# INFLUENCE OF MOBILE DEVICES USE ON THE LEVEL OF MARITAL SATISFACTION AMONG COUPLES IN MCK NKUBU SYNOD, MERU, THARAKA NITHI, EMBU AND KIRINYAGA COUNTIES, KENYA

**MUTUA CATHERINE KAGWIRIA**

**A Thesis Submitted to the School of Education and Social Sciences in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Conferment of the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Counselling Psychology of Kenya Methodist University**

**SEPTEMBER 2022**

# DECLARATION AND RECOMMENDATION

**Declaration**

This thesis is my original work and has not been presented for the award of a degree or any other award in any other University.

_____Date_____

Mutua Catherine Kagwiria

PSC-4-9524-3/2018

**Recommendation**

We confirm that the candidate carried out the work reported in this thesis under our supervision.

…………………………………………Date……………………………………………..

Dr. Rebecca Wachira, Ph.D

Kenya Methodist University

…………………………………………Date……………………………………………..

Dr. Peter Mwiti, Ph.D

Kenya Methodist University

# COPYRIGHT

## DEDICATION

To my husband, children, parents, and Jan Brockley.

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

# ABSTRACT

Marital satisfaction is an indicator of health and quality in a marriage relationship. However, marital satisfaction does not just occur, but hinges on good communication. Communication enhances cohesion among married couples and promotes marital satisfaction. Interestingly, addiction and misuse of technology in mobile devices anticipated to enhance communication among married couples and contribute to marital satisfaction has been associated with adverse effects on marriages. This study seeks to examine the influence of the use of mobile devices on marital satisfaction among couples in MCK, Nkubu Synod, Meru County, Kenya. Nkubu Synod covers Meru, Embu, Tharaka Nithi and Kirinyaga counties, and is positioned on the Eastern and Southern sides of Mt. Kenya. The Synod covers a total of 21 administrative units, commonly referred to as circuits. The study was guided by four objectives; namely; to investigate the influence of social media use on marital satisfaction in married couples in MCK, Nkubu Synod; to explore the influence of mobile game use on marital satisfaction in married couples in MCK, Nkubu Synod; to analyse the effects of mobile phone calls on marital satisfaction in married couples in MCK, Nkubu Synod; and to determine the influence of marriage character traits on the level of marital satisfaction among married people in MCK, Nkubu Synod. The study was anchored on two theories: the family systems theory and cognitive behaviour theory (CBT) that guided data analysis. The study adopted a Mixed-Methods research approach, where qualitative and quantitative data was collected. The study targeted 4003 married couples in Nkubu Synod as per Nkubu Synod 2019 Annual Committee Resolution and Reports. This population translated to 8006 married persons. Stratified and simple random sampling techniques were used to select 367 respondents for the study. Questionnaires, interviews, and focus group discussions were utilized in collecting data. Pre-testing of instruments enhanced determination of their validity and reliability. Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) was used to modify, code, input, and analyse quantitative data, while the thematic technique was used to analyze the qualitative data. The study used multiple regression analysis to show the relationships that existed between the independent and dependent variables. The study established that when combined, social media use, mobile gaming and mobile phone calls formed a model that was found statistically significant in determining couples' marital satisfaction in MCK, Nkubu Synod, Meru County. However, in an integrated model, social media was weightier as compared to the other two uses of mobile devices. As regards the moderating effect of marriage characteristics such as the level of education, the number of years in marriage, and the income, the study found out that the level of education and the income both had statistically insignificant moderation effect on the relationship between mobile device use and the marital satisfaction of couples in MCK, Nkubu Synod, Meru County. However, the number of years in marriage was the statistically significant moderator on the relationship between media device use and couples' marital satisfaction. The study recommends that the church leadership develops comprehensive guidance and counselling church training curriculum to equip the couples with knowledge on drivers of marriage dissatisfaction and train them on effective use of social media, mobile games and mobile phone calls. The study findings may aid in the development of appropriate psychological therapies and promote appropriate models for marital satisfaction.

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# ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

**RIA**    Registered Investment Advisor

**USA** United States of America

**CBT** Cognitive Behaviour Theory

**MCK** Methodist Church in Kenya

# CHAPTER ONE

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background of the Study

Marital satisfaction refers to feelings of contentment, happiness and joy in one's marriage (Atapour et al., 2021). It is one of the indicators of quality in marriage, and is usually exemplified by companionship, communication, compassion, trust, and cohesion, among others. Many studies measure the level of marital satisfaction using prescribed scales. The level of marital satisfaction scores often range from 3 to 21; with higher levels indicating a high level of marital satisfaction.

Research indicates that factors such as employment and social economic status; personal attributes, cognitive abilities, religious inclinations, courtship before marriage, age of the married partners, the number of children, couples' age difference, drug and substance use, addiction, level of education, gender, illness; and conjugal satisfaction, all play a significant role in marital satisfaction (Amato et al., 2007; Chiung & Shen, 2005; Tavakol et al., 2017; Vandenberg, 1972;). Chiung and Shen (2005) observe that factors that influence marital relationships vary across cultures. Studies indicate that while men have the highest marital discontent, marital satisfaction in women improves with age. Nonetheless, Amato (2007) quips that marriage satisfaction does not vary between men and women.

Marital dissatisfaction among Christian spouses is a common problem the world over, and that it is a threat in marriages (Bravo & Martinez, 2017). Lack of marital satisfaction

is associated with increased rate of divorce among Christian couples. Indeed, owing to marital difficulties, divorce and separation are on the rise all around the world (Stevenson & Wolfers, 2007). Data demonstrate that European and American nations, particularly those classified as developed countries, have extremely high rates of divorce. Interestingly, couples in economically prosperous countries are more likely to divorce, most likely because women have greater financial power, which is not the case in underdeveloped countries (Chiung & Shen, 2005). A similar tendency is developing in many of the world's rising nations, according to Kenny (2013). As a result of this, divorce is becoming increasingly common. Outside North America, Europe, and Oceanic countries, some countries in Africa, majority of which the United Nations has categorised as emerging economies, statistics indicate increased divorce rates as from the year 2011.

Numerous factors are attributable to marital satisfaction. These include family structures, financial status, psychosocial aspects, personality, technological dynamics, demographics, communication, alcoholism, sexual relations, and societal norms and customs (Abbasi, 2018; Aziz et al., 2018). All these factors may either have a positive, or an adverse effect on the rate of marital satisfaction. Notably, technology is one of the factors that affect the rate of marital satisfaction. Mobile phones, which are the most widely used forms of technology affect the rate of marital satisfaction. While the use of mobile phones may help partners in a marital relationship to communicate with each other, thereby impacting positively t on the marital satisfaction, they can also have adverse effects on the rate of marital satisfaction, thereby affecting the quality of a marriage. Communication, which is an important determiner of marital satisfaction, can be affected either positively or negatively by mobile phones (Rahtikawati & Ratnasih,

2021). The technological factors that influence satisfaction in marriage, particularly the influence of mobile devices on the level of marital satisfaction among married Christian couples, were investigated in this study.

Technologically advanced mobile devices have become some of the most widely used apparatuses in the modern world. Sim (2019) observes that mobile devices include all portable computers, including mobile phones, tablets, laptops, and other handheld computers. Many individuals depend on these devices for various uses, such as for communication, entertainment, business, and education. Some researchers have observed that mobile devices have become an essential need for some individuals, such that their use has resulted to mobile device addiction (Hoque, 2018). These outcomes are a result of availability of cheaper devices and affordable internet connectivity that allows different individuals to communicate with each other, access and share content internationally. Unlike in earlier years, people can today interact through social media platforms and other mobile phone facilities such as text messages, video calls, and audio (Gull et al., 2019).

The world has enjoyed more connectivity today due to increased numbers of mobile device users worldwide. Jomy (2019) observes that by the end of 2015, the number of distinct mobile subscribers in the whole world stood at 4.7 billion. Based on the global mobile device ownership and subscription statistics, by the end of 2015, approximately 70% of the world's population was connected and communicated through mobile devices. That number was estimated to have hit 5.645 billion by 2020. It was anticipated that in 5 years from 2015, almost three-quarters of the world's population would have owned a mobile device; and that one billion new subscribers would have been added (Servies,

2018). A study by Bellou (2015a) indicated steady increase in use of mobile devices in the United States of America since the 1990s. However, the study fails to show any relationship between internet browsing and the level of marital satisfaction, yet it notes that the web has the capacity to minimize social frictions, thus enabling people to find a larger number of alternatives that match their preferences in conflict resolution. This has benefited marriage and thus enhanced satisfaction in marriages. On the other hand, Kapoor et al. (2018) argue that mobile technologies have affected various areas of society, such as relationships and marriages, in both negative and positive ways.

Social media and other features in mobile devices have enabled couples to communicate and build stronger relationships worldwide (Oliveira, 2016a). Njoh (2018) notes that individuals from different parts of the world can meet and develop relationships through mobile devices. Additionally, in some cases, mobile gadgets are known to improve commitment between partners. This is because some couples who are in long-distance relationships and those who operate busy schedules that make face-to-face interactions difficult benefit from the mobile devices. According to Njoh (2018), some people who are married may be tempted to cheat or seek other partners. However, through mobile device facilities such as video calls, partners can easily interact and communicate with one another. This means that the mobile devices enhance commitment and communication between couples, thereby enabling them to stay close to each other (Abbasi, 2018).

The number of mobile device users across the globe exceeds three billion and is predicted to even increase by hundreds of millions by the year 2023. Global social statistics show that social media platform users have grown to 4.33 billion since the year 2021; a figure

that translates to 55% of the whole world's population (Juhasz & Bradford, 2016a). With a combined total of 1.46 billion users, China, India, and the United States are by far the highest mobile device users (Statistica, 2021). There were 4.28 billion mobile internet users by 2020, implying that more than 90% of the worldwide online population uses a mobile device to access the internet. Smartphone ownership and internet usage are likely to increase in the coming years, as mobile technology becomes more inexpensive and accessible (Sim, 2019).

Globally, social media users currently account for more than 70% of the eligible population (Zhang et al., 2018). Each month, the average mobile device user frequently uses or checks well over six different online social platforms and spends close to two and a half hours on the internet (Jomy, 2019). Supposing that an American sleeps for 7 to 8 hours per day, statistics indicate that Americans spend around 15% of their waking lives on the internet. On a daily basis, individuals utilize more than 10 billion hours of active interaction on the social networking systems, which translates to approximately 1.2 million years of a peoples' life (Jomy et al., 2019).

On the other hand, the global web index shows that 53.6% of the inhabitants of the universe use social networks daily at a mean of 2 hours and 25 minutes (Servies, 2018). According to Abbasi (2018), excessive usage of Social Networking Sites (SNS) has a negative impact on intimate relationships, owing to jealousy, resentment, mistrust, spying on each other, and adultery. Moreover, consumption SNS messages is associated with diminished couple intimate commitment by the virtue of the existence of alternative online chartrooms which make them dedicate their time and emotional commitments to their online friends (Abbasi, 2019a). Many people worldwide interact and communicate

through social media and other features available on mobile devices such as text, audio, and graphical messages (Christensen, 2018). These individuals can meet new people or interact with those that they already know, and create stronger bonds that lead to friendships and marriages. However, although mobile devices can be essential in building relationships, they can also affect marital satisfaction. Arguably, mobile devices are the most frequently used technological inventions, and they have the potential to affect relationships in diverse ways (Jomy, 2019).

In China and Malaysia, the percentage of people who own mobile devices and use the internet is exceptionally very high (Minuchin et al., 2006). In 2013, an average of 45 per cent of mobile devices users in 21 emerging economies reported that they use the web via own mobile phone, at least once a week (Benti et al., 2019; Shava & Chinyamurindi, 2018). In 2015, average percentage of mobile device users increased to 54 per cent, with significant figures of users noted in growing economies like Malaysia, Brazil, and China accounting (Zhang et al., 2018). According to a poll conducted in 2015, 87 per cent of individuals in 11 industrialized nations; the United States of America, Australia, Japan, South Korea and Israel, use the internet (Wang et al., 2017).

According to Pew Internet (2008), 70% of wedded American couples both of whom own mobile devices contact each other (via phone) at least once a day to check in on the other or to simply chat. However, studies evaluating the relationship between smartphone use and marital satisfaction have yielded mixed results. Earlier researches revealed that using a mobile device has no influence on happiness in relationships (Borrelli, 2015). Nonetheless, other studies have found out that the increase of cell phone communication and text messaging use has increased relational happiness and contentment (Yin, 2009).

According to Miller-Ott, Kelly, and Duran (2012), cellphone use in a relationship is strongly and positively related satisfaction in relationships.

In Africa, literature on social media use and its effects on relationships is scanty (Asongu & Odhiambo, 2021). Ninety per cent of the 1 billion additional users predicted between 2015 and 2020 were anticipated to come from developing countries. Jha and Kodila-Tedika (2019) investigated whether social networks promote democracy, while Jha and Sarangi (2017) investigated whether these social networks influence corruption. Asongu and Odhiambo (2019a, 2019b) investigated the connection between social platforms, tourism and administration. Asongu et al. (2019) interrogates the link between social platforms and terrorism and global homicide. However, all these inquiries did not have any findings as far as marital satisfaction is concerned.

However, the above studies indicate increased usage of mobile devices. Notably, none of them sought to determine the association between mobile technology and the level of marital satisfaction. A study conducted in 12 African nations by the Registered Investment Advisor (RIA) sought to determine individual and household internet usage in rural and urban settings (Gillwald & Mothobi, 2018). In 2007/8, a comparable poll was undertaken in 17 countries. Statistics reveal increase in internet usage in the nine nations covered by both polls. The use of internet has more than doubled in most nations over time (Gillwald & Mothobi, 2018). The fact that at least 22% of South Africa's 12 million Facebook users are between the ages of 13 and 18 is startling (BusinessTech 2015). Asongu and Odhiambo's (2021) surveys 49 African countries and found out that internet availability has increased. For instance, mobile data charges in South Africa have dropped from two rands per megabyte (MB) to less than 20 cents. This suggests that there

would be increased internet access and usage. The study, however, found no evidence of an effect of socioeconomic status on satisfaction in a relationship (Gillwald & Mothobi, 2018).

More than 9.5 million Kenyans were anticipated to use social media; with this number increasing by one million between the fourth month of 2019 and the first month of 2020. By January 2020, Kenya had 17 per cent social media penetration rate (World Bank, 2021). In Kenya, a 5 MB data coupon can be purchased for roughly three cents (US) (Kiogora, 2018). One person uses Facebook up to 20 times a day and spends roughly 15 cents per day on data. As a consequence, low-income users find social networking sites like Facebook and local online information services provided by news organizations like the Daily Nation to be of great value. This is because they allow a large number of individuals to gain access to vital information, and communicate with their friends and family at a low cost (Wathigo, 2019).

