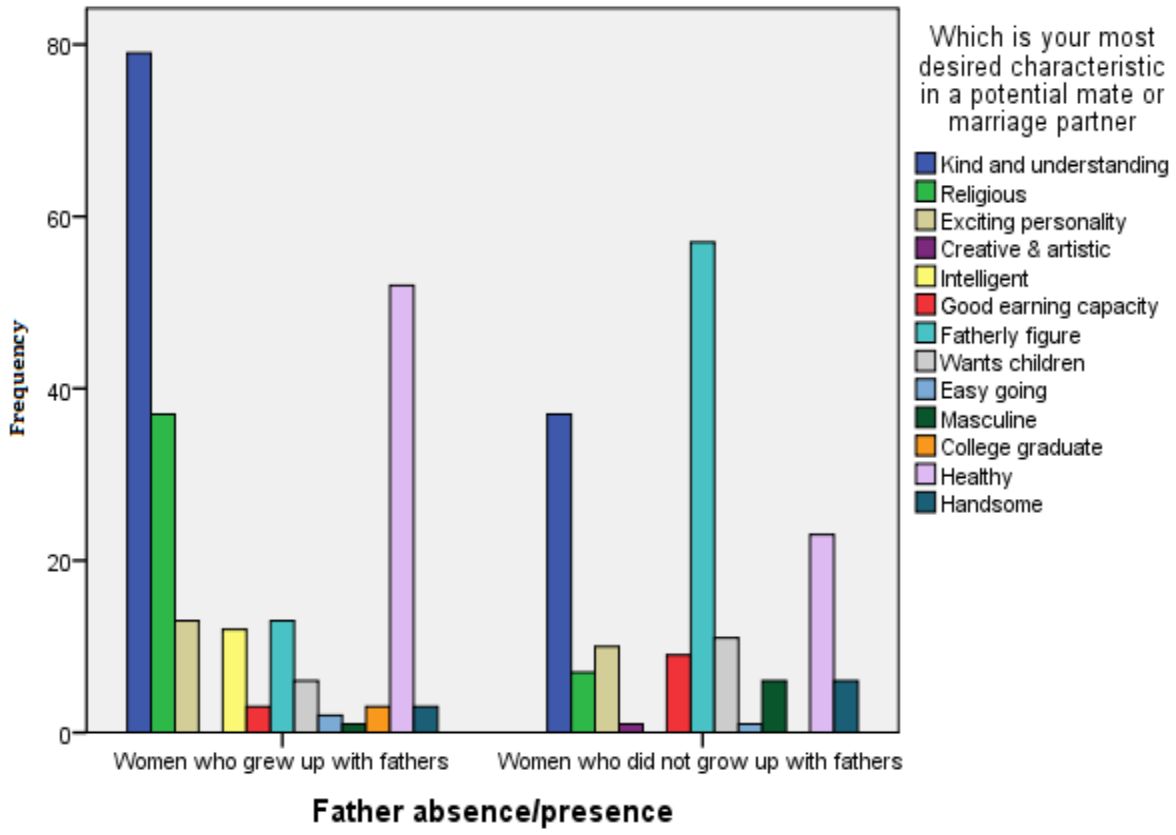

Figure 4.2: Thirteen Characteristics in a Potential Marriage Partner and How Respondents Ranked Them.

4.6.4 Marital status

More women from father absent homes than those from father present homes were divorced. For instance, 19.7% of women who grew up without fathers compared to 7.1% of women who grew up with fathers indicated that they had divorced. On the other hand, 45.1% of women who grew up with fathers compared to 32.9% of women who grew up without fathers indicated that they were married.

4.6.5 Relationship Strategies

This study revealed that father absence or presence during the first eighteen years of life moderates relationship strategy only slightly. More women from father present homes than those from father absent homes were of the view that sex is very important and necessary in a romantic relationship. 66.1% of women who grew up with fathers compared to 48.8% of women who grew up without fathers indicated that sex is very important and necessary in a romantic relationship. This difference was significant at $X^2(3, N = 392) = 19.242, p < .01$.

Slight differences were noted on the preference for a long-term relationship. Slightly more women from father present households (77.7%) compared to 75.6% of women from father absent households indicated that it was very important and necessary to have a long-term relationship.

There was only minor difference between the two groups of women on their views on the need to be possessive to a partner in a relationship. 29% of women who grew up with their fathers and 30.2% of women who did not grow up with their fathers were of the view that it is not important to be possessive of a partner in a relationship. Inversely, 58% of women who grew up with their fathers and 57.2% of women who did not grow up with their fathers were of the view that it is very important and necessary to be possessive of a partner in a relationship.

Faithfulness in a relationship was equally rated as very important and necessary by both groups of women. For instance, 91% of women who grew up with fathers compared to 90.5% of women who grew up without fathers indicated it was very important and necessary to be faithful to one partner. The trend is shown in Figure 4.3.

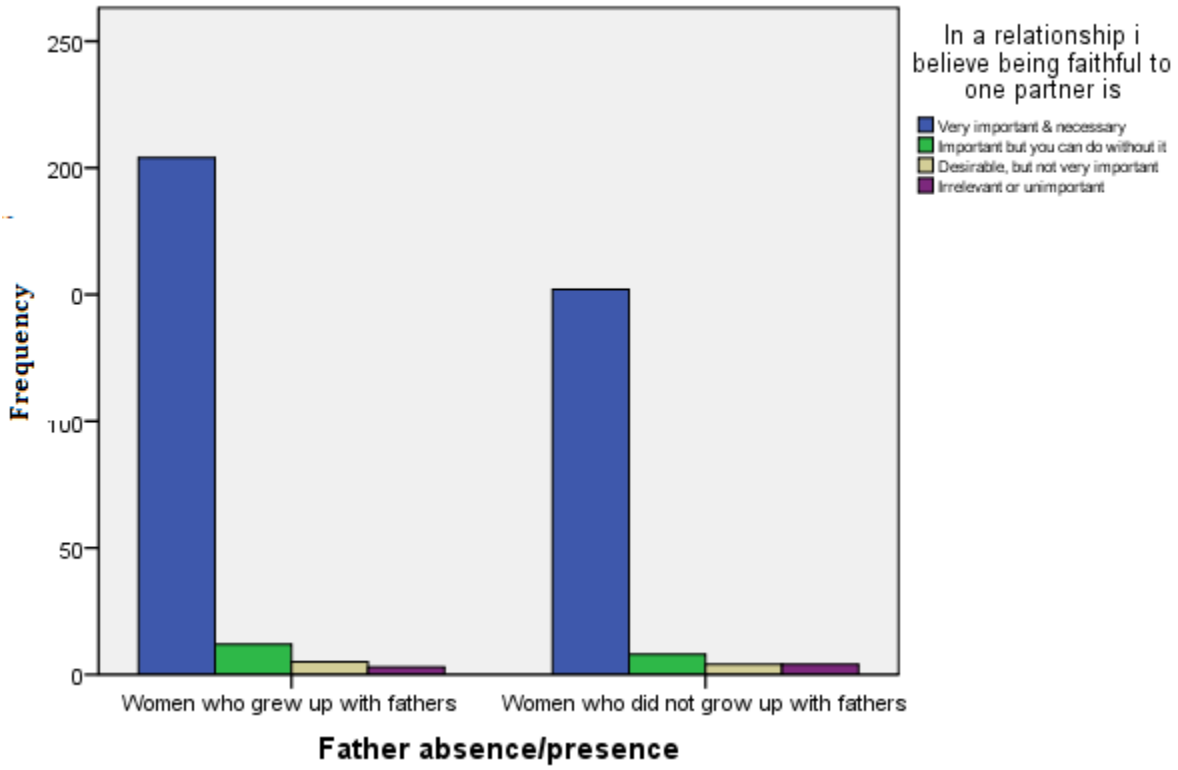

Figure 4.3: Respondents Views on the Importance of being Faithful to One Partner.

A higher percentage of women from father absent homes when compared to women who grew up with their fathers indicated that they believed that it was very important and necessary to have as many short-term enjoyable relationships as possible. The results are shown in Table 4.30.

Table 4.30: Father Absence/Presence and Short-term Relationships.

	In a relationship i believe having many short-term enjoyable relationships as possible is				Total
	Very important & necessary	Important but you can do without it	Desirable, but not very important	Irrelevant or unimportant	
Women who grew up with fathers	34	16	25	149	224
	15.2%	7.1%	11.2%	66.5%	100.0%
Women who did not grow up with fathers	37	12	27	92	168
	22.0%	7.1%	16.1%	54.8%	100.0%
Total	71	28	52	241	392
	18.1%	7.1%	13.3%	61.5%	100.0%

Slightly more women from father absent households (85.1%) compared to 83.9% of women from father present households indicated that it is very important and necessary to be close to their partner in a relationship.