According to the World Bank (2021), by January 2020, there were 22.86 million internet users. Between 2019 and 2020, the internet citizenry rose by 3.2 million; an incremental value of about 16%. In January 2020, 43% of Kenyans had access to the internet. According to Naumwa (2019), over 91 per cent of Kenyans use mobile phones, while others use other sorts of mobile devices. This finding implies that, like the rest of the world, Kenyan spouses are influenced by the usage of mobile devices. According to Naumwa (2019), the majority of Kenyans use social media, the mobile devices, and the internet. Obtaining information, entertainment, and social connections are the top three reasons Kenyans use social media. For example, Naumwa (2019) argues that many Kenyans are preoccupied with their mobile phones to the point of ignoring their

relationships. "Phubbing" is a term for this type of behaviour, and it has contributed to the country's poor marital satisfaction rate (Ndeke et al., 2020).

In the MCK Nkubu synod, there is insufficient data on social media and internet usage. However, a study by Ndeke et al. (2020), which examined factors influencing the uptake of the internet in Meru, a high connectivity and usage of internet within Meru County was noted. However, the study did not show any link between mobile devices usage and level of marital satisfaction. Further, information on social media, gaming, internet use, and mobile device use and their effect on marital satisfaction in Nkubu synod is scanty (Ndeke et al., 2020).

While there is a dearth of studies on the association between mobile device use and marital pleasure, studies on general cellphone use in married relations have been conducted. Although no study has investigated this link in MCK Nkubu Synod, Maigallo (2019) investigated the impact of family life knowledge on marriages in Meru County, Kenya. He observed that in Meru, it is a common scenario to find people engrossed to their devices even when they are with their spouses, friends, or family members (Maigallo, 2019). Notably, literature gap on the nexus between mobile device use and satisfaction in marriages in Meru County and Nkubu Synod is enormous. Arguably, some family counsellors have observed that many of their clients complain that their partner's excessive use of mobile devices is to blame for their marital conflicts (Maigallo, 2019).

Although many couples spend a lot of time with each other, they rarely have meaningful conversations or intimacy, since they concentrate on various activities on their mobile devices. Consequently, many them find their marriages unsatisfying, while others separate due to issues related the use of mobile device(Coyne et al., 2018). These

arguments indicate that it is necessary to study how mobile devices affect various relationships.

A few studies have sought to explain how the use of mobile device affects the level of marital satisfaction (Abbasi, 2018; Abbasi & AlGhamadi, 2017; Abdul Aziz, 2018a; Gullet al., 2019a; Hertlein & Hawkins, 2015a; Juhasz & Bradford, 2016a; Kimoto, 2016a; Wathigo, 2019. However, not one of them has explored the specific mobile device components whose use has led to marital satisfaction. This research, therefore, was intended to determine how social media, internet browsing, gaming, and mobile phone calls, affect the level of marital satisfaction among selected married couples in Nkubu synod, Meru. This information is essential because it will reveal how Kenyan couples are affected by mobile device usage.

## 1.2. Statement of the Problem

For a marriage to last, there is need for both parties to be satisfied. Various studies indicate that marital satisfaction is a very important determiner of a person's overall sense of joy (Zaheri et al., 2016; Bradbury et al., 2000; Amirnovin & Ghaffarian, 2018). Given that marriage serves as the most fundamental human relationship, it is seen as the most significant and basic human bond. According to a study conducted by Tummala (2008), though marriage is a highly desirable relationship, marital satisfaction is difficult to achieve. There are various factors that affect the level of marital satisfaction; namely, communication, family relationships, and income, among others. Mobile device use, particularly the use of social media, mobile games, and phone calls are some of the factors that influence the level of marital satisfaction (Wang et al., 2017).

Communication is a great determiner of marital satisfaction. While past studies have shown that mobile phones enhance communication among married couples, recent studies have shown that with the advancement in technology, mobile phones have led to disconnect between couples, leading to lower levels of marital satisfaction. Although mobile phones have numerous positive implications in marriages, especially due to enhanced communication, they too also have adverse outcomes. Aziz et al. (2018a); Gullet et al (2019a); Krasnova et al. (2016) and Oliveira (2016) all observe that mobile devices lead to withdrawals, emotional distance, tension, distrust, and jealousy among spouses. These studies further indicate that this dissatisfaction may lead to depression, marital conflicts, and reduced quality of a marriage relationship.

Further, Jomy et al. (2019) investigated the effects of social media and noted that mobile phone addiction led to increased depression, irritability, and restlessness among married couples. This affects one or both married couples' mental health, impairing their interpersonal relationships and family life. While there aren't many studies on mobile device use and marital satisfaction, there have been some studies on general mobile device use in marriage. Afolaranmi (2020) found that Facebook use was associated with dissatisfaction and low satisfaction in marriage. Twitter was also linked to adverse effects, while posting selfies on Instagram had more impact on marital conflicts. From these studies, there is a clear indication of a gap in the influence of mobile device use on the level of marital satisfaction. This study seeks to fill this gap.

There is limited data within Meru County, specifically MCK Nkubu synod, on the effects of mobile device use and the level of marital satisfaction. However, unpublished sources from church records and incidents at Nkubu Synod indicate high marital dissatisfaction

and a high divorce rate among couples. This implies low marital satisfaction in married couples in MCK Nkubu Synod. The study seeks to investigate the influence of the use of mobile device on the level of marital satisfaction in couples in MCK Nkubu Synod.

## 1.3 Purpose of the Study

This study sought to investigate the influence of mobile device use on the level of marital satisfaction in married couples in MCK Nkubu Synod.

## 1.4 Objectives of the Study

The study sought to investigate the following objectives, to;

i.    Assess the influence of social media use on the level of marital satisfaction in MCK Nkubu Synod, Meru County of Kenya.

ii.   Determine the influence of the use of mobile games on the level of marital satisfaction in MCK Nkubu Synod, Meru County of Kenya.

iii.  Examine the influence of Mobile phone calls on the level of marital satisfaction in MCK Nkubu Synod, Meru County of Kenya.

iv.   Determine the influence of marriage characteristics on the level of marital satisfaction in MCK Nkubu Synod, Meru County of Kenya.

## 1.5 Research Questions

The study sought to answer the following research questions;

i.    To what extent does social media use influence the level of marital satisfaction in MCK Nkubu Synod, Meru County, Kenya?

ii.   To what degree does the use of Mobile games influence the level of marital satisfaction in MCK Nkubu Synod, Meru County, Kenya?

iii. To what extent do Mobile phone calls influence the level of marital satisfaction in MCK Nkubu Synod, Meru County, Kenya?

iv. What is the effect of marriage characteristics on the level of marital satisfaction in MCK Nkubu Synod, Meru County, Kenya?

## 1.6 Justification of the Study

Mobile device usage has become a strand of families' cyclic life. In the context of Africa, and Kenya specifically, mobile device technology has grown exponentially. This growth is an indication of more mobile device use in communication. Incidentally, the use of mobile devices can either increase or decrease the level of marital satisfaction. This phenomenon inspires a study on the effects mobile device use on the level of marital satisfaction. Consequently, this study sought to investigate how mobile device usage influenced the level of marital satisfaction.

The effects of technology on individuals and families are often studied. However, there is still a dearth of studies as regards mobile devices and spousal relationships. Though many scholars have found the subject of the nexus between mobile device use and marital satisfaction inviting, empirical data remains limited.

The findings of this study shall be useful to married couples since they provide couples with knowledge for better utilization of social networking platforms in their marriage union. As a result, couples would be able to make required modifications to their usage of social networking sites, while remaining in control of psychological issues related to mobile devices.

Moreover, the study's findings will enlighten marital counsellors, organizations that deal with marital counselling, and the church leadership about the challenges that couples

experience as a result of their use of social media websites. Such knowledge will aid marital counsellors in addressing related concerns whenever brought to their attention.

## 1.7 Significance of the Study

This study will be beneficial in diverse ways. The findings provide valuable information on ever increasing issues on marital satisfaction and family social interactions. Further, it provides knowledge critical in harnessing the opportunities provided by mobile technology, with the aim of facilitating quality marital satisfaction. Further, the findings of the study may help counselling practitioners to update their theory and practice so as to address the contemporary challenges resulting from mobile technology.

The findings of the study may also be helpful in the Methodist church in Kenya, the county governments, and the national government in making and implementing marriage policies. The findings of the study will add to the existing knowledge in the area of counselling, and family therapy, as provided by religious leaders and other premarital counselling professionals. Premarital counselling clients may be made aware of the influence of mobile device usage on marital satisfaction. Marital counsellors may include the influence of mobile device usage on marital satisfaction in their counselling manuals. Additionally, the findings of this study will be used to provide areas for further research so as to fully understand how mobile devices affect marriages and other relationships, and how these tools can be used to solve different problems affecting the institution of marriage.

The findings would further be helpful in coming up with appropriate interventions and helping models that would help improve the level of marital satisfaction. Positive activity interventions and cognitive-behavioural theory applied in this study will be highly

beneficial to couples as they advocate for couples focus on good things, the future of their marriage, show of gratitude and affirmation of the other marriage partner, so as to enhance a healthy marital relationship.

## 1.8 Scope of the Study

Couples from the Nkubu Synod which comprises of Meru, Embu, Tharaka Nithi and Kirinyaga counties were the focus of this study. Tharaka Nithi and Kirinyaga Counties are located on the Eastern and the Southern of Mt. Kenya. There are 21 circuits in Nkubu Synod, which hosts 250 congregations. The study drew data from married couples sampled in aforementioned regions. These individuals were aged between 20 and 60 years, and who were members of MCK churches within the Nkubu Synod. Additionally, the respondents must have owned and used at least one mobile device. The study considered several aspects of marital satisfaction; namely, intimacy, love, communication and commitment, as well as aspects of mobile device use such as the social media, internet browsing, mobile games, and mobile phone calls.

## 1.9 Limitation of the Study

The study's conclusions were based on respondents' ratings of marital satisfaction. As such, respondent biases cannot be ignored in the final results. However, the use of the standard measures of the three aspects of mobile device abuse mitigated this effect. Further, there could be other factors apart from the ones included in this study that may affect the level of marital satisfaction. However, from the results, the level of significance of each variable was derived using multiple regressions to check the degree that each independent variable had on the dependent variable

**1.10 Assumptions of the Study**

The following assumptions were made while carrying out this research:

i)    Respondents would be willing to help with the study by providing pertinent information.

ii)   The participants would be able to rate the level of satisfaction in their marriage.

iii)  National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI) would grant authorizations to undertake the study.

iv)   Permission to obtained data from church records would be granted by Nkubu Synod authorities, namely; the Synod Bishop, the Superintendent Ministers and Circuit Stewards from the respective circuits.

## 1.11 Operational Definition of Terms

**Circuit**  Refers to a grouping of local sanctuaries under the care of one or more ministers.

**Couples**  Two married people or in a romantic long-term relationship

**Internet browsing**  It is defined in this study as the act of looking through a set of information quickly using the world wide web and search engines such as Mozilla Firefox, Google Chrome, Microsoft Internet Explorer, Apple Safari, and the Opera browser.

**Level of marital satisfaction**  The degree of marital satisfaction is characterized as a multi-dimensional construct that assesses both objective and subjective components of the married relationship, such as companionship, communications, compassion, trust, and conflict.

**Marital conflict**  Refers to tensions or stress between spouses. It is manifested through constant arguments, disagreements, infidelity, and breakups. For purposes of this study, marital conflict will be measured using Conflict over Mobile Device Usage by McDaniel & Coyne (2014).

**Marital relationship**  Refers to the relationship between a husband and a wife. Even though same-sex marriages in some regions are acceptable, in Kenya, these are rare; thus, we will only consider relationships between a male and a female. And

monogamous relationships.

| | |
|---|---|
| **Marital Satisfaction** | An individual's attitude regarding his or her own marriage relationship |
| **Marriage Characteristics** | These are the moderating variables in the study. Three features are covered; namely, the level of education, the length of the marriage & the income of the married couple. |
| **Mobile devices** | Refers to portable electronic gadgets that can connect through voice calls and messages. |
| **Mobile phone calls** | A mobile phone call in this study has been defined as the connection of two or more people using a mobile phone device through a voice call, video call, and text message chatting. |
| **Social media** | Social sites which allow friends to communicate and share real-time content quickly and efficiently, such as Facebook, WhatsApp, Twitter, and Instagram. |
| **Synod** | Refers to a grouping of several circuits under the care of a Bishop. |

**CHAPTER TWO**

**LITERATURE REVIEW**

## 2.1 Introduction

In this chapter, the researcher reviewed literature related to marital satisfaction, social media use, mobile games use, mobile phone calls and marriage characteristics. It also highlighted the gaps in the literature reviewed. The chapter also presents the conceptual framework and the theories that inform the findings of the study. These theories include family systems theory and cognitive behaviour theory (Beck & Weishaar, 1989a; Bowen, 1993a).

## 2.2 Level of marital satisfaction

The desire to enjoy marital satisfaction is one of the most significant purposes of marriage. However, marital satisfaction is a complex and diverse phenomenon that has been widely investigated by scholars across disciplines. According to Schoen et al. (2022), marital satisfaction is a comprehensive assessment of one's marriage status, and a reflection of the quality of the relationship. Marital happiness may be understood as a psychological state of mind, which controls processes that assess advantages and costs of a marriage from an evolutionary standpoint (Kamp-Dush et al., 2008). Experts believe that marital satisfaction is a subjective judgement of the quality of a couple's partnership. Indeed, factors that influence marriage satisfaction differ across cultures.

Everyone desires a life of happiness and contentment upon marrying; consequently, marital success and marital satisfaction are more important than the marriage itself. As a result, a decline in marital satisfaction not only produces an unsuitable environment in a family, but it also contributes to family dysfunction and divorce (Zaheri et al., 2016). As

a result, marriage satisfaction is significant in maintaining a family's harmonious coexistence and keeping it from disintegration. As such, it is crucial to understand factors in marital pleasure, which reinforce happiness in married life.

The level of marital satisfaction was the study's dependent variable. Lewis (1979) and Spanier (1990) describes relationship satisfaction as a multi-dimensional concept that assesses objective components of the married relationship such as companionship, communication, intimacy, trust, and conflict, as well as happiness. Prior studies that have investigated marital satisfaction have used a 14-item revised dyadic adjustment scale (RDAS) (Busby et al., 1995).

Mobile devices have made a tremendous impact on social, educational, and professional aspects of most human beings. These devices allow individuals to connect and interact with each other in ways that were not possible in earlier years (Rotondi et al., 2017). Currently, many devices come with high-quality software that can simulate face-to-face interaction that is critical in creating strong bonds between individuals. However, regardless of these benefits, mobile devices have become a significant source of conflict in many marriages. Data collected by Sbarra et al. (2019) indicate that over 42% of couples admit being distracted by their mobile devices even when they are having a face-to-face conversation with their partners.

In Africa, divorce cases have increased in recent years, and some scholars attribute these cases to increasing mobile phone use among married individuals (Lesitaokana, 2018). Lesitaokana asserts that excessive mobile phone use, particularly the use of the social media has contributed to low marital commitment and higher divorce rates. These observations prove that mobile devices and social media have affected interactions and

the relationship between married individuals. Earlier observations reveal that intimacy and communication are essential attributes of successful marriages. Salimi et al. (2019) argue that love and commitment are crucial for lasting relationships. According to them, when couples connect, they become interdependent. Subsequently, it is arguable that couples who love one another are more interdependent compared to those who do not. Various faiths support heterosexual marriages since they signify the institution of lifelong commitment to nurturing love, and to raising a family (Belcher, 2019).

Unlike some countries that allow same-gender marriages, Kenyan society does not approve of any other type of a marriage relationship other than heterosexual marriages (Kimeto, 2016). This marriage approach encourages partners to commit to the relationship to achieve marital goals. Therefore, it can be claimed that one of the leading roles of marriage is to encourage commitment and love in couples. Mobile devices have made tremendous impacts on the social, the educational, and the professional aspects of life. Indeed, mobile devices allow individuals to connect and interact with each other in ways that were not possible in earlier years, thereby increasing the level of marital satisfaction (Rotondi et al., 2017).

Konstam et al. (2019) define commitment as intent to remain in a relationship for a long time. In the case of marriage, commitment refers to the intention to remain in marriage until the separation of the couple by death. According to Konstam et al., (2019), this intention results from intimacy and marital satisfaction that encourage interdependence and commitment. Consequently, commitment of couples relies on human attachments and bonding. Mobile devices provide a platform for accessible communication, connections, and bonding. As observed by Atkins (2019), technological devices such as

mobile devices connect people living in different areas compared to earlier forms of technology.

Communication strengthens relationships bonds between individuals. Indeed, many young couples have met through social media, and still continue to use these tools even after marriage (Atkins, 2019). During the early stages of marriage, many couples experience conflicts that may result to divorce or unsatisfactory unions, whenever issues are not sorted out early. Menin (2018) suggests that individuals should make use of technology to deal with marital problems. Further, Menin (2018) notes that modern marriages can use texts, video, and phone calls as well as images to communicate their intimate desires and to strengthen their love. However, although many couples engage in texting, many scholars agree that there is no significant relationship between text messages and couple commitment (Lapierre & Lewis 2018). Indeed, scholars have argued that phone calls are the most effective way of dealing with relationship uncertainty (Lapierre & Lewis 2018).

Although mobile devices are instrumental in improving couple commitment, these gadgets may also result in relationship uncertainties. Some scholars have observed that excessive use of mobile devices results in specific problems such as phubbing and suspicions among partners (Saha, 2017). Individuals need trustworthy partners before they can commit fully to a relationship. As observed by Isanejad (2018), many couples engage in online infidelity due to various reasons. Firstly, some of these individuals feel unappreciated by their partners who are addicted to mobile devices. Subsequently, they too join various sites and interact with other people as a way of seeking companionship.

Secondly, many people use mobile devices as a way of escaping face-to-face interactions with their spouses (Chattopadhyay et al., 2020). These individuals contact other people online as a way of seeking better or more exciting companions rather than interacting with their loved ones. Thirdly, some spouses suspect their counterparts, and often find evidence to substantiate their suspicions, while in other instances, evidence is never found (Honari, 2017). However, regardless of these outcomes, the suspicious partner may seek alternative company online, and thus engage in infidelity as a form of revenge against their spouses. Unfortunately, when couples feel threatened by their partners' activities, they become less committed to the relationship.

 In other instances, social media offers an easier way of meeting other people who seem better than their spouses. For example, Kirimi (2019) states that mobile phone use in Kenya has resulted in increased cases of infidelity and divorces in the country. He argues that married individuals can use various tools on their phones to organize meet-ups easily and indulge in infidelity. These claims prove that mobile device users can affect marital commitment since the devices offer an easy way of finding alternatives from their current marriages. It is therefore agreeable that mobile devices have affected the commitment of most couples due to either the trust issues or due to the ease of obtaining alternatives to a dissatisfying marital relationships (Koike et al., 2020).

## 2.3 Social media use and the level of marital satisfaction

WhatsApp, Facebook, LinkedIn, Instagram, Twitter, Snapchat, Reddit and Myspace are examples of the social media (Abbasi, 2019a). Social media addiction is a sort of internet addiction in which people have no control over their internet use and end up spending excessive time on social media (Hou et al., 2019). The insatiable need to log

on to social media, as well as investing time and effort to social media, has a negative impact on other areas of life. Excessive usage of social networking sites has been known to have negative consequences for users (Abbasi, 2019a).

Globally, though many studies have been conducted on the impact of social media on mental health, very few studies concentrate on effects of marital satisfaction (Abbasi, 2018; Abdul & Aziz, 2018a; Hertlein & Hawkins, 2015a; Kimoto, 2016a; Underwood & Findlay, 2004). Oliveira conducted a research in 2016 that examined the existence and use of mobile devices, and couple relationship satisfaction. According to the findings of her study, relationship satisfaction was shown to be negatively related to mobile device usage whenever couples are together. Further, both conflict and interference over device usage moderated the association between a couple's mobile device usage and happiness. Additionally, physical affection was shown to be connected to partner mobile device usage (Oliveira, 2016a). According to Christensen (2018), the more time people spend surfing online, the more the likelihood of suffering negative emotional influence that impacts negatively on the well-being and quality of a relationship. Consequently, scholars need to explore the various implications of mobile device use in marriages. Handschuh et al. (2019) posit that new technologies have impacted on intimate relations between partners owing to tools such as sexting. Such practices as sexting can significantly harm the level of marital satisfaction, especially when the one of the couples realizes what the other has been doing.

In Malaysia, a study by Gull et al. (2019) focused on the effect of social networking on married peoples' behaviour. The study had sampled 287 respondents from the Middle East and noted that many people are addicted to social media today, and this harms their

relationships. Similarly, a study by Abdul Aziz (2018a) surveyed 300 Malaysian women to determine the use of the internet and time spent online in the social media and how this affected intimacy in marital satisfaction. Further, Gull et al. (2019) presented social media as a two-sided coin, noting that it can enhance social support on one hand, while on the other, it arouses conflicts and negative feelings of inferiority and neglect among married couples. This happens especially when one couple busies themselves on social media, and the other partner feels left out. The study by Christensen (2018) had similar findings, noting that time on the social media can reduce the level of marital satisfaction.

Coyne et al. (2012), on the other hand, found out that themes of partner surveillance, jealousy in relationships, and hiding profiles on social media significantly affected relationships. Strained marital relationships results to loneliness and a lack of trust among the partners, which eventually reduces the level of couple satisfaction. While the use of social media, especially posting of offensive messages, was a cause of marital conflict. Most studies do not explain any gender differences in frequency of postings as well as their effect on the level of marital satisfaction. Though this area is not of interest in this study, the findings of this study can inform a couple on therapy sessions (Jomy, 2019). While social media is widely used in different countries, their study raises many questions related to the level of marital satisfaction in other regions since its scope was wide, that is; the whole Middle East countries. Such a wide scope made his findings less objective (Christensen 2018). Their study focused on a large area in the Middle East, yet a small sample was used; thereby raising questions of generalizability of the results (Juhasz & Bradford, 2016).

In Afghanistan, Abbasi and others studied 242 females and 123 males who used social network sites. Their findings showed that the age of the respondent was related to the specific social media use and the likelihood of infidelity (Abbasi & Dibble, 2021). However, the study was limited by the methodology used, since a tiny sample size had been employed. Ngwainmbi (2017) studied the impact of online behaviours on committed relationships with regard to couples that own Black Berry mobile phones. Findings indicated that spouses felt distracted by their partners who spent time online. Whilst the conclusions of their study provide impetus to this study, their argument on the use of mobile phone, specifically the Black Berry, is biased since the phone one uses online does not control the effect of online social media, compared to using different mobile phone models (Czechowsky, 2009). However, time spent on Facebook was found to harm relationships, thereby leading to breakups, divorces, and cheating (Abbasi, 2019b). Twitter was also linked to adverse effects, though posting selfies on Instagram had more impact on marital conflict (Wathigo, 2019). Further, according to Afolaranmi (2020), Facebook use was associated with discontent, trouble and low quality in spousal life. Some couples would post sexting posts, flirted, and fell in love with not well-known partners; thus increasing the level of infidelity behaviours. Their study asserted that Facebook increases the level of unfaithfulness since once a partner posts attractive photos, they receive private messages, likes and comments taken as infidelity (Durães et al., 2020).

In earlier years, it was a taboo for most African communities to talk about sexual matters openly (Asongu & Odhiambo, 2021). Therefore, the introduction of technology in these regions had enabled couples, regardless of their geographic location, to become intimate

through sex chats, intimate photos, and videos. On the other hand, mobile devices enable individuals to be intimate with other people other than their spouses (Abbasi & Alghamdi, 2019). Further, people can access explicit content on their devices which results to behaviours such as masturbation. These behaviours affect the ability of the affected individuals to become intimate with their spouses since they are either busy with other people online, or they have their sexual drive affected through masturbation (Handschuh et al., 2019). This is a significant factor that can be detrimental to the level of marital satisfaction among couples due to feelings of being sexually inconvenienced.

In Kenya, Kimeto (2016) focused on the positive influence of social sites on marital success in Langata constituency in Nairobi County. The study used stratified random sampling to select a sample of 30 males and 30 females who were married. Using correlation design, the study found that more female than male respondents spent more time online. This finding was found similar to other further studies by Abbasi (2019b, 2019b); and Volungis et al. (2020). However, their study added that feelings of jealousy, loneliness, emotional distance, and suspicion were high when a married partner strays in social networking sites. These findings corroborated with the argument by Kimeto (2016) that found out that social media has got pros and cons which can enhance or destroy a marital relationship. They added that couples should be keen on the behaviour that erode trust and arouse jealousy. However, a good marriage is works on the quality that those involved may obtain, and therefore the two spouses must therefore be intentional and committed to making their marriage work without allowing much influence on the social media (Volungis et al., 2020). Kiogora (2018) found out that emotional well-being mediated the link between time spent online and the quality of the user's relationships,

implying that the more the time an individual spent on networking sites, the more their emotional well-being diminished, causing a deterioration of their relationship (Christensen, 2018).

## 2.4 Influence of Mobile games on the Level of marital satisfaction

Gaming has been defined as the act of playing games using joysticks, smartphones, or any other mobile device games (Ahlstrom, 2019). Mobile gaming refers to the use of devices such as smartphones for gaming purposes. An example of gaming is Massively Multiplayer Online Role-Playing Games [MMORPGs] (Ahlstrom, 2019). Gaming can be beneficial in improving psychomotor and sensory skills, among others (Koike et al., 2020). However, excessive use can lead to addiction and get out of hand. Married couples require spending quality time together. However, such quality time together is spoilt by the time spent in gaming where a couple is involved. Addictive mobile gaming has also been referred to as an internet gaming disorder that can harm the social life of an individual (Andreassen et al., 2016).

There are several online support groups for "gaming widows" who believe their spousal connection has been replaced by time spent playing MMORPGs (Ahlstrom et al., 2021). In the twenty-first century, the enormous genre of computer gaming known as MMORPG is very popular. Further, Video games have been related to increased divorce rates among Americans (Wallace, 2019). The amount of time spent gaming, as well as the substance of the games, can have several effects on married couples (Coyne et al., 2012; Wallace, 2019). Too much time spent playing video games may replace other activities important to married individuals (Redmond, 2010). For instance, if a spouse spends a substantial amount of time playing video games rather than with their partners, they may feel

forsaken (Hertlein & Hawkins, 2015a). Therefore, gaming can significantly alter the life of a gamer due to time spent gaming, which withdraws a couple's time together. Further, the physical health life of a gamer may be affected by addiction due to lack of time to exercise, which may lead to diseases that can affect the couple's level of marital satisfaction(Ahlstrom, 2019).

According to a recent poll where one thousand twelve hundred people participated in a research by the Entertainment Software Association (ESA), 68 per cent of households in the United States (US) play video games (ESA, 2009). The MMORPG, a depot of online multiplayer, role-playing and free games had 1,120,491 subscribers as at September 2009. Despite the popular belief that home gamers are mostly youths and teenagers, ESA (2009) discovered that the most dominant age of an American gamer is 35, while that of a video consumer was 39 years, and had been gaming for 12 years. Therefore, gaming appeals to people of all ages and backgrounds. Women experience the fastest absorbance rate to gaming industry, and comprise about 40% of the total gamers. Moreover, ESA clarifies that an estimated 25% of adults play video games, which is an increase of nine per cent from the previous decade (ESA, 2009). Despite the fact that little has been explored on the video gaming, Mitchell (1985) discovered that video gaming brought families closer together.

Studies conducted in the United States, have found that gaming has a favourable impact on marital satisfaction. However, according to a Malaysian study, internet gaming might cause problems for spouses when it is only one of the partners who engages in it. According to Smith's (2019), the recurrence of either violent or nonviolent video game among couple predict poor partner attachment. Both the males and the females who

watch non-violent games predicted better attachment behaviours (Abdul & Aziz, 2018a). Both violent and nonviolent gaming posed some degree of perception towards a partner; a case which brought chaos in a relationship, leading to weaker connective behaviours. The female's negative perception of video games impacted both she and the spouse, while the male's perception solely influenced their behaviour (Smith, 2019). This presents a situation where one couple enjoys gaming, while the other couple is a victim or a subject of the negative consequences of gaming. This implies that males may want to practice the violent scenes absorbed from the gaming world, thus harming their partners physically. This lowers the level of marital satisfaction.

The time spent gaming may obviate critical household tasks, including housework, yard maintenance and child care. Such may cause indignation in the non-gaming spouse, thereby leading to conflicts over social media, and possibly increased hostility in the relationship (Coyne et al., 2012; Schneider et al., 2017; Smith, 2019). Further, the content of a video game, particularly when it contains violent content, may be linked to higher relationship troubles. According to the General Aggressiveness Model (Anderson & Bushman, 2020), violent video games correlate to pugnacity in relationships, especially if the material is frustrating or violent (Coyne et al., 2012). Exposure to such stirs up physiological response, anger and violent impulses in the short term, and it may contribute to relationship issues, manifest in hostile conduct. Arguments are likely to grow if either of the spouses fails to approve of the video game content, particularly if it contains explicit depictions of violence or sex (Schneider et al., 2017; Wallace, 2019).

Further, any content that may not necessary be sent through any of the aforementioned priming methods; or rejection of specific game material may also trigger some effect. If

the game allows for potentially dangerous interpersonal ties, it may have negative consequences on relationships (Hertlein & Hawkins, 2015a). If males get emotionally entangled with the opposite gender who they have met in the game, their marital cohesiveness may be affected. This new kind of content impact that is not expressly written is yet to be permitted. Both the volume and the substance of gaming may have separate impacts on players. This phenomenon is the subject of the present research. To our knowledge, no studies have looked at how video games affect conflict or aggressiveness in intimate relationships (Hertlein & Hawkins, 2015a; Redmond, 2010; Smith, 2019).

Wallace (2019) investigated whether video gaming was associated with interpersonal conflict, using a reasonably large sample of heterosexual couples in China, while Coyne et al. (2012) hypothesizes that much entanglement to gaming would be linked to increasing media disagreements, which would lead to more aggression in marriage relationships.