There was no significant difference between the two groups of women on their views on the need to have many children in a relationship. 23.2% of women who grew up with their fathers and 16.4% of women who did not grow up with their fathers were of the view that it was not important to have many children in a relationship. Inversely, 27.7% of women who grew up with their fathers and 24.2% of women who did not grow up with their fathers were of the view that it was very important and necessary to have many children in a relationship. The number of children preferred by both groups of women did not significantly differ as well, with the majority indicating a preference to have three children. This is shown in Figure 4.4.

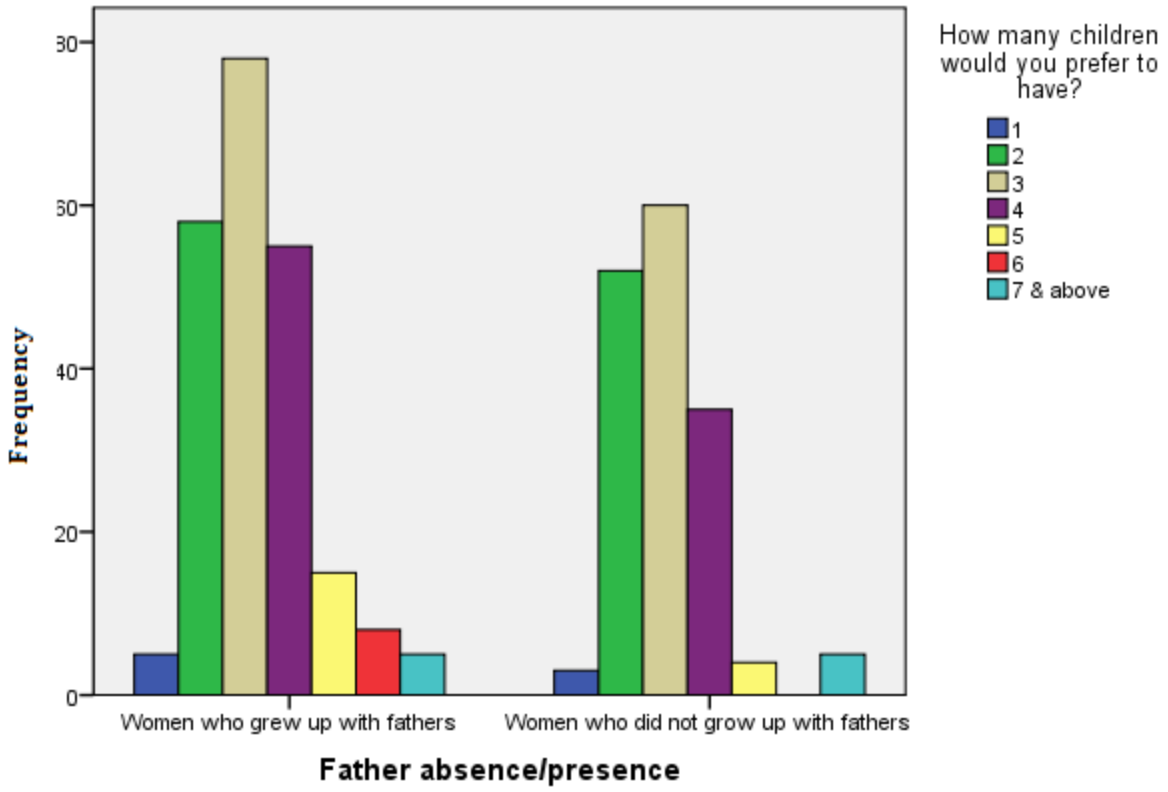

Figure 4.4: The Preferred Number of Children by the Two Groups of Women.

A higher percentage of women from father absent homes than those from father present homes were of the view that it was very important and necessary to be their own providers in a relationship. For example, 48.4% of women from father absent homes compared to 33.2% of women who grew up with their fathers believed that it was very important and necessary to be their own providers in a relationship.

A higher proportion of women who grew up with their fathers when compared to women from father absent homes were of the view that it is very important and necessary to be their own protectors in a relationship. The results are shown in the cross-tabulation in Table 4.40.

Table 4.31: Father Absence/Presence and being Own Protector in a Relationship.

	In a relationship i believe being my own protector in a relationship is				Total
	Very important & necessary	Important but you can do without it	Desirable, but not very important	Irrelevant or unimportant	
Women who grew up with fathers	105	39	36	44	224
	46.9%	17.4%	16.1%	19.6%	100.0%
Women who did not grow up with fathers	78	21	32	31	162
	48.1%	13.0%	19.8%	19.1%	100.0%
Total	183	60	68	75	386
	47.4%	15.5%	17.6%	19.4%	100.0%

4.7 Summary

This chapter presented the findings of the research. The results were presented under five different headings which are

(i) Type of father absence

(ii) Duration of father absence

(iii) Father absence/presence and anxiety

(iv) Father absence/presence and depression

(v) Father absence/presence and sexual partner preference and relationship strategy.

Statistical tests were used to test for significance in differences between women who grew up with a resident father and women who grew up without a resident father in terms of their anxiety and depression levels as well as their relationship strategies. Comparisons were also made between the different subgroups of father absent women in terms of anxiety, depression and relationship strategies.

The next chapter will discuss the findings of the study, that is, link the findings with existing literature. Points of convergence and departure between this current study and previous research will be analysed. Recommendations will be proffered and a conclusion will be drawn.

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION, CONCLUSION & RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the major findings of the study. An analysis will be made in relation to how these findings concur or contradict existing literature. Conclusions will be drawn as well as recommendations made.

5.2 Discussion

5.2.1 Type of father absence and related effects

Forty three percent (43%) of the 392 women who participated in this study emerged from father absent homes. The size of this sample provided a reasonable population to get an understanding of three variables namely, anxiety, depression levels and relationship strategies employed by women who lived without fathers during childhood. Moreover, the size of the population enabled good comparison between the two groups of women, that is, those who lived with their fathers (57%) and those who lived without their fathers (43%) in terms of those three psychological variables. Again, the fact that these women were randomly selected (through cluster sampling) to participate in this study can be used to infer that generally 43% of women in Mucheke, Masvingo have lived in father absent homes during their childhood.

The study has re-defined father absence to refer to a situation where children live without their biological fathers for more than two continuous years. This definition was informed by the subjective 'definitions' implied by the women concerned who participated in this study. Of the 392 women who participated in this study, only 1.8% categorized themselves as having grown up without a father for a period of less than 2 years. However, 5% of women who participated in this study categorized themselves as having grown with their fathers (father present category) but went on to indicate that they had not stayed with their fathers for a period of less than 2 years.

This definition gives precision to previous definitions such as the one by Mancini, (2010:5), who posited that, "absent fathers usually do not reside with their children or are away for long periods of time. This includes fathers who are divorced, separated, incarcerated, in the military, travel regularly for business and are absent in the home more than they are present". Most definitions (such as the one above) do not give a measure of how long the period of father absence is to warrant categorisation as father absence.

This study revealed that father absence is of four different types that have differing effects on the adult life of the affected daughters. Girls who grew up without fathers reported different psychological symptoms and relationship strategies depending on the type of father absence that they experienced. The duration of father absence was also found to be a significant factor in moderating the effects of father absence. Comparisons between women who grew up with resident fathers and those who did not grow up with fathers generally showed significant differences between the two groups. The women who did not grow with their fathers reported more extreme anxiety and depression compared to women who grew up with their fathers. Women who did not grow up with their fathers adopted relationship strategies which pointed toward compensation for a missing fatherly figure in their lives. Detailed analysis is given as this discussion unfolds.

This study established four types of father absence, the type of father absence are basically the causes of father absence. These types have been categorized as father died, father divorced, father migrated and father abandoned. These categories are in line with findings made by Shenk, Starkweather, Kress and Allam, (2013) who revealed that a father's death, father's labour migration, divorce of the parents and father abandonment are types of father absence and each of them is associated with different childhood experiences for women. It is possible however, that

there are types of father absence that may overlap. For instance, it is possible that a participant in this study may have had been abandoned by their father and then the father dies again during childhood. Such a scenario probably explains why the father died category has got the highest number of participants (35.7%). The type of father absence with the lowest number of participants is the father abandoned with about 18% of the total participants of women who grew up in father absent homes.

Women who grew up without fathers due to divorce (father divorced) experience more negative effects than other groups of women. This study revealed that women who grew up without fathers due to divorce experienced more extreme depression in comparison to other groups of women. This supports findings by Fagan and Churchill (2012) who argued that divorce raises the risk of negative outcomes such as depression and anxiety after the age of 23. Their contention was that parental divorce could set in motion events such as early childbearing or limit schooling that, in turn affect adult outcomes. The challenges to emotional development among women from divorced families could arise due to the fact that children from divorced families receive less emotional support and practical help from their fathers. Divorce and separation result in less caring and more over protective parenting during the adolescent years.