Conflict arises from physical harm as a result of couples' destructive behaviours learned in the game. When the couple feels left out by their gaming partner, they also become resentful as they seek alternatives that fulfil them (Ahlstrom, 2019). This results in couples becoming reluctant in fulfilling their roles and duties in marriage, and thus causing conflict. Consequently, gaming ends up harming communication between couples, much as it augments conflict between couples, and leads to reduced levels of marital satisfaction (Coyne et al., 2018).

Andreassen et al. (2016) conducted a cross-sectional research on the link between addictive video game usage and symptoms of mental diseases. The study targeted 23,533 participants aged between 16 and 88 years. The study demonstrated strong relationships between addictive video games and comorbid psychiatry disorders. Interestingly, the study found that men were more associated with video games, while females had a high likelihood of social media use (Andreassen et al., 2016; Jomy et al., 2019; Loton, 2014). However, this study did not concentrate on the relationship between video gaming with marital satisfaction, nor its effects either. Therefore, this is part of the literature gap that this study seeks to fill.

Marital satisfaction is meant to create companionship and a place for holistic growth of both partners. An ideal marital health condition is created by two couples working out their marriage through consistent communication and sharing of ideas (Ahlstrom, 2019). However, if duration and regularity of play are not monitored, playing online games can become a distraction. Hertlein and Hawkins (2015) examined the impact of internet gaming on offline married individuals' relationships. They stated that, although the obstacles associated with online gaming continue to develop, couples suffering from relationship troubles connected during gaming sessions (Gullet al., 2019b). They employed a hermeneutic research design to examine the consequences of online gaming to a couple. Their explored over 18 publications about online gaming and concluded that gaming may both enhance and interfere with a couple's lives. However, their research failed to prove how gaming influenced levels of marital satisfaction (Andreassen et al., 2016; Hertlein & Hawkins, 2015b; Smith, n.d.).

Though there is little research on the link between video gaming and marital pleasure, some findings suggest that internet usage and interpersonal interactions are negatively correlated (Abbasi, 2019b; Aziz et al., 2018b; Volungis et al., 2020). Some studies have queried gamers about their offline romantic attachments and interactions (Abbasi, 2019b; Andreassen et al., 2016; Hertlein & Hawkins, 2015b; Loton, 2014; Smith, n.d.). In comparison to light players and non-players, intimate online gamers, including those who spent 20 hours per week gaming, indicated a worse quality of interpersonal interactions (Hertlein & Hawkins, 2015). However, approximately half of these partners thought that playing MMORPGs harmed their relationships with non-gaming partners (Andreassen et al., 2016). The reasoning is nevertheless contested by the fact that the data collecting techniques used may be biased because if the majority of people understood the reasons for participating in the internet, they would not choose to participate in the study (Söylemez, 2017).

In Africa, gaming has increasingly become part of life. There lies a gap in the literature that explore disturbances related to mental disorders. In Africa, there is a lack of data that links gaming and the level of marital satisfaction. Sosso et al. (2020) conducted a study to determine the incidence of sleep problems, excessive sleepiness, dread, and sadness among individuals participating in gaming activities in Africa. Focusing on the participants' scenarios, non-unbalanced, involved, problematic, and addicted forms of gamers were evident The study used 10,566 people from different multilevel income countries like Rwanda, Gabon, Cameroon, Nigeria, Morocco, Tunisia, Senegal, Ivory Coast and South Africa who completed online surveys covering gaming aspects such as insomnia, drowsiness, fear, depression and gambling addiction. The findings indicated

that 88.64% of players were males 30% dependent, 30% were problematic, 8% employed, and 32% were not interrupted. It was significant that insomnia, daily drowsiness, and anxiety affected gamers. The study concentrated on video gaming and health concerns, but failed to show any relationship between gaming and marital satisfaction. The study was also biased to a few African countries, and their results can only be generalized to other parts of Africa with caution (Clark, 2006).

Further, a comparative study by Aziz et al. (2018) compared males' to females' utilization of the internet recreationally. Unlike Aziz et al., De-Sola Gutiérrez et al. (2016a) discovered positive implications that came with surfing the internet and even getting involved in recreational activities which were, compassionate when not overdone. However, higher levels of engagement were reported to cause decreased psychosocial well-being, breakups, and irresponsibility among the engagers (Andreassen et al., 2016; Hertlein & Hawkins, 2015b).

According to Hertlein and Hawkins (2015), online video gaming complicated marital relationships in many ways; namely, fantasizing, intimacy disruption, and addiction. Depending on the incentives for gaming, fantasy in gaming can be beneficial to a relationship; nevertheless, internet gaming may impede intimacy. For instance, lodging was discovered to be among the possible vulnerabilities associated with too much entanglement to gaming activities among spouses (Oliveira, n.d.). Additionally, the restrained individual took advantage of this to escape daily life's frustrations. Couples may experience difficulties when accommodations are done selfishly by avoiding their partners through spending time in other engagements rather than with them. (Aziz et al., 2018b). The ability to personalize one's character within the virtual environment of an

MMORPG exhibits accommodation as well. Gender, looks, personality, function, and talents are all options for players when creating their online characters. This is important for couples to grasp because some research implies that the computer helps the real vs ideal self" (Hertlein & Sendak, 2007, p. 4). The therapist ought to employ creativity when dealing with cases from couples for successful probing of the root cause of the situation underlying (Hertlein & Hawkins, 2015b). This approach is anticipated to foster greater empathy and a commitment to work together among spouses.

In Kenya, the video gaming industry is rapidly becoming popular. Indeed, this industry was valued at 83 million US dollars in 2018; and it is expected to grow to 153 million US dollars by 2023 (Kimemia, 2016). There is limited literature expounding on the implications of video gaming on the level of marital satisfaction in Kenya. Different inquiries, however show that gaming leads to intimacy disruption As noted earlier, knowing a gamer's intent for gaming is fundamental to therapists in helping them to figure out why gaming undertakings happen among couples (Aziz et al., 2018b). If for instance one game primarily seeks cohesion from unseen friends, such motivation is likely to ruin the intimate relationship with the partner; a fact that will call for treatment. The motivations for forsaking one's relationship are nevertheless, absent from this literature (Abbasi, 2019b). If a partner, for example, utilizes gaming to keep themselves busy from having time with the family, the probing therapist, having realized the intent, should undertake the best correction course for the victim (Andreassen et al., 2016). As a result, it is critical that a therapist understands why and what excites the gamer and also the non-participative partner (Hertlein & Hawkins, 2015b). The therapist needs to study the habits that contribute to marital problems whenever couples engage in gaming

together, in spite of the differences that exist between them. Possibly, there could be a likelihood of a conflict within the games played; with the people one plays with, and with the features of the players.

Once one becomes addicted to video games, the situation will get worse (Coyne, 2020). Although gaming does not indicate addiction, five of the researches evaluated (Aanchal, n.d.; Andreassen et al., 2016; De-Sola Gutiérrez et al., 2016b; Jomy et al., 2019; Loton, 2014) focused on the chaotic and addictive behaviour for gamers. This corroborated findings indicating that the non-gaming partner is often perceived as unattended to, and neglected by the other due to the developed addiction to the virtual friends he/she interacts with online (Christensen, n.d.; Czechowsky, 2009). While one may agree that they spend various amounts of time playing, they may have little idea of the effect of their gaming to their relationship. Trying to figure out if your gaming activity is an addiction can lead to arguments between you and your partner (Loton, 2014). The goal of this study is to determine if there is a link between video gaming and marital pleasure.

**2.5 Mobile phone calls influence the level of marital satisfaction**

Globally, mobile devices have become familiar to modern-day individuals who use them for various functions, including entertainment (Hoffmann, 2017). Hoffmann explains that in earlier years, people relied on other forms of communication such as postal letters, faxes, and wired calls, but these methods were usually slow and sometimes inapplicable in some instances. However, technological advancements have resulted to the development of devices such as smartphones that are cheap and fast compared to earlier inventions (Jomy et al., 2019).

Mobile devices have made communication easy and cheap compared to traditional methods (Jin, 2017). Jin argues that modern-day smartphones have many features that can be utilized to improve quality. Cizmeci (2017) observes that although modern mobile devices can help to improve marriages, their use also result to various challenges like mobile device addiction. As highlighted by Njoh (2018), there is limited and often contradicting research findings that explain how mobile devices affect the level of satisfaction among couples. Some sources support mobile device use in relationships, while others argue that face-to-face interactions are more applicable.

Various mobile device capabilities are essential in modern-day couples since they aid effective communication. Griggs (2018) observes that globalization has changed how some couples interact. He explains that in the current world, many couples spend less time around each other, and in some instances, they stay separated for a long durations of time due to business or other activities. Arguably, poor communication may affect the quality of marriages and other forms of relationships (Wang et al., 2017). Therefore, Gutzmann (2018) proposes that mobile devices and social media can be utilized to bridge this communication gap and strengthen relationships. Voice communications, text messaging, and online forums are the most difficult applications, according to Roberts et al. (2019). Male and female disparities are dependent on usable capacity rather than utilization (Zhang et al., 2018).

Females devote considerable time on social media apps than males; thus exhibiting behaviour that is more focused on heightened individual interactions, whilst the males utilize their time reasonably and instrumentally (Servies, n.d.). Whereas for females the mobile device boosts interactions and plays an important role, for males, the use of

mobile devices is a more diverse (Juhasz & Bradford, 2016b). This is in contrast to internet use where males are more likely to engage in harmful conduct online. Notably, mobile phone abuse is a response to disturbed women who suffer illicit behaviour from men intensively surfing the internet (Volungis et al., 2020).

In a poll where 197 college students were interviewed on the link between cell phone use and relationship uncertainty, love and commitment; and attachment styles, De-Sola Gutiérrez et al. (2016) found out that more mobile voice calls with a romantic partner were linked to decreased relationship insecurity and loyalty. Further, continued refrain diminished the ability to use voice communication, and an interaction between evasion and stress on voice call utilization. Excessive mobile device use and internet misuse have been connected to sleep disruption, anxiety, stress and depression (Jomy et al., 2019). With few or no studies on the internet or video games, a rising corpus of research has stressed addictions today covering online, video games, and mobile phone usage. According to this viewpoint, mobile devices provide activities that can lead to their inappropriate usage (Jin & Pea, 2010). There is evidence that the mobile device, with a wide range of apps and functions, is more likely to be abused than a traditional mobile device (Jomy et al., 2019).

While there is no study done on the association between mobile device use and marital satisfaction, studies on general mobile device use in married partnerships have been conducted. According to Pew Internet (2008), 70% of married American couples who own mobile devices would contact each other at least once per day (over the phone) to check in or chat (Borrelli, 2021.) Jomy et al., (2019) did a cross-sectional study in Faridabad residential neighbourhood to investigate the influence of mobile phone use on

marriage happiness and family. They used a quantitative research approach, selecting 160 individuals from Faridabad area using a non-probability convenience sample technique. The mobile device addiction scale (SAS-SV) was used to assess the relationship between the study constructs, and structured rating scales were used to configure the implications mobile phone posed to a couple's marital quality (Abdekhodaie, 2021). According to their findings, a significant number of people in marriage were found addicted to cell phones. Moreover, gender was an important factor that informed the extent of phone addiction in couples' marital life (Wang et al., 2017).

Jo Hemmings, a British behavioural psychologist and relationship coach, claims that phubbing leads to resentment in relationships. Many people feel ignored as a result of their spouse's phone or tablet addiction (Wang et al., 2017). The 2017 report envisioned that neglect consequently grew to resentment, resulting to conflicts and a complete breakdown of communication. According to Roberts and David, who were quoted saying that their lives had changed drastically under the influence of mobile device consumption, phubbing can lead to a decline in one of the most essential relationships may be in as adults; particularly with our life partner (Alizadeh et al., 2019). Evidently, phubbing reduces marital satisfaction by virtue of it being a cause for disagreement over phone use. Researchers have discovered that phubbing impacted a partner's mood and life satisfaction via diminishing marital satisfaction.

Miller-Ott and Kelly (2015) looked into the stress accompanied by continuous calls and communication from unlimited friends while a couple is together. The study found out that many romantic partners were found to be angered by suspicious calls by one of the partners while together (Lenhart & Duggan, 2014). Participants of the focus group

discussions expressed dissatisfaction when mobile phone abuse appeared to be inappropriate due to the timing or the volume of use. However, many people, particularly those who are new to a relationship said they were hesitant to tell their spouse they need to limit their phone use.

According to Juhasz and Bradford (2016), when couples cannot agree on what constitutes an appropriate intent in social interactions via cell phones, conflicts might arise (Duran et al., 2011). Many partners naturally prefer to construct mutually agreed statements of agreements to keep off the undesirable mobile use. These behaviours are referred to as "managing the volume" by Baron (2008); while other scholars label it "creating norms" (Duran et al., 2011; Miller-Ott, Kelly, & Duran, 2012). The norms set to manage cell phone use in a relationship are referred to as role expectations in interaction.

Addiction, according to De-Sola Gutiérrez et al. (2016a); Volungis et al. (2020), comprises uncontrollable use, mood swings, tolerance, abstinence, personal injury or environmental issues, as well as a proclivity to relapse. Addiction is defined as the ability for one to lose control over irritating conduct, irrespective of negative consequences associated with it (Juhasz & Bradford 2016). People's increased access to and use of mobile phones has created new diseases, such as "Nomophobia" (No-Mobile- Phobia). Also known as "FOMO," or "Fear of Missing Out," most individuals are afraid of being without a mobile device, disconnected, or without access to the internet. There's also "Textaphrenia" and "Ringxiety," where couples have the erroneous impression that they've received a text message or a phone call, causing them to continuously check their devices. "Textiety," is the fear of receiving and reacting to text messages in a timely manner (Jomy et al., 2019). These fears may lead to an increase in the use of mobile

phones even when the spouses' partners require attention. The deprivation of this attention may mean disrespect, leading to a feeling of being demeaned. The continuation of this behaviour is a reason for low level of marital satisfaction.

According to Juhasz and Bradford (2016), there are two types of expectations for mobile phone use: regulative and constitutive. Regulative expectations decide whether or not a particular behaviour is appropriate in a specific context. Miller-Ott and Kelly (2015), for example, looked at focus group conversations about whether or not cell phone communication with "others" is appropriate when a couple is together. "No phones at the table," or "it is okay to text if you're just hanging out," were frequent responses by many couples. These standards ensure full attention during formal conversations, but which allow for selective attention during informal interactions, are excellent examples of what appears to be a prevalent regulative role assumed by many spouses. Couples are most likely to have regulatory role expectations (Duran et al., 2011). However, when some of these rules are applied, they might imply a lack of independence and self-control, which may raise an urge for self-expression through withdrawal behaviours. This will eventually plunge the level of marital satisfaction. However, "sending x number of SMS every day," for example, is a defined by constitutive norm.