Results of this study also revealed that women who were abandoned by their fathers during childhood exhibited the most extreme symptoms of anxiety. This finding concurs with Bohn, (2017) who posited that rejection from fathers may lead to increase in social anxiety and loneliness. The author argued that father abandonment may make children more nervous about approaching social situations which in turn is related to more social isolation and feelings of loneliness. On that same note, this study showed that women who had dead fathers exhibited minimal anxiety during childhood. This is in line with findings by Schwartzhoff, (2017) who

revealed that girls with dead fathers showed behavioural outcomes that were more similar to girls with present fathers than girls with divorced fathers. He suggested that this should be the case because of mothers' similar attitudes toward present and dead fathers.

Fifty four percent of women who had divorced fathers from this study married early, that is married before the age of 20. This is below the Zimbabwean singulate mean age of marriage, which is at 21 (UN, World Fertility Report, 2009). Early marriage entails that this group of women had an early sexual debut. A possible explanation for the early marriages among women from divorced fathers is that the single parent family structure that these girls grow up in may facilitate adolescent sexuality due to reduced parental control (Huebner & Howell, 2003). Two parents may better monitor their children's activities and social networks, reducing opportunities for sexual activity. This finding is confirmed by Shenk, Starkweather, Kress and Allam, (2013) who predicted that girls from father present homes who perceive investing fathers to be available and important to their productive success should adapt slower life history strategies, delaying sex and childbearing until an investing male is available. On the other hand, girls from father absent homes who perceive paternal care to be less important choose faster life history strategies including earlier sex and child bearing. In short, women who emerge from father absent homes are more likely to engage in early sexual activity, childbearing and marriage because they do not take time to choose an investing male because they do not consider that to be important due to their background.

The greatest percentage of divorced women is among the father abandoned group. About 20% of women who had indicated that they were abandoned by their fathers reported that they were divorced, this is in contrast to an average of 10% among other groups of women. The explanation for this marital status could be found in early socialisation. Parental sexual behaviour

acts as a socializing force for children's sexual and relationship behaviours. Parents, both explicitly and implicitly model sexual attitudes and behaviours for their children. Because girls reared in single-parent households may have seen parents engaging in separation and divorce, the children may end up seeing separation and divorce as normative (Wu & Thomson, 2001). This finding also concurs with existing literature. According to Franklin, Janoff-Bullman and Roberts (1990), girls who have been abandoned by their fathers typically have less contact with the non-custodial parent and as time goes on, the parent-child relationship seem to further deteriorate. This leaves a gap in the parental model that serves as the "relationship template" for all future relationships in life. As these abandoned girls reach adulthood, they have been shown to have problems with their own psychological well-being and relationships.

Findings of this study revealed that women abandoned by fathers during childhood preferred to marry at an older age than other groups of women. This finding contradicts previous studies which have consistently shown that children abandoned by fathers are likely to assume adult roles prematurely such as cohabitation, early sexual activity and early marriage, (Aquilino, 1996; Teachman, 2003; Ellis, 2004).

5.2.2 Duration of father absence and its effects

This research uncovered that the majority of participants (45.8%) had not stayed with their fathers for a period of 14 years and above. Only 1.8% of the participants indicated that they had not stayed with their fathers for a period of less than 2 years. The low percentage of women who indicated that they had not lived with their fathers for less than 2 years could mean that participants may not have felt as if they lacked a father in their lives if they lived without them for less than 2 years. This finding has an influence on how father absence is defined in

adulthood. Father absence can then be defined as a situation in which a person who is 18 years and above has lived without their father for more than two years during childhood.

The duration of father absence had an impact on the anxiety levels expressed in adulthood. Regression analysis indicated that about 31% of anxiety expressed by participants could be influenced by the duration of father absence. The study however showed that women who had not stayed with their fathers for a relatively shorter period were the ones who were more affected by anxiety. About 70% of women who had not stayed with their fathers for 2 to 5 years revealed that they experienced extreme anxiety most of the time compared to an average of 30% among other groups of women. This finding contradicts findings by Schwartzhoff (2017) who noted that lengthy separation from a father poses considerable difficulties on many children's psychosocial well-being, particularly emotional wellbeing primarily through disrupted attachment relationships. The longer the period of absence, the higher the likelihood of emotional distress and anxiety. These effects may not be easily restored even if the father permanently returned home.

Women who had not lived with their fathers for a period of fourteen years and above experienced heightened fear of criticism and disapproval more than other groups of women. This finding is in line with findings by Jones 2007 who revealed that loss of a father during the early years of life has the potential to impact the mother's ability to be fully immersed with the infant which may in turn disrupt the optimal need gratification/frustration rhythm. For the child, this alteration in attachment may lead to impaired development of self-confidence which in turn leads to increased fear of criticism and loss of self-confidence.

Duration of father absence was found to be minimally related to levels of depression among participants. Only 0.6% of the depression expressed by participants was found to be related to the period that they had spent without a father. Divergent views emerge from existing literature with regards to this finding. Markowitz and Ryan (2016) concluded that the departure of a father later in childhood is associated with increased delinquency in adolescence but not with greater depressive symptoms. However, Ghosh, (2016) in a study carried out among adolescents, revealed that depression was severe among those adolescents who had spent longer periods of time without fathers.

In contrast with previous studies by Bothroyd and Perrett (2008) and Shenk et al. (2013), this study established that women who had not stayed with their fathers for lesser periods (2-5 years) preferred masculine romantic partners in contrast to women who had not stayed with their fathers for longer periods. This finding contradicts literature on father absence and in particular Bothroyd and Perrett (2008) who found no differences in preferences for male facial masculinity between women whose parents were never separated and those whose parents had separated, whether that separation took place before or after menarche.

This study revealed that women who had not stayed with their fathers for lesser periods (2-5 years) married early (before the age of 20) compared to women who had not stayed with their fathers for longer periods. Previous studies have shown that daughters who grow up without fathers have an early menarche, which in turn makes them susceptible to early sexual debut and may lead to early marriages (Bothroyd & Perrett, 2008; Shenk et al., 2013). However, the studies do not indicate whether duration of father absence could be a mediating factor in influencing early marriages or early sexual debut.

The finding of this study with regards to early marriages contradicts the assumption derived from Mendle et al. (2009) that girls who have grown without fathers for longer periods of time that is more than eight years are likely to have early sexual debuts, early pregnancies and early marriages. Mendle et al. (2009) argues that father absence is a secondary element of social and environmental strain. They contend that cumulative life exposure to poverty, violence, lack of educational opportunities and reduced parental resources increase likelihood of early sexuality and pregnancy. Because father absence correlates with these factors, it also correlates with earlier sexual onset. The assumption therefore is that, the longer a girl stays without a father, the more they are exposed to harsh socio-economic conditions which may force them into early marriages.

5.2.3 Father absence/presence and anxiety

Women who grew up without fathers experienced more anxious feelings, thoughts and physical symptoms than women who grew up with fathers. The majority of women from father absent homes expressed extreme anxiety much more than women who emerged from father present homes. This finding concurs with Zirima and Gadzikwa (2017) conclusion that female students who emerged from father absent homes were anxious and distressed, their anxiety is in large part explained by lack of a father figure to give them continuous assurances about life's uncertainties. This finding is also supported by Belsky, Hsieh and Crinic (1998) longitudinal study which observed mothers' and fathers' rearing behaviour and concluded that it was fathers, not mothers' rearing behaviour that predicted a child's level of inhibition, a factor which predisposes a child to anxiety.

Findings from this research however contradict with Bogels and Phares, (2008), who concluded that father absence due to work may actually help in helping children to cope with anxiety, the

researchers argues that a father who is away from home a lot because of work and travel might give a positive and dynamic model to his child in how he explores the world, demonstrating that the world is a safe place to be.

Sharp difference between women who grew up with fathers and those who grew up without fathers were exposed in a number of anxiety symptoms. For example, women who emerge from father absent homes expressed fear that something terrible was going to happen, they had a constant fear of impending doom and felt detached from part or all of their bodies. These findings correlate with other studies that have been conducted on the role of father involvement and father presence on adolescents' anxiety symptoms. Bogels and Phares, (2008) argued that father-adolescent closeness as perceived by the adolescent and as perceived by the fathers, predicted less adolescent anxiety/withdrawal problems beyond maternal closeness in divorced families. The significance of father presence as protection against anxiety in young adulthood was demonstrated in a longitudinal study by Summers, Forehand, Armistead and Tannenbaum (1998). Adolescents' perceived lack of closeness in father-child relationship, more than the mother-child relationship, predicted anxiety symptoms in young adults. Findings of this study confirm the Psychosocial Acceleration Theory which posits that a harsh family setting with marital disharmony, parental abuse, divorce, death of a parent and or inadequate economic resources including parental and particularly father absence and inconsistent parenting often contribute to increased child stress and anxiety (Belsky, 2012).

A higher percentage of women from father absent homes who participated in this study reported fear of criticism or disapproval more than those women who grew up with fathers. Such fears are closely associated with a low self-concept. This finding concurs with Mancini (2010) who also revealed that teenage girls who grew up in father absent homes have low self-concept and

uncertain psychological and physical security. These children constantly indicate feelings of abandonment because their fathers were not involved in their lives, have difficulty dealing with their emotions and experience bouts of self-loathing.

The above finding contradicts an earlier study in South Africa which revealed that women who grew up in father absent homes tended to be self-reliant, strong and assertive (Makofane, 2015). The South African study was however a qualitative study which did not compare participants who grew up without fathers against those that grew up with fathers and as such the reported assertiveness was subjective and may prove to be not so assertive when compared with a population of women who grew up with fathers. Moreover, the context in which the study was done, that is South Africa, has very high numbers of girls who grow up without fathers and as such they may have accustomed to a fatherless life which in turn makes them self-reliant and resilient.

5.2.4 Father absence/presence and depressive symptoms

This study revealed that women who grew up without fathers expressed more depressive thoughts, feelings and physical symptoms than women who grew up with fathers. That is to say, women who grew up without fathers are more prone to depression than women who grew up with fathers. This finding stands in contrast to Makofane (2015) who argues that father absence does not necessarily lead to depression and other negative effects among African children as it does in the Western world, this is because of the existence of supportive extended families. This study, however, revealed clear cut differences between depressive symptoms reported by women who emerged from father absent homes compared to those women that grew up with their fathers with women from father absent homes being six times more likely to be severely depressed than women who grew up with their fathers.

In this study, women who did not grow up with fathers had more extreme depression when compared to those who grew up with fathers. Women from father absent homes also exhibited more severe depression than those women who grew up with fathers (17.3% against 2.7%). This concurs with findings by Ghosh (2016) in a study in India which revealed that prevalence of depression was significantly higher among adolescence of father absent groups as compared to father present adolescents. Majority of father absent groups of adolescents were having moderate and severe levels of depression where as in most of the father present adolescents group were having low levels of depression and none of them belong to severe level of depression. This finding is also consistent with Culpin et al. (2013) who found out that girls who emerged from homes where they had been exposed to father absence during the first five years of life were highly likely to report high levels of depressive symptoms.

An analysis of the depressive symptoms that is, personal relationships, physical symptoms, thoughts and feelings indicate that women from father absent households consistently indicate that they experience these symptoms. This finding stands in contrast with previous work which suggests that non-resident fatherhood was dissociated with depressive symptoms in adolescence within families (Markowitz & Ryan, 2017). A possible reason for this discrepancy might be that Markowitz and Ryan study focused on adolescence and internalizing symptoms may not emerge until young adulthood when chronic depression tends to emerge and as such they may have been examining that outcome at too young an age.

Among a host of depressive symptoms, this study revealed that women from father absent homes indicated feelings of hopelessness at a higher magnitude compared to women who grew up with fathers. This finding is consistent with Mancini (2010) who posited that, "Due to the perceived lack of interest these daughters felt from their fathers, they expressed feelings of hurt,

hopelessness and diminished respect for their fathers. Furthermore, participants felt that their fathers were unable to provide them with the father-daughter relationship that they sought" (p.14).

Feelings of guilt or shame were more prevalent among women who did not grow up with fathers than among women who grew up with fathers. This correlates with findings from a cohort study by Culpin et al. (2013) which found girls with absent fathers during early childhood with a 53% greater chance of experiencing high levels of depressive symptoms particularly feelings of sadness, guilt and shame compared with girls with fathers present in the same period.

5.2.5 Father absence/presence and sexual partner presence and relationship strategy

This study analysed the impact of father absence on adult relationships of women. A comparison of relationship strategies and sexual partner preferences between women who grew up with fathers and those who grew up without fathers was done to ascertain the impact of father absence on these aspects of the women's lives. Father absence or presence during the first eighteen years of life was found to influence the age of marriage. About half of the participants from father absent homes married between the ages of 18 to 20 years compared to 25% of women from father present households. Early marriage can be explained by early maturation that women from father absent homes may experience due to early stress. Belsky, Steinberg and Draper (1991) argue that if girls experience high levels of stress during their critical formative years (<5– 7 years of age) they will accelerate their maturation process. The Psychosocial Acceleration Theory posits that the accelerated maturation process will biologically manifest as earlier menarche and general acceleration of all secondary sexual characteristics. The theory further explains that this early maturation will present psycho-socially by way of early ages at first

sexual intercourse, age at first marriage (depending upon the cultural manifestation of marriage), and age at first birth (Belsky et al. 2010).

Early marriages among women from father absent households is explained by a number of scholars as being linked to early menarche triggered by childhood stress, particularly father absence. A number of studies found a direct relationship between stressful life events, specifically father departure, and the early onset of puberty. Earlier menarche can lead, in turn, to earlier sexual debut, early marriage and or riskier sexual behaviour (Tither & Ellis, 2008; Gregorian, 2013; Horne, 2015). Socio-economic strains may force young girls from father abandoned homes to get married early so as to support their siblings. Survival analyses showed that women who grew up in father divorced homes or father abandoned homes consistently married at an early age and gave their first birth at an early age as well (Shenk et al., 2013).

Divorce was more pronounced among women who emerged from father abandoned families than among women from father present households or households without a father due to migration or death. This finding is consistent with the Draper and Harpending Father Absence Theory which posit that absence of a co-resident biological father during early childhood is associated with earlier age of puberty and first sexual intercourse and increased likelihood of marital breakdown in the following generation (Teachman, 2004). The explanations for divorce among women who did not grow up with fathers can also be explained from an Afro-centric point of view in which Makofane (2015) argues that women who grew up without fathers did not have proper models to observe appropriate behaviours for a wife and as such were unlikely to maintain a stable relationship. Western studies have shown that adult children of divorced parents have relationship problems that lead to divorce in their own marriages as well, that's creating a perpetual cycle of this phenomenon (Amato, 2000; Christensen & Brook, 2001; Kirk, 2002).

This phenomenon is partly explained by the fact that children who grow up in households with high parental conflict are more likely to perceive their own relationships as being in trouble; a strong explanation for this may be parental modelling (Leah, Marie, Tamara & Debra, 2018).

In-depth studies such as one by Walsh (2016) strongly indicate that the attitudes surrounding marriage and success in marriage is transmitted between generations in divorced families. Men and women from divorced families tend to score significantly lower on several measures of psychological well-being and more likely to be divorced themselves (Walsh, 2016). Women who experience parental divorce have a 60% higher divorce rate than their counterparts; while men whose parents divorced have a 35% higher rate of divorce than men whose parents remained married (Rossiter et al., 2017). This clearly shows that women are more affected by divorce of their parents and are likely to be influenced to follow the path taken by their parents.

This study revealed that more women from father present homes than those from father absent homes were of the view that sex is very important and necessary in a romantic relationship. This finding stands in sharp contrast to previous studies such as Horne (2015) who found that adolescents who emerged from father absent homes wanted to have sex in their relationship much more than adolescents who emerged from father present homes.

Father absence was found to be influential in perceptions about chastity. More women from father absent homes than those from father present homes viewed chastity as irrelevant or unimportant. Therefore women who emerge from father absent backgrounds are more likely to consider sex as casual. This finding is also consistent with Horne (2015) findings that adolescents with an absent father preferred to exert less commitment on a romantic partner and

desired to take part in unsafe activities such as unprotected sex which sometimes lead to pregnancy in their ideal relationship.

Father absence has been shown to influence preference for physical looks regarding potential and actual sexual partners. More women from father absent homes than those from father present homes preferred romantic partners with good looks, similarly; women from father absent homes indicated a preference for masculine men as romantic partners. This finding confirms the Father Absence Theory which states that father absent females, or those that experienced poor family relationships during childhood, prefer more masculine men with attractive faces than father present females or those who experienced warm relationships with their parents (Boothroyd & Perrett, 2008). The possible explanation for this preference on masculine men is that people and in particular women who emerged from father absent homes have a preference for short-term sexual strategy with less committed romantic relationships and sexual behaviour outside committed relationships. Furthermore, the upbringing of some father absent women, particularly those emerging from father abandoned families would have socialised them to believe that romantic partners are not to be trusted and relationships do not last and as such it will be more worthwhile to focus on short term strategies like finding a masculine man.

More women from father absent homes when compared to women who grew up with their fathers indicated that they believe that was very important and necessary to have as many short-term enjoyable relationships as possible. This finding confirms such previous studies as Bothroyd and Perrett (2008), Belsky et al. (2010); and Horne (2015) who revealed that father absent girls and women showed low investment in relationships and as such preferred short-term sexual strategies. Horne further noted that adolescents without a resident father desired a lower level of commitment to their partner. This can be explained by parental modelling in which as a

child, the women would not have seen the benefits of having long term relationships. Moreover, lack of trust in men could have developed as a result of having been brought up in a strained family environment especially where the father would have abandoned the family.