Chinese scientists carried out a study on 243 married individuals and established that partner phubbing correlated to increased feelings of depression since it was linked to reduced relationship satisfaction. When a text, email, or other task interrupts a conversation, dinner, or romantic moment, the implied message is "what I'm doing on my phone right now is more essential than you"; "I'm more interested in my phone than you"; or, in some situations, "you're not worthy of my attention." Because the other spouse is

more likely to face rejection, taking to internet and the subsequent addiction may have a negative impact on their mental health.

Females show higher levels of dependency and harmful internet usage than males in almost all the studies (De-Sola Gutiérrez et al., 2016a; Jomy et al., 2019; Juhasz & Bradford, 2016b; Servies, n.d.). Female cellphone use is usually associated with sociability, interpersonal interactions, establishment and maintenance of contacts; and indirect communication, with texting and instant messaging being the most commonly utilized applications (Volungis et al., 2020). Further, a mobile device can be used to avoid an unpleasant mood, which can lead to restless and uneasy conduct, as well as problems with self-control and expenditure (Jomy et al., 2019). Males use their mobile phones for texts, voice calls, and gaming apps at the same time, with men being more likely than females to use their phones in dangerous situations (Juhasz & Bradford, 2016b).

In Africa, Asongu et al. (2018) observe that mobile device use may potentially affect couples negatively. They argue that many individuals have become attached to their mobile devices as the primary source of entertainment, information, and communication. Konok et al. (2016) claim that some people rely on their mobile devices for many uses, including companionship. These individuals are capable of starting and maintaining relationships through mobile devices, but they have difficulties communicating with the individuals physically. It is a common scenario in modern African societies to see individuals multitasking by engaging in physical conversations while on mobile device interactions.

People in various parts of the world, including Africa, have access to mobile devices. Adzaho et al. (2020) state that many individuals in Africa have become addicted to social media and other mobile device applications. These observations are supported by Kirimi (2019) who explains that social media use has affected many families in Kenya, and has resulted to high divorce rates. According to Kirimi (2019), many divorcees alleged that their spouses were too engrossed in their phones and social media, such that intimacy was impossible or less satisfying. Individuals addicted to their phones often ignore their partners or multitask in using mobile devices and at the same time having a conversation with their spouses. Kadylak et al. (2018) claim that individuals who continue using mobile device during face-to-face interactions, pay less attention to the conversation as well as to the person they are speaking with. In any marriage, the partners need to pay close attention to one another so as to develop intimacy and better connections. Therefore, it is arguable that increased mobile device use negatively affects the intimacy of various couples.

Relationship maintenance has repeatedly appeared as the leading cause for most text messages and phone conversations, though mobile phones may also be used for a number of other functions (Juhasz & Bradford, 2016a). According to research that categorizes mobile phone conversations depending on the sender's intention, half to two-thirds of all text messages are designed to maintain friendships, romances, and other social relationships (Faulkner & Culwin, 2005; Thurlow, 2003). Texting is the most popular way for people to spend time with their significant other, according to a poll by Pew (Lenhart, Anderson, & Smith, 2015). Mobile phone communication is frequent in love relationships of middle-aged couples, not simply among young users (Coyne et al. 2011;

Subrahmanyam & Greenfield, 2008). Moreover, 21% of married people say that internet communication or text messaging has made them feel closer to their partner (Lenhart & Duggan, 2014).

In Kenya, Wyche and Olson (2018) observe that many individuals own and use mobile phones to communicate with their friends and family members. These scholars also argue that many married individuals communicated through mobile phones rather than face-to-face conversations. Communication through mobile phones affects many couples negatively due to two main reasons. Firstly, good communication between partners relies on interpreting verbal and non-verbal cues to understand each other and to connect emotionally. Therefore, when these couples multitask between their mobile devices while they communicate with each other, some messages may be missed or misinterpreted, resulting to negative outcomes.

Secondly, David and Roberts (2017) state that mobile devices offer a quick escape from relationship issues. Many mobile devices have games and other exciting applications that can be used as a distraction from the physical world. Some couples avoid dealing with their relationship issues and turn to their mobile devices for entertainment. Therefore, Du Plooy and De Beer (2018) suggest that all couples need to exercise good communication skills and problem-solving capabilities so as to solve their problems and increase marital satisfaction. According to this observation, it is arguable that couples who are more attached to their mobile devices have poor communication skills and lower marital satisfaction rates.

Many people marry for various reasons, including sharing responsibilities or working towards similar objectives. However, most people marry to have a life partner with whom

they can be intimate. Hagey et al. (2018) define intimacy as spiritual, emotional, intellectual, or physical closeness between an individual and their spouse. These scholars further explain that marriages without intimacy are likely to fall apart; thus, intimacy is an essential attribute for successful marriages. However, although Hagey et al. (2018) provide an applicable rationale for defining intimacy, in some instances, different individuals have varying views. For example, in a study conducted by Schoenfeld et al. (2017), the researchers concluded that husbands and wives have different perceptions of what intimacy is. They observed that for most men, intimacy entailed sexual interactions, while women claimed that intimacy entailed both sexual and emotional connections. Some women also argued that sexual satisfaction was lower if the partners lacked emotional connection that can be improved through face-to-face communication.

In a study by Schoenfeld et al. (2017), many individuals, including men, agreed that intimacy levels were lower when the spouses failed to pay attention to each other. These observations mean that mobile device use can result to lower intimacy levels in marriages. Consequently, some marriages failed due to these intimacy problems associated with mobile device use.

However, mobile devices have improved many areas of society, including communication. As such, some scientists argue that mobile devices can be used to maintain intimacy in marriages (Muntean 2019). According to Muntean, many modern-day marriages are composed of working individuals who spend a lot of time away from each other, and who have little time for physical interactions. In some cases, these individuals become emotionally apart, and this may affect their marriage. Therefore, mobile phones offer a practical alternative that may be used to maintain intimacy

between these partners. Supriani, and Iqbal (2018) observe that many people own devices that can capture good photos, connect to the internet, and can support many applications. In recent years, applications such as WhatsApp and Facebook have become synonymous with many mobile device users worldwide. Therefore, Supriani and Iqbal (2018) suggest that these applications be used to improve intimacy between partners. In a research, selected respondents were expected to rate the level of intimacy they shared with their spouses on a Likert scale. The respondents were also expected to respond to open-ended questions on how they used technology to improve their intimacy. Most of the respondents agreed that they used mobile devices for various activities, such as sexting which is a common trend among youths and adults alike. Generally, sexting occurs when individuals exchange sexually explicit media such as photographs, videos, and messages through mobile devices. Barrense-Dias et al. (2017) conducted a study to determine the prevalence of sexting in young couples. According to this study, over 60% of the respondents agreed that sexting was a necessary tool for intimacy. The respondents claimed that it was possible to be intimate with their partners even when they were physically apart; thus, mobile devices are influential in maintaining couple intimacy.

Secondly, mobile devices and the internet have eased access to pornography and other explicit content. Kohut et al. (2017) claimed that many spouses watch pornographic content together or separately. These couples use this material as a source of sexual knowledge. Another research conducted by Newsroom and Harris (2016) concludes that pornographic material is an essential tool to improve intimacy. Many respondents argued that they used pornography to improve their sex life through new styles and approaches. Although this evidence suggests that mobile devices and pornography should be

encouraged as a way of maintaining intimacy, these tools may also result in negative implications. As highlighted by Kadiani et al. (2017), in many instances, excessive use of pornography may result in addiction. They further claim that many men become addicted to pornography and sex, which contributes to marital violence, and which affects emotional connections with their partners. Additionally, pornographic materials may lead to other vices such as masturbation or infidelity. When individuals masturbate or cheat on their partners, they reduce the desire to have physical interactions with their spouses, and it affects their marital intimacy (Miller et al., 2019). Therefore, mobile device use may affect intimacy between spouses.

Healthy partnerships need good communication to thrive. The tone of voice and body language are crucial aspects of communication that help to improve communication (Choi et al. 2005). As a result, mobile phones may appear to be inadequate for relationship maintenance since they typically lack these crucial communication characteristics. The receiver of a mobile message is often unable to see the sender's facial and bodily clues, or hear the sender's tone of voice, which are both important components of communicating (Miller, 2012). Despite these flaws, research shows that cell phone use frequently promotes authentic social bonds (Igarashi et al. 2005; Reid & Reid, 2004; Tulane & Beckert, 2013). Addiction to mobile phones, and withdrawal from the mobile network can lead to increased anger, stress, despair, irritability, and restlessness; all of which can disrupt psychological equilibrium, interpersonal relationships, and family life (Jomy et al., 2019).

## 2.6 Effect of Marriage Characteristics on Marital Satisfaction

Marriage is a lifelong commitment between husband and wife. It is intended to achieve social, psychological, biological and religious goals. Alfons and Jose (2007), marriage is a unique partnership between two people of different sexes that is founded on mutual rights and duties. The relationship is long-lasting. Marriage necessitates societal acceptance. It is not valid until the connection between the man and the women has societal acceptability (Gottman & Notarius, 2002). Marriage creates a family. The family contributes provision for child procreation and upbringing. Marriage binds husband and wife to joint duties. The pair carries out their mutual commitments in accordance with norms or rules. Marriage is always preceded by a civil or religious ceremony. This event validates marriage. Even though modern marriages are performed in courts, some religious or customary traditions are still required (Hirschberger & colleagues, 2009). Indeed, marriage governs sexual relationships in accordance with established conventions and regulations. It is symbolized by a ring, vermillion, special robes, a defined sign in front of the home, or several decorations.

Flexibility is an important aspect of marriage. In a good marriage, both couples prioritize and compromise for one another, since marriage is about making each other happy, and meeting each other's wants. Only when this compromise does not seem like a load is marriage considered a success (Hirschberger et al., 2009).

In this study, the researcher examines how mobile device use affects the level of marital satisfaction using moderating variables such as the length of marriage, the education level of the couples, the socio-economic status of the couple, and the age of the couple by the time of marriage.

## 2.6.1 Length of Marriage

The concept of length of marriage has been explored in numerous studies that seek to establish whether it has any effect on marital satisfaction, and whether married people experience either positive or negative effects of mobile device use. Studies that have been conducted in the last half-century indicated that the level of marital satisfaction was highest at the point of getting married, but begins to decline from that period forward (Wallin & Burgess, 1953; Vaillant & Vaillant, 1993). According to Jose and Alfons (2007), the length of marriage has a substantial impact on marital satisfaction. The study established that the level of marital satisfaction for married couples decreased over the course of fifteen years. Attachment security was linked to higher marital happiness, but it did not protect against reduction of marital satisfaction with time (Hirschberger et al., 2009). The only significant indicator of marriage breakup was husbands' lower initial degree of marital satisfaction, which was tested during the first child's transfer to school (Hirschberger et al., 2009). As time goes by, married couples eventually become parents, and this affects the level of marital satisfaction in the later years of their marriage (Hirschberger et al., 2009). Recent studies have proven that the level of satisfaction significantly increases when children leave home on either becoming independent or to institutions of learning (Gottman & Notarius, 2002). This usually occurs during the later years of marriage.

Marriage, just like the life of human beings, goes through changes, some of which have either a positive or a negative influence on the lives of the marriage partners. There are different issues that affect the marital satisfaction of couples with time. This includes their age which is dependent on the length of time that a couple has been married,

achievement of goals in life, and children, among others. The quality of marriage among couples is considered by psychologists as a direct determinant of the quality of an individual's life. It has a direct influence on the physical and mental health of a married people. A study conducted by Umberson et al. (2005) investigated the effect of length of marriage on the marital satisfaction of couples, found out that there were few marriages that lasted till old age. This is attributable to divorce after the couple loses the need to stay married.

Studies that have been concluded in the past found out that the birth of children was a factor that affected the level of marital satisfaction. According to Hirschberger et al. (2009), the level of marital satisfaction of couples with time found out that the level of marital satisfaction declined slowly over a period of fifteen years following the birth of the couple's first child. In most cases, after the birth of the first child, most married couples experience huge changes in their lives, with most of their attention being directed towards the happiness and satisfaction of their children because the needs of the other spouse has been neglected (Kowal et al., 2021). The transition into parenthood brings about drastic changes to the lives of a married couple, since the family undergoes a change from constituting two members to adding another human being who is wholly dependent on them in everything (Kowal et al., 2021). The stress that comes with parents raising the first child has significant challenges on the lives of married couples, which can reduce the level of marital satisfaction of the parents (Kowal et al., 2021). One of the negative effects of raising children, and which has a significant impact on the level of marital satisfaction of couples is the exhaustion that comes with taking care of children, that reduces time spent with each other (Hirschberger et al.,2009). They may also have

disagreements on small issues such as division of labour, and in some instances, whenever one of the spouse's parents is not helpful enough, leading to a reduction in the level of marital satisfaction. A research conducted by Twenge et al. (2003) found out that restriction of freedom of partners, especially mothers, led to a reduction in the level of marital satisfaction. Further, Karayağız and Taş (2019) investigated whether the number of children in a relationship had any effect on marital satisfaction, and found out that the higher the number of children, the more the level of marital satisfaction in couples was affected. Couples with no children were also found to have a lower level of marital satisfaction because of the stress, and societal pressures that were brought by the lack of children (Karayağız & Taş, 2019). Couples with four children or more were found to have the lowest level of marital satisfaction. Given that the longer the people married were, the more the children they gave birth to, this means that later years in marriage were characterised by lower levels of marital satisfaction (Karayağız & Taş, 2019). Although research shows that the level of marital satisfaction increased after the children left home, in some cases, the differences may be so severe that the couples may decide to break off the marriage. Indeed, numerous studies have shown that children were important determiners of the level of marital satisfaction among married couples with the passage of time.

Changes in emotional reactivity were also found to be a factor that affected the level of marital satisfaction. Umberson et al. (2005) investigated the changes in marital satisfaction of couples over the years, and found out that over time, couples had a reduced emotional reactivity to some issues that used to bother them when they were younger in marriage. While emotional regulation is key to ensuring that couples are

happy in their relationships, some couples can also find it annoying when their partners fail to pay attention to them. Some can interpret the failure to react to issues as being uninterested in the other, leading to gradual loss of interest in the other partner (Umberson et al., 2005). In most cases, when couples encounter some kind of negative emotion, which may include disappointments and betrayal, the relationship with each other may change into something nasty. In such cases, the partners may start criticising each other using harsh words (Bloch et al., 2014). Interesting, a reaction triggered by a negative emotion caused by something that one of the partners does or fails to do, may cause a chain of negative interaction reactions that may end the relationship (Bloch et al., 2014). The ability of partners to regulate their emotions and reactions may aid the survival of relationships. In most cases, when couples regulate their emotions, effective communication that ensure marital satisfaction of a married couple is enhanced. When partners in a romantic relationship reciprocate how they are treated by the other partner, marital dissatisfaction occurs (Bloch et al., 2014). According to Bloch et al. (2014), women are the best emotion regulators in a relationship. The study also concluded that women are the determiners of marital satisfaction, given that they can regulate their emotions sufficiently. Their ability to regulate their emotions affects not only their marital satisfaction but their husband's as well. Another study that was conducted by Nesselroade and Ferrer (2003) found that the husbands' ability to regulate their emotions is crucial in determining the marital satisfaction of a couple. The study found out that in cases, where husbands are unable to regulate their emotions are more that the cases where wives are unable to regulate theirs. However, all the studies concluded that regulation of emotions was key to ensuring high level of marital satisfaction. With passage of time,

partners in romantic relationships can regulate their emotions better, and hence longevity of their marriage (Dalgleish et al., 2014). On the other hand, partners who are unable to regulate their emotions may end up being more dissatisfied in their marriages, forcing them to get divorced later on (Dalgleish et al., 2014). Time, therefore, may be an asset or a liability in a relationship, depending on whether couples can regulate their emotions or not.