The most desired characteristic in a potential mate by women who did not grow up with their fathers was 'fatherly figure'. The preference for a fatherly figure as a potential mate could be a way of compensating for lost years of not having a father in one's life. The finding is consistent with Mancini (2010) who revealed that girls from father absent homes exhibit a desperate need for males to cover up for the emotional loss caused by father absence, which then makes them susceptible to exploitation by adult men . Zirima and Gadzikwa (2017) also found out that female university students looked up to their boyfriends to fill the void left by their absent fathers.

Father absence has an influence on self-sufficiency of women. This study revealed that more women from father absent homes than those from father present homes were of the view that it is very important and necessary to be their own providers and protectors in a relationship. This finding concurs with other studies from Southern Africa which show that women who grew up in father absent homes tend to be self-reliant and strong (Bhana & Nkani, 2014, Makofane, 2015, Makusha & Ritcher, 2015).

5.3 Conclusion

Father absence is a common trend in most modern societies and its impact permeates into the adult lives of the children affected. This study has demonstrated the impact of father absence on the girl child's psychological adjustment in adult life. The significance of this study is that it has explored how childhood father absence psychologically influences the adult life of women in the Zimbabwean general population by focusing in Masvingo urban. This is something that no study

known to this researcher has explored. Father absence has been redefined in this thesis to refer to a scenario in which a father is absent from their child's life for a continuous period of more than two years. The impact of father absence was found to be moderated by the specific type of father absence experienced; for instance, father absence due to migration was generally not as detrimental as father absence due to abandonment or divorce. Shorter periods of father absence were found to be more detrimental than lengthy periods in terms of experiencing anxiety and early sexual activity. This was illustrated by the finding that women who were separated from their fathers for periods of less than five years tended to experience more anxiety symptoms and were more likely to have early marriages when compared to those women who were separated from their fathers for longer periods.

Duration of father absence is marginally related to levels of depression that one experiences in adult life. However, the absence of a father was found to be influential in increasing the depression symptoms that a woman might experience in adult life, for instance, growing up without a father increases the likelihood of having feelings of sadness, discouragement and hopelessness. Father absence in general, was found to affect the experience of anxiety among women by increasing the likelihood of having irrational fears of criticism or disapproval and fears of impending doom.

Father absence has an effect on the age of marriage as more women from father absent homes get married early when compared to women from father present homes. However, this was further moderated by the type of father absence experienced. The influence of father absence in determining partner preference and relationship strategies was revealed in this study. Short term relationship strategy was found to be a preferred strategy among women who grew up in father

absent homes. A preference for a relationship partner who is a fatherly figure to fulfil the role of a father who was absent in the women's life was noted.

5.4 Limitations of the Study

Although this study revealed many new ideas regarding the impact of father absence on the subjective wellbeing of women, a number of limitations inhibited a more thorough interpretation of results. First, only the experience of biological father absence and no other aspects of family instability were examined. In effect, women who had stayed with their stepfathers, adoptive fathers, and mother's cohabitating partners were all included under the umbrella term of "father absence." Although this classification lends evidence to the importance of a biological father within a household, it also may obscure the effect of having a general father figure on a child's psycho-social development. Various studies have delved into the differences in youth outcomes according to whether or not they have any figure standing in for their father to provide guidance and support (Mendle et al., 2009).

This study did not exhaust all the psychological variables that could be affected by father absence such as cognitive development. A more thorough analysis of educational achievement and intelligence quotient in future studies might provide insight into that area.

Furthermore, this study did not include variables that reflected father involvement such as the amount of weekly interaction between father and child, the nature of their activities, and the length of their phone contact. These variables may illuminate the significance of the father/child relationship quality, which may have an impact on the psychological development of a child into adulthood. Yet, it was found to be generally more appropriate to examine intimate qualities of relationships using smaller scale data, such as personal, qualitative interviews (East et al., 2007).

5.5 Recommendations

The findings of this study may pave the way towards a better understanding of the effects of parental relationships on the adult life of children. In light of that fact, the following recommendations are made:-

(i) Government and civic society can work together to encourage fathering as it is a critical component of child development, this can involve setting up of agencies that promote fatherhood and creating platforms to discuss the importance of fatherhood.

(ii) Institutions such as schools and churches are encouraged to move in to provide psycho-social support to children in psycho-social strain due to father absence.

(iii) Fathers that may have to be away from their children due to labour migration need to be encouraged to be involved in their children's lives as it may help in covering up the gap of absence.

(iv) School based programs can be instituted to build self-esteem of girls growing up in father absent homes. Such programs can include self-esteem journals as well as sporting activities and games that build self-esteem. Sporting activities that involve exercising have been shown to be effective means of coping with depression.

(v) Girls growing up in father absent homes may need to be provided with a consistent and connected father figure in their lives. Girls need to have a positive and long-term father figure in their lives and when that does not happen with their biological father, it may need to happen with another good man. The presence of a father figure helps in the development of good relationship strategies.

(vi) Sustainable programs to provide social support may need to be made available to institutions that surround the girl child; these institutions include Churches, Schools and

the home environment. Social support is an effective tool to deal with anxiety and depression.

5.5.1 Recommendations for future research

(i) Future research may explore the role of father involvement in children's lives, this is critical as father presence alone is not important without father involvement.

(ii) A cohort study ought to be conducted so as to gain in-depth understanding of the implications of father absence on children as they grow up.

(iii) Exploration of other psychological variables that may be influenced by father absence may have to be conducted; this may include cognitive development, assertiveness and stress.

CHAPTER 6: MODEL

6.1 Introduction

This chapter presents a model which can be used to address the challenges of father absence which have been identified in this thesis. The study has revealed that fathers are important in the psycho-social development of the girl child. Absence of a father during early years of life can have negative effects in the adult life of daughters. The effects of father absence have been revealed and these include extreme depression, anxiety and loneliness among women who grew up without fathers. Early marriages and high rates of divorce were also found to be repercussions of father absence among women who grew up without fathers. The researcher therefore proposes a model that may be used to remedy the effects of father absence. The model is premised on the notion that fathers should be present and involved in the life of their daughters. The model also proposes mechanisms to help girls growing up in fatherless homes to cope with the condition. Where fathers can no longer be available in their daughters' life especially due to death then foster fathering or having a connected and consistent father figure should be encouraged so that daughters have a father figure in their lives.

6.2 Description of the Father Absence Coping Mechanism Model

This model is hinged on the idea that in order to cope with the ripple effects of father absence exposed in this study, father presence should be encouraged and programs put in place to replace an absent father or build self-esteem of fatherless girls . However, father presence alone may not work; father presence should be coupled with father involvement. This proposal is supported by a finding by Makusha, Richter and Bhana (2012) in which women expressed a wish for the fathers of their children to be emotionally available for their children as opposed to being "distant breadwinners" by providing material support only. This model is also based on the understanding that traditional African systems of remedying father absence no longer exists.

Grandparents and other relatives are no longer in a position to assist in rearing and providing for the needs of children with absent fathers as what used to happen in traditional African communities.

This model proposes the establishment of father-daughter camps. These camps will be established after engaging in five processes which are establishing a fatherhood resource guide, having a Dare (fatherhood forum), establishing clubs to improve self-esteem of fatherless girls and establishing a voluntary organisation that supports fatherhood programs such as a fatherhood television/radio program and encouraging foster fathering. The camps will provide an opportunity for non-resident, resident fathers to link up with their daughters and be 'present' in their daughters' lives.