Age differences was also found to be a determining factor that influenced the level of marital satisfaction in married couples. Research has shown that at the beginning of a marriage, differently aged couples were less satisfied in their marriages compared to couples who were of the same age set. Lee and McKinnish (2017) investigated the differences in the level of marital satisfaction among differently aged couples, and found out that over time, differently aged couples tended to be less satisfied in their marital relationships compared to couples who were of the same age. The study also found out that men were more satisfied with younger partners than partners of their age. The study also found out that women were more satisfied with younger partners than they were with partners their own age (Lee & McKinnish, 2017). Again, this became clear later on in life after several years in marriage. The study attributed these findings to the fact that elderly men were more financially secure, and hence had the ability to woe younger women. The study also attributed those findings to the fact that younger people were stronger, and hence more sexually active than their age-mates (Lee & McKinnish, 2017). This means that to a greater extent, married couples may lose interest in each other and start admiring younger people given that goals in later years change. At this time, most of the partners are usually financially secure, and they crave the thrill of their younger married years

which may lead to them admiring the more physically fit younger men and women (Lee & McKinnish, 2017). Therefore, physical fitness and beauty which fades over time may reduce the level of marital satisfaction of older couples.

The studies that were reviewed in this section prove that the length of marriage is a great determiner of the level of marital satisfaction. Majority of the studies concluded that over time, married couples' level of marital satisfaction diminished due to reasons such as the number of children, physical appearance that fades away with time, and changes in the emotional reactivity to issues affecting them.

### 2.6.2 Education

The level of education of spouses is a factor that affects the level of marital satisfaction. A study conducted in Kisii Township, Kisii County, Kenya, by Barongo et al. (2014) found out that the level of marital satisfaction was higher among couples where the husband had a higher level of education. The level of marital satisfaction was found to be significantly low in cases where the wife had a higher level of education than the husband (Barongo et al., 2014). According to Glenn and Weaver (1978), the level of education affects the ability to communicate with each other, and the kind of job a person does, which in turn, may affect the availability of a spouse, and hence, their attention to the family and their partner. The level of education was also found to affect how a person dealt with life's challenges (Glenn & Weaver, 1978). This study seeks to find out how the educated or not educated use mobile devices and the effect of mobile devices on their marital satisfaction.

Communication is an important factor in marital satisfaction. Effective communication helps reduce marital disagreements (Fateme & Sadat, 2016). Education influences the

efficiency of communication among married couples. It is a tool used by couples to articulate any issues affecting them, and their affection towards each other. It is therefore a crucial determinant of the level of marital satisfaction. All relationships have their good and bad days, and what determines whether couples can recover from a bad day is their ability to communicate. Education affects the ability of couples to communicate their issues calmly and in a way that is easy to understand, without raising any misunderstandings that may worsen matters. Communication moderates arguments to ensure they do not turn into ugly conflicts, which may lead to people having irreconcilable that culminate to the dissolution of a relationship (Fateme Sadat, 2016). When one of the partners in a marital relationship is more educated than the other, there may be communication problems that may lead to disagreements. Other than verbal communication, non-verbal communication is very important in ensuring that relationships have lesser issues to resolve (Fateme Sadat, 2016). Educated people can read non-verbal cues of communication better than uneducated people. Studies have indicated that raising a couple's education level causes them to understand each other more, which may boost their marital happiness (Fateme & Sadat, 2016). As a result, a high degree of education may improve communication and enhance conflict resolution abilities between spouses. As such, communication determines the level of marital satisfaction.

A study conducted in the United States to investigate the effects of education on the level of marital satisfaction found out that the more educated the women were, the more likely they were to stay in a marriage for a longer time (Wang, 2015). The study also found out that men who were college graduates were also likely to stay in long-term marriages. The

study found out that approximately 50% of first-time marriages in the US were likely to last for more than 20 years. Further, the study also found that education was a determinant of the survival of a marriage. Findings of this study indicated that there was a 40% chance that a college-graduated woman would still be married after twenty years. In addition, National Centre for Health Statistics conducted a study and found out that college-educated women had a 78 per cent chance of being married two decades after their first marriage (Wang, 2015). However, the percentage was significantly less for women who held a high school education or less. Only about 40% of women who had a high school diploma or less were likely to be married two decades after their first marriage (Wang, 2015). The data collected in this study was limited to first marriages only. In addition, the only reason considered in this study for termination of a marriage was divorce or separation. The target population for this study comprised adults who were below 44years old (Wang, 2015). This implies that long-term marital relationships that started later on in life were not taken into account. Another study conducted by Barongo et al. (2015) examined the impact of the level of education on the marital satisfaction of married couples. The study established that as the level of education increased, so did marital satisfaction. This implies that the more educated the couples were, the more they were satisfied in their relationship.

In the last two decades, the literacy levels in Kenya have increased, with even more women acquiring college degrees than men. Previously, due to culture, the roles of women were confined to childbearing, children-raising, and taking care of their husbands. However, in the recent past, this has changed significantly, and the number of educated women has exceeded the number of educated men in Kenya. More women have become

career women and this has led to a change in the level of marital satisfaction (Muasya, 2016). During the colonial period, access to college and university education for both men and women was very low. Most of the college degree and diploma holders acquired them from outside the country. By the 90s, more people had enrolled and acquired degrees and diplomas. Between 1983 and 1999 college enrolment levels rose by 7% (Chege & Sifuna, 2006). The total enrolment in 1998 was close to 50000, with 64% male students. Enrolment continued to rise steadily, and by 2002, the number of students were close to 70000. However, there were inequalities in the enrolment between male and female students (Chege & Sifuna, 2006). This enrolment gap has significantly narrowed over the last couple of years, with the current male: female ratio being 52:48 (Commission for University Education, 2019). This shows that there has been an increase in the number of career women. Such statistics indicate that priorities of women have shifted, and they have goals and aspirations that are different from the traditional woman whose priorities were limited to staying home and taking care of their homes. The increase in career women was found to have been a key factor that affected relationship satisfaction of many couples, since educated women had a bigger role than simply giving birth and raising children (Muasya, 2016).

The kind of education one gets is a great determiner of the kind of job they get. On the other hand, jobs determined as the number of working hours, salary, and job satisfaction, which in turn affected marital satisfaction. Since most of the African families are predominantly patriarchal, the idea of many women getting into careers has had an effect on this study (Maseno & Kilonzo, 2011). However, married women may not have the time to focus on their careers and as they spend most of their time caring for their

husbands. Some men who may have patriarchal mind-set may not be satisfied with career women, thereby creating disagreements, divorce or separation. A study that was conducted by Philip (2002) found out that increased percentages of career women led to factors that affect the level of marital satisfaction. Some of these factors include independence, female work-life balance issues, competition between the statuses of spouses, high levels of commitment of couples to their jobs without corresponding levels of commitment to their marriages, and job superiority complexes within marriage (Philip, 2002).

Through education, women have become more and more empowered, giving them the power to demand equal rights, not just in the society, but also in their homes and their marriages. This is a factor that affects the level of marital satisfaction. A study conducted by Pessin (2017) to investigate the impact of changing gender roles on marital satisfaction found out that continued increase of women who demand equal rights and opportunities both in society and in marriages was a factor that lowered the level of marital satisfaction. However, this decline was also found to be dependent on the level of education of women, with the level of marital satisfaction being lower for women who did not have a college degree, but who demanded equal rights (Pessin, 2017). The level of marital satisfaction was found to be high for egalitarian marriages in which the wife had a college degree and a stable job. The study also found out that for some couples, the likelihood of divorce was higher in families where gender roles were predominantly traditional (Pessin, 2017). The study concluded that the aforementioned findings supported the premise that women who were not college-educated would find it hard to get marrieds since the society had started embracing gender equality. This means that

women who push for gender equality must be as educated as their husbands (Pessin, 2017). On the other hand, women who are not college-educated cannot push for gender equality, and would remain stuck to marriages where predominant gender roles are valued. This phenomenon leads to low levels of marital satisfaction, and consequently raise chances of getting divorced.

The use of mobile devices requires that the user be educated. In addition, phones are also used to work remotely, at times from the comfort of the user's home. Most of the married couples who used mobile phones to work were educated people who knew how to operate the phones and use them to execute the required tasks as spelt out in their job descriptions. Most educated people who hold white-collar jobs will in most cases bring their work home, which will more often than not affect the level of marital satisfaction (Wajcman, 20017). Traditionally, homes were meant to be spaces for family time. However, through the use of technology, people can also work from home (Wajcman, 20017). This can affect the level of marital satisfaction, as the partners may work late hours, having no time for their partners. Marpaung et al. (2020) conducted a study to investigate the impact of working from home during the Covid-19 pandemic, and found out that working from home affected the ability to communicate and be open, which affected the level of marital satisfaction. Working from home gave rise to job stress which may be projected onto the partner, thereby affecting the level of marital satisfaction (Marpaung et al., 2020). The use of mobile phones to work from home, therefore, affects the work-life balance of employed partners, and consequently affect the level of marital satisfaction.

All the papers that were reviewed in this study indicated that education influenced levels of marital satisfaction. In addition, the use of mobile devices was also found to be influenced by the level of education of the user. Therefore, education should be a characteristic that should be considered by partners before choosing their life partners.

### 2.6.3 Socioeconomic Status

Studies have analysed the effect of a person's socioeconomic status on their levels of marital satisfaction. Socioeconomic status is dependent on factors such as peoples' income, their level of education, as well as job statuses. Financial issues are a crucial factor that affects levels of marital satisfaction. In a study that was conducted by Kerkmann (2000) on married college students at Utah State University, the respondents indicated that marital happiness was substantially connected to financial planning and perceptions of how effectively funds were handled, as well as how financial problems were. This study seeks to establish how the mobile device impacts on the levels of marital satisfaction of the people who are endowed economically compared to those with financial challenges.

Research has shown that healthy relationships can have positive effects on the mental health of couples (Mental Health Foundation, 2018). However, unmarried people are safer than those who are stuck in unhappy relationships. Those in healthy relationships are less likely to suffer from depression or develop low self-esteem (Mental Health Foundation, 2018). Unhealthy relationships have characteristics such as lack of communication, dishonesty, disrespect, manipulation, controlling behaviour, constant fighting, and negative use of mobile devices, all of which may have negative implications that may affect mental health (University of Alabama, n.d.).

Social economic status (SES) was found to be a factor that affected the mental health of married couples. The mental health of partners can influence their levels of marital satisfaction. A study conducted by Conger et al. (2010) to investigate the effects of SES, family processes, and individual development found out that people who had low levels of income, low levels of attainment of educational goals, and low levels of job prestige had a negative effect on marital satisfaction. These factors were also found to cause instability among couples and could be a divorce risk factor (Conger et al., 2010). The study also found out that the aforementioned factors were a threat to the mental health of married couples. A study done by the American Psychological Association found out that people who had a low SES were more likely to suffer from psychological illnesses. In a study that was conducted by Papp et al. (2007) to investigate the link between mental health and the level of marital satisfaction, it was discovered that socioeconomic status, particularly the level of income, was a factor that affected the mental health of married couples. The study also found out that marital satisfaction was dependent on the mental health of the married couples. The study noted that some of the psychological illnesses such as depression, and drug and substance use disorders were risk factors that increased the likelihood of violence within marriage. Miller et al., (2011) investigated the link between mental illnesses and the likelihood of couples being violent. The study established that illnesses such as attention deficit, hyperactivity disorder, drug and substance use disorder, post-traumatic stress disorder, and bipolar disorder, increased the likelihood of couples becoming violent (Miller et al., 2011). The study also found out that mental illnesses caused some of the couples to either fail to report the violence, and in some cases, those who reported the violence did not agree on their respective role in the

violence. This means that partners could not agree on who the perpetrator was, and who the victim was (Miller et al., 2011). This made it hard for reconciliation to happen, resulting to couples remaining stuck to their violent partners.

Drug and substance use disorder was also found to affect the level of marital satisfaction. According to St. Joseph Institute for Drug Addiction (2018), low-income people are more likely to suffer from drug and substance use disorder; particularly, alcohol use disorder. Although there is no link between alcohol and poverty, alcohol use is more prevalent among people with financial problems. Most of the people who have money problems will turn to alcohol as a way of coping (St. Joseph Institute, 2018). This implies that low-income families suffer from alcohol addiction problems which can lead to a low level of marital satisfaction. In a study conducted by Birchler (1998), it was discovered that in marriages where both spouses abused drugs, the level of marital satisfaction was high for some, while for others it was low. Further research showed that drug and substance use was linked to satisfaction for some partners. However, for the majority, the level of marital satisfaction was low in cases where both partners were drug abusers, and in cases where one of the partners abused drugs and other substances (Homish et al., 2008). Alcohol was also found to increase the prevalence of intimate partner violence. A study that was conducted by Moore et al. (2011) established that alcohol and drug abuse increased the likelihood of intimate partner violence.

In cases where both partners abused drugs, the likelihood of them being violent was found to be higher (Moore et al., 2011). Stuart et al. (2006) found out that there was a strong relationship between the severity of alcohol abuse and the prevalence of domestic violence. The more severe the drug abuse problem was, the more one of the partners

suffered physical and mental violence. It was also revealed that among men seeking alcoholism treatment or domestic violence, the likelihood of serious violent behaviour directed to a female partner was eleven times higher on days when the man consumed alcohol, compared to days when they refrained (Fals-Stewart, 2003). Given that domestic violence was found to be a factor that negatively affected the level of marital satisfaction, the premise that alcohol adversely impacted on the level of marital satisfaction is true. Haris et al., (2010) found out that marriage had mental health implications that changed as the couples transitioned into adulthood. The study showed mixed results, with some of them supporting that indeed marriage affected mental health, while the other results indicating the contrary. However, this study established that early marriages reduced the prevalence and likelihood of developing an alcohol abuse problem (Harris et al., 2010).

Okhakhume et al. (2016), in a study that sought to understand the effect of socioeconomic status and marital satisfaction on domestic violence among couples in Nigeria, found out that money is a strong predictor of domestic violence among Nigerian couples. Another study found out that marital satisfaction has a considerable impact on domestic violence. As a result, it was established that household income and marital happiness are predictors of domestic violence among Nigerian couples (Okhakhume et al., 2016). Domestic violence is an indicator of low levels of marital satisfaction.