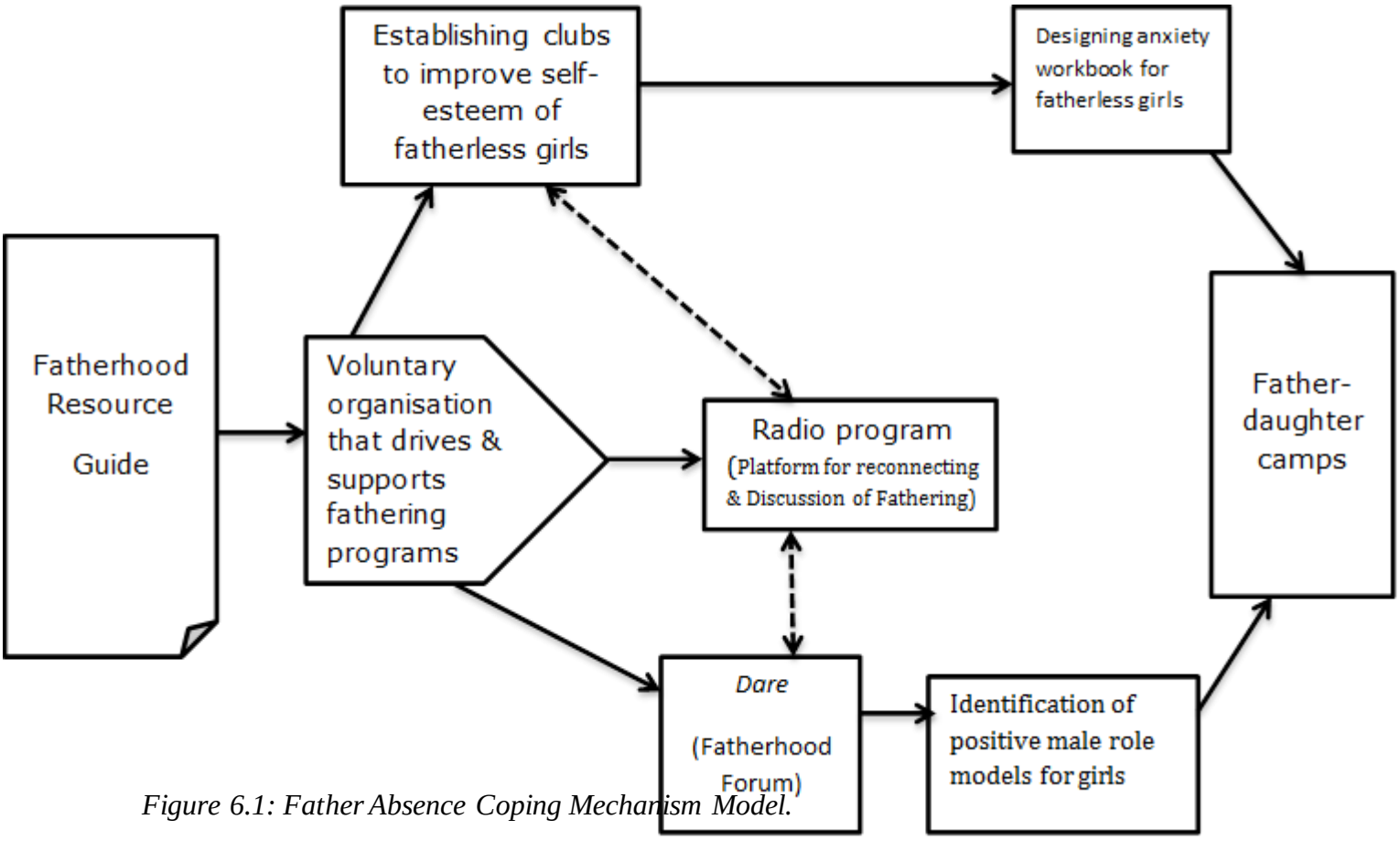

Figure 6.1: Father Absence Coping Mechanism Model.

Create a fatherhood resource guide – the model proposes to come up with a fatherhood resource guide which will provide critical information on how to be a responsible father. It is hoped the resource guide will help in shaping responsible fathers. The resource guide will provide information on traditional methods of parenting and foster fathering which may be adopted as alternative methods of fatherhood in the event that a biological father is not present. This guide will also highlight some potential challenges that may arise from foster fathering and father and daughter camps and how these challenges can be prevented. The fatherhood guide will provide the necessary literature for the fatherhood forum and father and daughter camps.

Dare (Fatherhood forum) – Dare is a Shona word, (Zimbabwean local language) referring to a forum where people meet to deliberate on critical issues. This model borrows from the traditional African set up in Zimbabwe where people would sit to deliberate on important issues and take the issue of father absence as one of the issues that would need to be discussed. The proposal is to hold an annual forum to discuss fatherhood issues. The forum will bring academics, psychologists, counsellors, child development specialists, teachers and other stakeholders in issues of parenting so as to discuss emerging issues and challenges in fatherhood and propose solutions. Non-resident fathers would be specially invited to the forum as they stand to benefit from knowledge that would be disseminated on best parenting practices.

Traditional Parenting System – this model proposes a return to some of the traditional methods of parenting that worked in cases of father absence. African communities lived as one large family usually with a single homestead accommodating three families or three generations, (Graham, 1999). As a result, in the traditional African society, the absence of a biological father did not entail that a child becomes fatherless. Grandparents, aunts and uncles would take on parental roles when actual parents have passed away, (Ratele, Shefer & Clowes, 2012). Among

the Iteso of Uganda, most of the education about adult life is actually given by grandfathers and uncles as children feel more comfortable around them, (Schmitz, 2016). While it may be impossible to return to these traditional methods of parenting in their totality, this model proposes that some elements be adopted. Elements that can be adopted include the adoption of children by relatives when the actual parents have passed on.

Foster fathering (Finding a consistent and connected father figure) – this involves a man taking the responsibility of a father for a child who is not their biological child. In this model, the proposal is that male relatives should be encouraged to voluntarily take the role of a father for fatherless girls. The concept of foster fathering is not exactly new to Africa. Makofane, (2015) makes reference to a situation in which in rural South Africa, father absence effects were not so negative because girls looked up to their maternal grandfathers who played the role of fathers when their biological fathers are not there or are no longer alive. Foster fathering should be encouraged among relatives, by so doing the model proposes a return to traditional methods of remedying father absence. The foster fathers may do so on a part time or full-time basis. They may take the girl child and stay with them in their homes full time or they may take them on weekends and family vacations. Foster fathers may fill in the void left by absent fathers by modelling more positive family relations. According to Inch, (1999), "Fostering can involve the fulfilment of a sense of social commitment and observing children grow and mature. The value associated with the child is an emotional one, not financial. It involves a willingness to assume the same responsibility and commitment as with a biological child." (p.400). It is important to note that in some instances, foster fathering may lead to sexual abuse of the girl child, in order to guard against that, this model proposes that close relatives should be encouraged to take up the role of foster fathers as was the case in the traditional African set up. Moreover, the fatherhood

resource guide will give further guidance and support mechanism to ensure prevention of sexual abuse of the girl child.

Establishing clubs to improve self-esteem of fatherless girls – This study revealed that one of the key potential losses for a fatherless girl relates to her self-esteem. She needs a strong sense of self-worth to survive and thrive in her world, and lacking that self-esteem may lead her to seek validation in all the wrong places. There is therefore a need to get the girl child involved in activities that tend to build self-worth. Things like sports, school clubs, church groups, music, and dance can be great sources of self-esteem for a girl.

Identify positive male role models - Fatherless daughters should be helped to find some good role models in other parts of her life outside the family. These good guys may be the fathers of her friends, an athletic team coach, a teacher, or a member of your clergy. When the girl child sees first-hand how good men behave and how they interact with other people, she can begin to determine the character traits that define good men.

Designing anxiety worksheets for fatherless girls – this study revealed that women who emerge from father absent homes experience more extreme forms of anxiety than those women who grew up with their fathers. The worksheet is a resource that will contain many exercises and activities designed to help fatherless girls think about the patterns of their anxiety and the circumstances around it. This will be followed by a lot of practical advice on how to change their habits and boost their self-esteem.

Establishment of a voluntary organisation that supports fatherhood programs – this model proposes to establish a voluntary organisation that supports fatherhood programs. The organisation will drive foster fathering programs as well as establish father-daughter camps. The voluntary organisation will network with other voluntary organisations, faith-based groups,

agencies and individuals committed to fatherhood programs, mentoring, marriage promotion and family stability. This network will in turn be encouraged to support foster fathering and father and daughter camps. The voluntary organisation will be modelled like the National Fatherhood Initiative in the USA.

The voluntary organisation will have the responsibility of launching a **television or radio program** which provides a platform to discuss fatherhood issues. The program will bring girls and women who do not know their real biological fathers to present their issues. Psychologists and social workers will then assist them by among other things making a public appeal for the fathers to connect with their children. The program will model a similar South African reality show known as *Utatakho*.

Father-Daughter Camps – the researcher proposes that voluntary organisations and schools should partner to establish father-daughter camps that will help to foster improved relational connections between fathers and daughters. The camps will offer a safe, distraction free environment for fathers and their daughters to share one on one time together. This is important for both resident and non-resident fathers as it provides an opportunity for fathers with busy schedules to spend some time with their daughters. The camps will provide a natural and safe place for fathers to show their daughters how much they appreciate them and also gain a better understanding of their needs as they grow into adulthood. The camps will carter for girls below the age of sixteen (16).

6.3 Validation of the Model

Validation of the model was carried out in order to ascertain the applicability and feasibility of the model. The process involved giving out a questionnaire to psychologists, other professionals in the field of parenting and some women who grew up without fathers. Their views shaped the

final structure of the model.

6.3.1 Sampling strategy

A sample of twenty-one (21) participants was purposively selected to participate in the validation process. Nine of the participants were psychologists, five were high school teachers, four were child counsellors with a local non-governmental organisation, two were female students who grew up without fathers and one was a medical doctor. Purposive sampling was opted for as a sampling strategy because it enabled the researcher to choose participants who would enrich the proposed model.

6.3.2 Data collection instrument

A Likert form scale questionnaire was used to gather data from the participants. The questionnaire enabled the researcher to get opinions of participants on specific issues related to the model, it also enabled quantitative analysis which is in line with this study. The questionnaire was designed in line with the major concepts of the model such that it would be easier for participants to then comment on each and every aspect of the model.

6.4 Data Analysis

Responses to the questionnaire were analysed using descriptive statistics and non-parametric statistics on the Statistical Package for Social Sciences version 21 (SPSS v 21).

6.5 Findings

6.5.1 Clarity of the model

All participants expressed that the description of the model is clear and 86% of the participants consented that the fatherhood resource guide is clearly explained in the model. All participants agreed that the concept of foster fathering is easily understandable with 66.7% of the participants strongly agreeing to that. 71.4% of the participants agreed that the idea of establishing a

voluntary organisation that supports fatherhood programs is well explained. The responses to that in relation to how the participants responded in their respective categories are shown in Table 6.1.

Table 6.1: Perspectives on the Idea of Establishing a Voluntary Organisation Supporting Fatherhood Programs.

			The idea of establishing a voluntary organisation that supports fatherhood programs is well explained				Total
			Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	
Profession	Psychologist	Count	2	3	4	0	9
		% within Profession	22.2%	33.3%	44.4%	0.0%	100.0%
	Teacher	Count	3	2	0	0	5
		% within Profession	60.0%	40.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%
	Counsellor	Count	2	1	0	1	4
		% within Profession	50.0%	25.0%	0.0%	25.0%	100.0%
	Student	Count	0	1	0	1	2
		% within Profession	0.0%	50.0%	0.0%	50.0%	100.0%
	Medical Doctor	Count	1	0	0	0	1
		% within Profession	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%
Total		Count	8	7	4	2	21
		% within Profession	38.1%	33.3%	19.0%	9.5%	100.0%

The cross-tabulation shows that 50% of the students and 25% of counsellors were of the opinion that the idea of establishing a voluntary organisation that supports fatherhood programs is not well explained. All other professionals were of the view that the idea is well explained.

81% of participants expressed that the father and daughter concept is clearly explained and all participants consented that the fatherhood forum is well explained.

6.5.2 Scope of the model

All participants consented that the model is useful in explaining possible solutions to father absence. 81% of participants agreed that the model can be understood by professionals who work with children. The responses are shown in the cross-tabulation 6.2.

Table 6.2: Perspectives on Whether the Model Can be Easily Understood by Professionals who Work with Children.

			Model can easily be understood by professionals who work with children				Total
			Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	
Profession	Psychologist	Count	2	5	2	0	9
		% within Profession	22.2%	55.6%	22.2%	0.0%	100.0%
	Teacher	Count	2	3	0	0	5
		% within Profession	40.0%	60.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%
	Counsellor	Count	2	1	0	1	4
		% within Profession	50.0%	25.0%	0.0%	25.0%	100.0%
	Student	Count	0	1	0	1	2
		% within Profession	0.0%	50.0%	0.0%	50.0%	100.0%
	Medical Doctor	Count	0	1	0	0	1
		% within Profession	0.0%	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%
Total		Count	6	11	2	2	21
		% within Profession	28.6%	52.4%	9.5%	9.5%	100.0%

The cross-tabulation shows that 50% of the students and 25% of counsellors did not agree that the model can easily be understood by professionals who work with children. All other professionals were of the view that the model can be easily understood by professionals, the result was significant and this was tested using the Chi-square test of independence, $X^2(12, N = 21) = 11.478$, $p = .04$.

Majority of participants consented that the model is useful in explaining father and daughter camps, (81%) and all participants agreed that the model can guide other researchers.

6.5.3 Extent of model use

Eighty one percent of the participants were of the opinion that the model can be used in schools to assist teachers to help girls emerging from father absent homes. All participants agreed that the fatherhood resource guide can be used by parents and professionals to improve parenting. 81% of the participants consented that the idea of establishing an organisation that deals with fatherhood programs is feasible and the same trend was seen in participants who agreed that the model can be used to guide professionals to help daughters to cope with father absence.

Forty three percent of participants were of the view that foster fathering and father and daughter camps would leave the girl child susceptible to sexual abuse. People who take up the role of a foster father may not be related to the girl child or may be step parents and as such may sexually abuse the child. 19% of participants expressed that the concept of father and daughter camps was alien to African tradition and as such may face resistance from people especially where it involved grown up ladies going out with a 'father' that may have been absent in their life.

Sixty eight percent of participants expressed that absent fathers should be invited to the Dare (fatherhood forum) as they would benefit from knowledge about the dangers of absent parenting.

6.6 Adjustments of the Model After Findings

Findings from the validation process helped to moderate the structure and content of the model. As a result of the input from participants, the model adjusted to advocate a restriction of foster fathering to only close relatives of the girl child, this is akin to what happened in most African traditional set ups. As a result, the researcher added a component on the model that advocates for traditional parenting systems. Restriction of foster fathering to close relatives will reduce the

chances of sexual abuse of the girl child as it is assumed that these close relatives will be people that were 'present' in the child's life even before the departure of the biological father.

The model was adjusted to restrict father and daughter camps to biological fathers whether resident or non-resident and exclude foster fathers. This adjustment was made in light of concerns from participants that the father and daughter camps may leave the girl child vulnerable to sexual abuse from foster fathers. The camps will also only focus on children below the age of sixteen (16) to carter for concerns by some participants that it will not be feasible for grown up girls to go out with their fathers on a camp.

The fatherhood resource guide would need to be detailed so that it demystifies issues related to foster fathering and father and daughter camps as these concepts that may face resistance if they are not well understood. Another adjustment made was the inclusion of non-resident fathers among the critical participants of the Dare (fatherhood forum).

6.7 Conclusion

This thesis presented findings on the issues that emerge as a consequence of father absence giving particular attention to women who grew up without their biological fathers. The proposed father absence coping model presented in this chapter presents an opportunity to provide a father figure to children especially girls who emerge from father absent homes. The model also provides an opportunity to enhance father involvement to fathers who live with their daughters and those who are non-resident.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Psychological Assessment Inventory Questionnaire

PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT INVENTORY

I am conducting a research on psychological issues that affect young women. This survey is voluntary and you can choose not to take part. The information that you give will be confidential, as such, there will be no way to identify that you gave this information. This information will be used for academic purposes only as it is part of DPhil studies with Great Zimbabwe University

SECTION A: BIOGRAPHICAL DATA

1. Age: …….
2. Marital status (please circle): Single & not Dating Single & Dating Single & Engaged
   Married Divorced
3. Have you stayed with your father during the first 18 years of your life? Yes ☐ No ☐
4. If no, for how many years have you not been staying with your father?.....
5. Again, if no, indicate by ticking in the following boxes why you have not been staying with your father?
   Father died ☐ Father divorced ☐ Father migrated ☐
   Father abandoned us/me ☐ Any other reason ☐
   explain…….
6. Highest level of education. Grade 7 ☐ Form 2 ☐ Form 4 ☐ Form 6 ☐
   Diploma ☐ Degree ☐ Post Graduate Qualification ☐

SECTION B: ANXIETY INVENTORY

Instructions: Put a tick to indicate how much you generally experience each of the following symptoms including during the past week and even today.

Category 1: Anxious Feelings	**Not at all**	**Somewhat**	**Moderately**	**A lot**
1) Nervousness, worry or fear				
2) Feeling that things around you are strange or unreal				
3) Feeling detached from all or part of your body				
4) Sudden unexpected panic spells				
5) A sense of impending death				
6) Feeling tense, stressed, "uptight" or on edge				
Category 2: Anxious Thoughts	**Not at all**	**Somewhat**	**Moderately**	**A lot**
7) Difficulty concentrating				
8) Racing thoughts				
9) Frightening thoughts				
10) Feeling that you are on the verge of losing control				
11) Fears of cracking up or going crazy				
12) Fears of fainting or passing out				
13) Fears of physical illness or heart attacks or dying				
14) Concern about looking foolish or inadequate				
15) Fears of being alone, isolated or abandoned				
16) Fears of criticism or disapproval				
17) Fears that something terrible is about to happen				
Category 3: Physical Symptoms	**Not at all**	**Somewhat**	**Moderately**	**A lot**
18) Skipping, racing or pounding of the heart (palpitations)				
19) Pain, pressure or tightness in chest				
20) Tingling or numbness of toes and fingers				
21) Discomfort in the stomach				
22) Diarrhea				

23) Restlessness or jumpiness					
24) Tight, tense muscles					
25) Sweating not brought on by heat					
26) Trembling or shaking					
27) Feeling dizzy, light headed or off balance					
28) Choking or difficulty breathing					
29) Frequent headaches					
30) Pain in the neck					
31) Pain in the back					
32) Hot flashes or cold chills					
33) Feeling tired, weak, or easily exhausted					

SECTION C: DEPRESSION INVENTORY

Instructions: Put a tick to indicate how much you generally experience each of the following symptoms including during the past week and even today.