In a study conducted by Jackson et al. (2017) to investigate the impact of household income and growth on the level of marital satisfaction, it was established that the effects of low income on marital satisfaction were not severe within the first few years of marriage. However, the study found out that the level of marital satisfaction was inconsistent; sometimes fluctuating from high, to low. The inconsistency in the level of

marital satisfaction made marriages unpredictable, and generally affected the sense of marital security for the married couples. The study also found that the behaviour of husbands and wives changed from time to time (Jackson et al., 2017). All these are factors that proved that low socioeconomic status has negative effects on the level of marital satisfaction.

## 2.6.4 Age at Marriage

The age of each partner at marriage was another factor that studies have examined in regard to marital satisfaction. A study by Kariuki (2018) found out that age at the time of marriage was a factor that affected marital satisfaction. The study found out that people who got married while young had lower levels of marital satisfaction than couples who got married later in life. The study indicated that subjective evaluation and interaction patterns were influenced by age at marriage of married couples in Murang'a County. A study by Lee (1977) also found that marital age at marriage affected marital satisfaction. The study concluded that couples who got married while young had lower levels of marital satisfaction than couples that got married while older. The study attributed this to the fact that older couples were able to regulate their emotions better than younger couples (Lee, 1977). The present study seeks to find out how mobile device use impacted the marriage of young couples, in comparison to those who got married at an older age.

Age at marriage was a factor that affected the level of happiness and satisfaction of married couples. According to a survey that investigated the level of marital satisfaction of older couples compared to younger couples, older couples were found to be generally happier than younger couples (Barnes, 2003). Kariuki, ( 2018) investigated the effects of age at marriage on marital satisfaction in Murang'a County, and found out that since

marriage leads to separation of couples from their extended family, and their support systems, this separation took a toll on their mental health.

Infidelity was another factor that was affected by the age of married couples. A study that conducted by Ndungu (2017) on the impact of marital satisfaction on marital infidelity in Nairobi County, Kenya, found out that the older someone was, the higher the likelihood of them being unfaithful to their married partners. The study also found that men were more unfaithful to their wives than women. This was because men were more interested in beauty and physical attraction, and hence, preferred younger partners. Levels of infidelity were relatively low for young couples in their twenties, all the way to their later thirties; however, this trend changed after the partners got to their forties. It was also established that marital infidelity led to low levels of marital satisfaction (Ndungu, 2017). Social media use increased chances of infidelity among married couples. Obsessive social media use has consequences on individuals' interpersonal, psychological, career and personal life. The availability of romantic alternatives disguised as 'friends' online creates the necessary environment for an interpersonal and/or sexual affairs (Abbasi, 2019). Online contacts with virtual friends divert individuals' attention and distract them from spending quality time with the important people in their lives, resulting to negative relationship results. The study by Abbasi (2019) also found out that addiction to social media led to a rising likelihood of being unfaithful through social media.

Younger couples were found to have lower levels of marital satisfaction compared to couples who get married while a little older. Marital satisfaction for couples who had a large age gap was also found to decrease as couples aged. Lee and McKinnish's (2017) investigated the impact of marital age gap on marital satisfaction concluded that as

couples grew older, their level of marital satisfaction decreased. The researchers further established that older women loved younger men, while older men preferred younger women. Younger marriages impacted negatively the mental health of women more than it did for men (Marphatia et al., 2017). This is because men, even while married, could still achieve their career goals. On the other hand, achieving career goals while married is hard for women, which leads to their having regrets and resenting their partners, and their marriages. Ultimately, this leads to low marital satisfaction, and consequently to negative impact on their marriage.

## 2.7 Summary of Literature Gaps

Most the studies on effects of social media (Abbasi, 2019b; Afolaranmi, 2020; Andreassen et al., 2016, 2016; Gullet al., 2019b) have established themes of jealousy, depression, mistrust, sense of ignorance, and couple surveillance as the effects of social media on marriage partners' interactions. However, these studies failed to include other essential parameters of quality marital satisfaction. Excessive engagements with social networking platforms may preoccupy the married and cause them to disregard their partners. As a consequence, the couple may spend lesser time together which negatively influences and degrades closeness in their relationships (Tran et al., 2017). Even if they are physically together, one who is enthusiastic and deeply intertwined in this dragon might make their spouse feel lonely and disregarded (Volungis et al., 2020). While the study by Afolaranmi (2020) advanced the use of social media in connecting marriage partners, it is arguably evident that the quality of marriages initiated through online dating sites is unknown. The study noted that many marriages amongst young couples

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had been realized through online dating, but a number of them end up in divorces and marital conflicts.

Indeed, many studies have shown that uncontrolled utilization of social chat forums led to addiction; a significant problem in most married relationships. Schneider et al. (2017) studied 252 married couples's aged 18 to 73 on social media factors that make romantic relationships vulnerable. Their study posited that Social networking sites (SNS) cause aggression since intimate couples start sharing suggestive love details with their online friends. This causes jealousy, suspicion, surveillance, and infidelity. These findings were similar to those of Oliveira (2016b), only that Oliveira's study included a wide range of respondents with more males than females. Their results found that young people were most entangled in chat forums, unlike their older counterparts. However, the current study linked the use of social network sites with a commitment to a relationship, but it failed to check out other vital variables that can be affected by the use of Social networking sites (Oliveira, 2016a). The analysis of data in this study also failed to find relationships and links between uses of specific social media; for example, WhatsApp, Facebook, Twitter, and google meet calls, with their effect on a relationship (Abbasi, 2019a).

As observed by Juhasz and Bradford (2016), mobile device use has both negative and positive implications for various couples. For example, mobile devices can help those in long-distance relationships as well as those with busy schedules. Regardless of these advantages, mobile device addiction may result in negative implications that would undermine the positive implications (Juhasz & Bradford, 2016a; Oliveira, 2016b; Servies, 2018). Consequently, other researchers need to identify appropriate measures to deal with

this addiction; for example, by motivating couples to implement mobile device use rules that regulate how much they use their devices when they are together. Secondly, most of the studies considered the age of the recipients as the primary attribute to explain how mobile device use affects various couples (Lanerolle, 2013; Juhasz & Bradford, 2016a; Oliveira, 2016b). While this approach is effective in explaining why younger couples rely more on mobile devices, while the older ones prefer face-to-face interactions, it fails to consider other factors such as gender, type of marriage, religion, race, and family income. These factors may have a tremendous implications on the overall outcomes of mobile use; thus, future researchers need to evaluate how these attributes affect these relationships.

## 2.9 Theoretical Framework

The family systems theory, cognitive behaviour theory (CBT) and revised dyadic adjustment scale will be the foundation of this research. The Bowen family system theory in psychiatry was established using these methodologies because of their complementarities (Bowen & Kerr, 2009). In 1960, this hypothesis was first published. According to the family systems theory, individuals are better understood when correlated with individuals with similar characteristics (Bowen, 1993a). Human beings are naturally social animals. According to the theory, families are viewed as a complex and interconnected group of individuals, where each member depends on the others to be understood. Bowen introduced the family systems theory in the late 60s after obtaining research evidence from schizophrenic patients and his own family (Wathigo, 2019).

The theory is a technique to understand human behaviour by focusing on relationships between family members as well as interactions between both the family and the context(s) inside which they live (Minuchin et al., 2006). Psychotherapy in general, and family therapy in particular, can be effective treatments for mobile phone addiction in close relationships. Maintaining a consistent pattern of behaviour within a system can result in both balance and chaos in the family system. The alterations in family member roles may or may not change the relationship causing a shift in equilibrium. This change in balancing among members may cause dysfunction due to inability to sustain the new responsibility (Schneider et al., 2017).

Therefore, the family system theory is based on this perspective and can be applied to define healthy family ties. The fact that the family consists of mutually dependent members, and that it fosters marital satisfaction, means that these connections can result in an open and continuous system that is constantly being influenced by the environment (Ferguson et al. 2016). Within this framework, the study treats mobile devices as a technological system that exists inside the family system and which influences family social interaction. The study used family systems theory to examine the well-being of a married relationship, and its effects on time spent on social networking platforms on marital satisfaction. According to this view, a healthy married connection demonstrates granted attention, acceptance and an ever-unending unwavering shoulder to lean on (Khadivzadeh et al., 2013).

The idea also states that in a healthy relationship, couples should respond quickly to partners' needs, expectations and suffering. Finally, this theory underpins how married

individuals are connected and interdependent with one another, breaking down barriers and delaying outcomes (Minuchin et al., 2006). Essentially, a well-functioning marriage connection, according to family systems theory, is one marked by care for each other, compassion, empathy, and connectivity (Bowen, 1993a). However, the Family Systems theory does not feature the boundaries and relations they should have towards social media bearing in mind that it has its benefits. Rational Choice was introduced to overcome this constraint (Bowen & Kerr, 2009).

Kering (2016), explains that when some members in the system fail to consider the emotions and expectations of others in a system, the connection breaks, and it results in conflicts. In the case of married couples, increased mobile device use may result in poor communication and low intimacy levels. Additionally, other behaviours which are associated with mobile device use, such as phubbing and infidelity, can lead to increased marital conflicts, low marital commitment, and poor satisfaction. Hence, family systems must operate under a sense of oneness and connectedness. According to Jurva (2018), the oneness of a family should be a healthy balancing of affectionate connectedness, where all individuals care about the needs of others in the system.

One of the main strengths of family systems theory is that it is based on a firm biological base and that it has a straightforward elucidation of interpersonal relationships and socio-cultural orientation (Palombi, 2016). Concerning the aspect of interpersonal relationships, family system theory "sees balanced, open, rational, emotion-centred one-to-one relationships as the basic building blocks of a healthful family systems" (Kerig, 2016). Based on this claim, it is arguable that interpersonal relations between family members are essential in creating strong family ties and bonds between spouses. According to the

socio-cultural viewpoint, family systems theory "acknowledges that a family lies in the lower hierarchy of community and the large society." On the other hand, society encompasses multicultural, regional and international cultures; thus, all of these aspects have a causal link to family ties (Bowen, 1993a; Bowen & Kerr, 2009).

The family systems theory is grounded on the premise that influential families require emotional and balanced connections between the members. However, the theory of this claim means that for a marriage to be successful, the spouses must connect on different levels (Minuchin et al., 2006). Mobile phones have both negative and positive implications in maintaining, developing and maintaining these connections among spouses. For example, mobile phones can improve communication and intimacy in a relationship. Putting together your family genogram is one of the finest methods to start counselling and obtain knowledge of how the emotional system works in your family (Bowen, 1993a). Studying your behavioural patterns and how they connect to those of your multigenerational family might offer new and more effective solutions to issues and ways to change your habitual response to the part you are expected to play (Schneider et al., 2017). The Family System Theory is critiqued based on the fact that in the family tree such that if the father or close family member was addicted to the Internet or social media, it might seemingly affect their children. However, these genograms and family trees have been used for psycho-diseases such as depression and schizophrenia. However, this generational impact of misuse and addiction may be checked on children using genograms (Bowen, 2013).

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## 2.8.1 Cognitive Behaviour Theory (CBT)

Cognitive behaviour theory was developed by Dr Aaron T. Beck, a psychiatrist at the University of Pennsylvania in the 1960s. After learning and practising psychoanalysis, Dr Beck developed and conducted various studies to evaluate psychoanalytic ideas about depression (Beck & Weishaar, 1989b). He was anticipating the studies to back up these core ideas, but he was astonished to discover the contrary. The cognitive-behavioural approach combines cognitive and behavioural therapy to explain how people's thoughts and perceptions influence their emotions and behaviour (Fischer et al., 2016). Basically, CBT ideology expounds that an individual's cognitions play an important and key role in the creation and preservation of behaviour and emotions in relation to life circumstances (Knapp & Beck, 2008).

In CBT models, intertwining both cognitive processes and experiences of meanings, judgments, appraisals and assumptions drives feelings and demeanour towards situations and happenings that may trigger or militate the adaptation process. CBT is a collection of approaches that have been shown to be beneficial in the treatment of posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) (Antonio, 2021). According to Corey (2013), CBT is premised to expose the place of reasoning, thinking and behaving which not only impact the self but also the individuals around one's circle. He goes on to say that the goal of this theory is to bring about change and that for that to happen individuals ought to learn their behavioural changes over multiple circumstances (Clark & Beck, 2011).

Self-observation, initiating a new internal dialogue, and acquiring new abilities are the three steps of behaviour change, according to cognitive therapy theory (Hagger et al.,

2020). Individuals are expected to record and evaluate their seemingly automatic actions in the first step. This enables the individual to observe some of the misbehaviours that arise as a result of incorrect perceptions or information. In the second phase, an individual engages in internal dialogues about how to change the misbehaviours identified in the first phase (Bowen, 2013). Finally, the person begins to learn new coping skills in order to develop the desired behaviour. Conduct alteration is out of an interplay of factors progressing from inward speech, cognitive reactions, which later manifest as outcomes," according to the aforementioned steps (Knapp & Beck, 2008).

González-Prendes and Resko posit that the cognitive-behavioural theory is applicable in understanding how couples develop specific attitudes or behaviours and how these behaviours, such as excessive use, addiction, and social distance, affect the quality of marriage. Mobile device addiction affects many marriages internationally as well as local families. Stuart's study on behavioural exchanges between partners is largely responsible for the development of CBCT. He founded his study of couple relations on principles relating to the social exchange theory, hypothesizing couple perceptions of their romantic attachments are influenced by the benefits to costs ratio that come from good and bad contact with others (Clark & Beck, 2011). Stuart presented a behavioural exchanges paradigm in which the frequency of desirable and also undesirable behavioural exchanges could be used to distinguish good partnerships from dysfunctional ones. Negative behaviours include negative criticism, animosity, disdain, and poor communication between couples, whereas positive behaviours include constructive problem resolution and heeding each other. Early behavioural pair treatments focused largely on behaviour modifications and skill acquisition to instil a positive demeanour, while diminishing the

negative one via good decision-making, clear communication and problem-solving (Beck & Weishaar, 1989b). According to recent studies (Abbasi, 2018; Aziz et al., 2018a; Coyne et al., 2012; Gullet al., 2019a), a large majority of individuals struggle to control the time they spend surfing the internet; hence resulting in addiction, reckoned by withdrawal symptoms, depicting unpleasant mood when unable to use the internet (van den et al., 2008).

Apart from explaining the implications of mobile device use on the quality of marriages, CBT can also be used to solve these issues (Bowen & Kerr, 2009). According to tenets of the theory, human beings can adapt to new expectations, and they can change their behaviour using the three steps of change (Hagger et al., 2020). This means that since excessive mobile device use is affecting many marriages, counsellors should suggest the three steps to clients who are affected by addiction. Consequently, using the theory, married individuals can consider their behaviours, how they affect their spouses, and how to deal with these problems. Individuals who spend much time on the internet are characterized by lonesomeness, being antisocial and sadness in comparison to their counterparts. According to Kimeto (2016), excessive social media use is the actual behaviour change that the cognitive behaviour theory talks about. There are many marriages in Kenya that fail due to excessive mobile phone and social media use. These individuals start by acquiring a mobile phone, and they develop a fondness or addiction to the device over some time. Subsequently, these individuals may develop other vices that may affect the quality of marriage (Beck & Weishaar, 1989b).