Thoughts and feelings	**Not at all**	**Somewhat**	**Moderate**	**A lot**	**Extremely**
1) Feeling sad					
2) Feeling unhappy or blue					
3) Crying spells or tearfulness					
4) Feeling discouraged					
5) Feeling hopeless					
6) Low self-esteem					
7) Feeling worthless or inadequate					
8) Guilt or shame					
9) Criticizing yourself or blaming others					
10) Difficulty making decisions					
Activities and Personal Relationships	**Not at all**	**Somewhat**	**Moderate**	**A lot**	**Extremely**
11) Loss of interest in family, friends or colleagues					
12) Loneliness					
13) Spending less time with family or friends					
14) Loss of motivation					
15) Loss of interest in work or other activities					
16) Avoiding work or other activities					
17) Loss of pleasure or satisfaction in life					
Physical Symptoms	**Not at all**	**Somewhat**	**Moderate**	**A lot**	**Extremely**
18) Feeling tired					
19) Difficulty sleeping or sleeping too much					
20) Decreased or increased appetite					
21) Loss of interest in sex					
22) Worrying about your health					

Suicidal Urges	**Not at all**	**Somewhat**	**Moderate**	**A lot**	**Extremely**
23) Do you have any suicidal thoughts?					
24) Would you like to end your life?					
25) Do you have a plan for harming yourself?					
Coping mechanisms	**Not at all**	**Somewhat**	**Moderate**	**A lot**	**Extremely**
26) I seek social support from friends to avoid depression					
27) I am always optimistic about the future					
28) I engage in exercise regularly					
29) I plan my work in advance					
30) I do not take blame for things that I do not have control over					

SECTION D: MATE PREFERENCE

1) At what age would you prefer to marry?.....If you are married already, at what age did you get married?.....
2) What age difference would you prefer between you and your spouse?.....years
   Whom would you prefer to be older (please circle): Self Spouse

3) Please tick to indicate how you evaluate the following factors in chosing a mate (i.e a boyfriend, husband or partner).

FACTOR	**Very important and necessary**	**Important but you can do without it**	**Desirable, but not very important**	**Irrelevant or unimportant**
1) Good housekeeper				
2) Pleasing disposition				
3) Sociability				
4) Similar educational background				
5) Refinement, neatness				
6) Good financial prospect				
7) Chastity (no previous experience in sexual intercourse)				
8) Dependable character				
9) Favourable social status				
10) Good looks				
11) Masculinity				
12) Ambition and industriousness				
13) Mutual attraction – love				
14) Good health				
15) Education and intelligence				

Preference Concerning Potential Mates

Instructions. Below are listed a set of characteristics that might be present in a potential mate or marriage partner. Please tick **just one** characteristic that you find most desirable in a potential marriage partner

Characteristic	**Indicate by ticking in this column your most desired characteristic in a potential mate or marriage partner**
Kind and understanding	
Religious	
Exciting personality	
Creative & artistic	
Intelligent	
Good earning capacity	
Fatherly figure	
Wants children	
Easy going	
Masculine	
College graduate	
Healthy	
Handsome	

Relationship Strategy

Please tick to indicate how you evaluate the following issues in a relationship.

RELATIONSHIP ISSUE	Very important and necessary	Important but you can do without it	Desirable, but not very important	Irrelevant or unimportant
1) Sex				
2) Having a long-term relationship				
3) Being possessive of my partner				
4) Being faithful to one partner				
5) Having as many short-term enjoyable relationships as possible				
6) Being close to my partner				
7) Having many children				
8) Being my own provider in a relationship				
9) Being my own protector in a relationship				

How many children would you prefer to have?.....

Thank you

Appendix 2: Participants Consent Form

GREAT ZIMBABWE UNIVERSITY

JULIUS NYERERE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY

DPhil in Psychology – Herbert Zirima

Questionnaire Consent Form

I, _____(participant's name), understand that I am being asked to participate in a survey/questionnaire activity that forms part of Herbert Zirima research for his DPhil in Psychology studies. It is my understanding that this survey/questionnaire has been designed to gather information about the psychological impact of father absence on daughter adult life.

I have been given some general information about this project and the types of questions I can expect to answer. I understand that the survey/questionnaire will be conducted in person and it will take about thirty to forty minutes of my time to complete.

I understand that my participation in this project is completely voluntary and that I am free to decline to participate, without consequence, at any time prior to or at any point during the activity. I understand that any information I provide will be kept confidential, used only for the purposes of completing this DPhil program, and will not be used in any way that can identify me. All questionnaire responses, notes, and records will be kept in a secured environment.

I also understand that there are no risks involved in participating in this activity, beyond those risks experienced in everyday life.

I have read the information above. By signing below and returning this form, I am consenting to participate in this survey/questionnaire project as designed by the above-named Great Zimbabwe University student.

Participant name (please print): _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

If you have other questions concerning your participation in this project, please contact me on cell number 0775371313 or at hzirima@gzu.ac.zw or my Great Zimbabwe University Supervisor on 0712409985 or 0783074069, email address: frezindi@gmail.com or peemudhovozi@yahoo.com

Thank you for agreeing to participate in my project.

Appendix 3: Father Absence Coping Mechanism Model Questionnaire

FATHER ABSENCE COPING MECHANISM MODEL QUESTIONNAIRE

My name is Herbert Zirima. I am conducting a research on the impact of father absence on daughter adult life. As an output of my research, I am proposing a model to help in improving fathering. I kindly request your input on the model, (please find the model attached to this questionnaire).

This survey is voluntary and you can choose not to take part. The information that you give will be confidential, as such, there will be no way to identify that you gave this information. This information will be used for academic purposes only as it is part of DPhil studies with Great Zimbabwe University.

Instruction: Please circle the appropriate response

1.1 Gender:

1	Male	2	Female

1.2 Age:

Below 30 years	1
30-39 years	2
40-49 years	3
50-59 years	4
60 years and above	5

1.3 Highest level of Education:

First degree	1
Master's degree	2
Doctorate	3
Other (Specify)	4

1.4 Profession

Psychologist	1
Teacher	2
Counsellor	3
Student	4
Social worker	5
Other (Specify)	6

VALIDATION OF THE MODEL

Instruction: Put a tick to indicate how much you agree with the following statements.

Item	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
CLARITY OF THE MODEL					
1) The description of the model is clear					
2) The fatherhood resource guide is clearly explained in the model					
3) The concept of foster fathering is easily understandable					
4) Fatherhood forum is well explained in the model					
5) The idea of establishing a voluntary organisation that supports fatherhood programs is well explained					
6) The father and daughter camps concept is clearly explained					
7) The concept of foster fathering is not clearly explained					
SCOPE OF THE MODEL					
8) The model is useful in explaining possible solutions to father absence					
9) Model can easily be understood by professionals who work with children					
10) The model is useful in explaining father and daughter camps					
11) The model can guide young researchers					
12) The model is too complex to understand					
EXTENT OF MODEL USE					
13) Model contributes to better understanding of father absence					
14) Model can be used to guide professionals to help daughters to cope with father absence					
15) Model can be used in schools to assist teachers to deal with girls emerging from father absent homes					
16) The idea of establishing an organisation that deals with fatherhood programs is feasible					
17) The fatherhood resource guide can be used by parents and professionals to improve parenting					
18) The model can confuse professionals					
19) The model is too academic and cannot be practically implemented					

Give any other comments on the model ……...

……..…….

……

…….

…….

……

…….

SUMMARY TABLES

Type of Father Absence and its Effects

Type of father absence	Effects
Father died	Preference for a sexual partner with no previous sexual intercourse (chastity)
Father divorced	Extreme depression
	Severe anxiety
	High rates of early marriage (married before the age of 20)
	Preference for a partner with good looks
Father migrated	Severe depression
	Preference for a partner with good financial prospect
Father abandoned	Extreme anxiety
	Higher divorce rate

Duration of Father Absence and its Effects

Duration of father absence	Effects
Less than 2 years	Nothing observed
2 to 5 years	Extreme anxiety
	High rates of early marriage (married before the age of 20)
	Preference for masculine romantic partner
6 to 9 years	Loneliness
10 to 13 years	Loss of interest in sex
14 years and above	Preference for a romantic partner who is a fatherly figure
	Feelings of sadness

Comparison of effects between women from father absent and father present homes

Dimension	Women from father absent homes	Women from father present homes
Anxiety	Severe and extreme anxiety	Borderline and minimal anxiety
Depression	Moderate and severe depression	Minimal and no depression
Relationship strategy	Early marriage, (about half married between the ages of 18 – 20 years) High rates of divorce Sex not considered very important in a relationship	About half married between the ages of 21 – 23 years Higher rates of marriage Sex considered very important in a relationship
Partner preference	Preference for good looks in a romantic partner Romantic partner to be a fatherly figure	Preference for a romantic partner who is ambitious and industrious Romantic partner to be kind and understanding
Coping mechanism	Social Support	Social support

Appendix 4: Ethical Clearance

Appendix 5: Turnitin Originality Report

Appendix 6: Editor's note

Appendix 7: Published Article 1

Appendix 8: Published Article 2

Appendix 9: Draft Submitted Article