Partners' intellectual, emotional, and behavioural interdependence is the foundation of relationships (Reis & Rusbult, 2004; Rusbult, Arriaga, & Agnew, 2001). Both partners

have an impact on each other's ideas, feelings, aspirations, actions, and overall well-being. This dependency encourages a number of pro-relationship actions that are important for the relationship to survive and thrive (M.D & Alford, 2009). Because obsessive Internet users, mobile phone conversations, gaming, and social media utilize the Internet mostly independent of their relationships, it is reasonable to predict that they will experience reduced dependency on each other as time flows. Furthermore, obsessive Internet users prefer surfing the internet rather than cultivating their family relations. Couples who spend more time on their phones than on one other, for example, establish a bad habit of poor communication, which can lead to divorce or greater marital disputes (Abbasi & Dibble, 2021).

According to Söylemez (2017), Cognitive Behaviour Theory has been used to help couples experiencing conflicts in their marriage lives. Specifically, assessing the influence of social media use on marital satisfaction will require fundamentals of the CBT theory to assist young and older experienced couples who are at high risk of domestic violence. Similarly, families experiencing trauma due to lack of commitment, poor communication, and infidelity are embedded in CBCT tenets (Söylemez, 2017). Following the assertions of Dugal et al. (2018), Cognitive behaviour couple therapy enhances treatment of distress arising in marital relationships and can therefore effectively evaluate the influence of mobile games in increasing or decreasing couple dissatisfaction as well as addressing communication difficulties (Dugal et al., 2018). The study by Shayan et al. (2018) found that cognitive-behavioural treatment can improve consultation between couples before they engage in marriage, stemming destructive mobile calls, and phubbing behaviours. The theory encourages social bonds, enhances

sexual relations, and reduces the divorce rate (Abdekhodaie, 2021). Several types of misunderstandings among couples can be resolved by employing communication, utilizing interpersonal skills and cognitive transformation according to Dures et al. (2020). The researchers wanted to see how a CBCT therapy regimen affected dyadic adjustment, marital feelings and human expressions. A similar principle may be applied to evaluating couple conduct at the Nkubu synod. Though Khanjani et al. (2017) discovered no measurable difference in conflict resolution between Behavioral Couple Therapy and Acceptance and Commitment Couple Therapy in the City of Isfahan, cognitive behaviour theory has been used in therapy sessions and may play an important role in marital satisfaction at Nkubu synod (Abdekhodaie, 2021; Dugal et al., 2018; Honari, 2017).

## 2.8.2 Revised Dyadic Adjustment Scale

The Revised Dyadic Adjustment Scale (RDAS) is a self-report survey that evaluates seven factors of marital satisfaction within 3 key classifications, including agreement in decision making, principles, and fondness, Contentment in the relationship with regard to stability and dispute regulation, and Unity seen through the actions and conversations. "[With] time limits on therapists in clinical practice, the RDAS provides for an accurate and cost-effective examination of spousal and relationship quality" (Crane et al., 2000, p. 54). The RDAS consists of only 14 items, each of which invites participants to evaluate particular elements of their relationship on a 5- or 6-point scale. The RDAS scale has a score range of 0 to 69, with higher scores suggesting better relationship and pleasure; and lower values showing higher marital unhappiness. The RDAS has a cut-off score of 48,

with scores of 48 and above indicating non-distress and scores of 47 and below indicating spousal distress.

## 2.10 Conceptual Framework

Mobile device usage is the independent variable in this study. A married person could either experience high-risk mobile usage or low-risk mobile usage. In the event, that a married person experiences high-risk mobile usage, the relationship with his/her partner is likely to be influenced negatively. High-risk mobile usage could negatively interfere with levels of marital satisfaction. On the other hand, when a mobile device is responsibly used, it could enhance marital satisfaction and increase the level of marital satisfaction.

**Figure 2. 1**

*Conceptual Framework*



| | |
|---|---|
| **Social Media Use**<br>• Sites visited<br>• Frequency<br>• Time spent per day<br>• Time of use<br>• Partners concerned | |
| **Mobile phone calls**<br><br>• Time spent on calls<br>• Time of calls<br>• Conflict over phone calls | **Level of Marital satisfaction**<br>• Degree of concurrence<br>• Level of contentment<br>• Compatibility |
| **Gaming**<br>• Types of games<br>• Time spent<br>• Time played | |

**Independent variables**

**Dependent variable**

**Marriage Characteristics**

• Length in marriage
• Education
• Social economic status
• Age at marriage

**Moderating variable**

## 2.10.1 Explanation of variables

Social media use inquiry seeks to find out how specific components like WhatsApp, Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram affect the level of marital satisfaction. Marital satisfaction is dependent on the degree of concurrence between the couple, the level of contentment with each other, and the degree of compatibility. Examination of the mobile games sought to assess aspects of mobile games such as time spent in gaming, video gaming, mobile gaming, and massive media role-playing games. Have they contributed to stability or conflicts in marriages? Under mobile phone calls, the inquiry sought to find out the time spent together, time spent on the mobile, mobile phone call addiction, and withdrawal are the variables of interest in checking their role in cohesion and consensus among the couples. Length in marriage considered the number of years the couple had been in a marriage; education level considered the academic achievement of the respondents; social economic status considered the income level of the respondents; and age at marriage considered the respondents' age at the time of marriage.

# CHAPTER THREE

# RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

## 3.1 Introduction

Chapter three outlines the approaches and criteria for gathering and analyzing data that was used to answer research questions. The following topics are addressed in this chapter: research philosophy, the design, study area, target population, sample size and sampling procedures, instrumentation, pilot study, reliability and validity, data processing methodologies, and ethical considerations.

## 3.2 Research Philosophy

Since quantitative data based on theory and scientific procedures were used to evaluate hypotheses, the researcher used a positivistic approach (Thompson, 2018). Positivism holds that only knowledge acquired from observation as well as its measurement is reliable. Studies upholding this approach usually restrain the researcher's role in the gathering of data and interpretation (Ryan, 2018). In this study, the dependent variable's parameters were measured using methods that had been established by research, which guided the positivist decision (Park et al., 2020). Because the scales that were used were standard and had been used in research before, there was a high degree of objectivity in the assessment of the variables under consideration. Positivism philosophy majorly depends on facts that are quantifiable; hence, the possible applicable analysis procedures are usually quantitative. Positivism, as an ideology, conforms to the empiricist concept which acknowledges intuition as a result of accumulated expertise and experience over a period of time. The philosophy also views world problems with an atomistic, ontological

eye, having confidence in the collected, observable elements and also scenarios which are uniformly predictable (Cresswell, 2014).

**3.2.1 Research Approach**

In research, the intertwined methodologies employed depend on the data and objectives of a study, and may be qualitative, quantitative or mixed methods. The research technique used is determined by the study topic, the type of data to be collected, and the design purported to be used (Creswell, 2009). Owning the place of the researcher as a primary instrument, the effect of the researcher's perspective is difficult to avoid in a qualitative technique. Qualitative techniques are most appropriate when one has little know-how of the underlying problem under study. This method employs a systematic procedure in which numerical data and measurements are used to gather knowledge about the topic under investigation. Moreover, important decisions are arrived at by relying on numerical answers on how, when and by whom probing questions (Cooper & Schindler, 2008).

Creswell (2014) defines the mixed method strategy as suitable when gathering, assessing, and combining both qualitative and quantitative insights from the data collection tools to answer research problems. For the situation here, a mixed-method approach was used in this investigation. The argument for using a mixed method approach was that if either of the methodologies would have been engaged, dismal achievement would have been achieved owing to the limitations of over-reliance on qualitative or quantitative strategies alone.

**3.3 Research Design**

This study adopted an explanatory research design. Explanatory research design is concerned with answering why and how questions to establish the truth. It develops explanations about why certain phenomena occur and how solutions can be found. According to Maxwell and Mittapalli (2008), explanatory research aims to give a deep description of the current underlying situation.

Creswell (2014) posits that in explanatory studies, the investigator identifies certain quantitative outcomes that require additional explanation. Explanatory designs go beyond description and try to clarify the motives for the phenomenon that were observed by the descriptive study. Explanatory design is used to create a clear picture from quantitative data and then utilize qualitative data to offer a better description and knowledge of the research in consideration. Hence, explanatory design was suitable in aiding a deep description of the influence of mobile device use on the level of marital satisfaction among couples in MCK Nkubu Synod. Besides, to effectively address the four research questions, both quantitative and qualitative data was collected. Thus, explanatory research design was chosen since it was suitable in triangulating the quantitative and qualitative outcomes captured by the research instruments.

**3.4 Location of Study**

This research was carried out in Nkubu Synod, covering Meru, Embu, Tharaka Nithi and Kirinyaga counties positioned on the Eastern and Southern sides of Mt. Kenya. The Synod covers a total of 21 administrative units, commonly referred to as circuits. In the Methodist church, a circuit is a collection of churches under the care of one or more ministers. The head of a circuit is the superintendent minister. Several circuits form a

Synod. Currently, the Methodist church in Kenya (MCK) comprises 13 Synods, namely, Nairobi, Mombasa, Nkubu, Nyambene, Western, Singwaya, Tharaka, Miathene, Kilifi, Kaaga, Tanzania, Uganda, and Kajiado Synod. A Synod is headed by a Synod Bishop. The thirteen Synods form a conference headed by the Presiding Bishop.

Twelve of the twenty-one circuits of the Nkubu Synod are in Meru County, seven in Tharaka-Nithi, and one each in Embu and Kirinyaga. Meru County is located on Mount Kenya's eastern slope. The population of the county is estimated to be 1,545,714 people (Kenya Population and Housing Census, 2019). The synod locale borders Isiolo County, Tharaka-Nthi County and Kirinyaga County to the north, east and southwest respectively while Laikipia County is positioned in the west direction. The County has a total area of 7,006 km2 (IEBC, 2013), with 972.3 km2 of it designated as forest. Miraa, coffee, tea, horticulture and dairy farming, quarrying, and tourism are the primary economic activities of the county. Tharaka Nithi County has a total area of 2609 km$^2$ (IEBC, 2013) and a population of 393,177 people according to the 2019 census. Embu County covers 2821 square kilometres and has a population of 608 599 people (IEBC, 2013). (Kenya Population and Housing Census, 2019). Tharaka Nithi County has a total area of 1478 square kilometres (IEBC, 2013) and a population of 610 411 people according to the 2019 census. Nkubu Synod was chosen because of a problem that had been recognized, namely, numerous reported cases of disagreements and instability in marriages. In Nkubu synod, the notion that mobile devices are the source of instability and strife had not been tested. Furthermore, there was a lack of data in Nkubu synod on the usage of mobile devices and marital satisfaction in the area. As a result, Nkubu Synod was an excellent place for this research.

## 3.5 Target Population

The study focused on 4003 married couples in Nkubu Synod as per Nkubu Synod 2019 Annual Committee Resolution and Reports. Hence, the target population comprised 4003 couples translating to 8006 married persons in MCK, Nkubu Synod. Table 1 illustrates the target population per circuit. The inclusion criteria were being a registered member in a church under Nkubu Synod, a currently married person, a couple utilizing at least one mobile device; where couples may be persons of either gender, persons between 20 and 60 years, and persons willing to participate in the study. The exclusion criteria were anyone who was not a registered member in a church under Nkubu Synod, couples not currently married, that is, single, widow, widower, divorcee, couples not utilizing any mobile device, couples less than eighteen years, or couples unwilling to participate in the study. The study targeted couples aged 20-60 years. The target population for the interviews was the 21 superintendent ministers while the target population for the focus group discussion participants was 840 members of quarterly meetings (21 circuits * 40 members).

**Table 3. 1**

*Computation of target population*

| Circuit | Target persons |
|---|---|
| Kithirune | 804 |
| Githongo | 752 |
| Uruku | 602 |
| Kathera | 468 |
| Katheri | 416 |
| Mariene | 410 |
| Ruiga | 406 |
| Nkubu | 400 |
| Chaaria | 372 |
| Mikumbune | 360 |
| Gaatia | 348 |
| Kiamakoro | 336 |
| Mitunguu | 320 |
| Chuka | 284 |
| Igoji | 276 |
| Maara | 272 |
| Gaitu | 262 |
| Kirinyaga | 248 |
| Embu – Mbeere | 238 |
| Abogeeta | 228 |
| Kaija | 204 |
| Total | 8006 |

Source (Nkubu Synod office, 2019)

## 3.6 Sample Size and Sampling Technique

This section presents how the engaged size of the population was arrived at by outlining the procedures.

### 3.6.1 Sample Size

A sample, according to Punch (2009), is a smaller group that is investigated, taken from a larger population, from which data is gathered and evaluated, and conclusions about the population then produced. The sample size for this study comprised 367 respondents. This figure was derived from the sampling table formulated by Krejcie and Morgan (1970). Kothari (2009) states that for descriptive studies, the most appropriate sample

size ranges from 10% to 30%. Therefore 30% of the circuits in Nkubu Synod will be included in the study. According to Nkubu Synod 2019 Annual Committee Resolution and Reports, there were twenty-one circuits in the Synod. Hence, six circuits were selected for the study as illustrated in Table 2.

**Table 3. 2**

*Determination of sample size*

| Total No. of Circuits | The sample size for the circuits (30%) | Target population | Sample size: As per Krejcie and Morgan's (1970) table |
|---|---|---|---|
| 21 | 6 | 8006 | 367 |

### 3.6.2 Sampling technique

Coming up with a group of persons or things from a population in such a way that the selected group shares characteristics with the rest of the population is what is referred to as sampling (Orodho, 2014). All married people in Nkubu Synod were included in the sampling frame. According to Kothari (2014), a random sampling approach should be used in descriptive investigations to ensure bias eradication and appropriate calculation of the sampling error. The probability sampling techniques of stratified sampling and simple random sampling were used to choose respondents for the study.

Orodho (2014) posits that in stratified sampling, the population is subdivided into segments known as strata. Subsequently, Nkubu Synod is divided into smaller sub groups known as circuits. Stratification allowed the study to obtain a sample population that best represents the entire Nkubu Synod. The Circuits in which Nkubu Synod spreads were the basis of stratification. The sample size per Circuit was computed based on the number of

married couples in the circuits; such that each Circuit had a sample size proportionate to the number of married couples in its circuit. The following formula was utilized in the determination of sample size per circuit,

Sample size for Circuit = Circuit Population/ 8006 X 367

 Where;

8006 is the total population

367 is the total sample size

**Table 3. 3**

*Determination of sample size per Circuit*

| Circuit | Population | Sample distribution per circuit (30%) |
|---|---|---|
| 1.  Kithirune | 804 | 37 |
| 2.  Githongo | 752 | 35 |
| 3.  Uruku | 602 | 30 |
| 4.  Kathera | 468 | 23 |
| 5.  Katheri | 416 | 19 |
| 6.  Mariene | 410 | 19 |
| 7.  Ruiga | 406 | 19 |
| 8.  Nkubu | 400 | 18 |
| 9.  Chaaria | 372 | 17 |
| 10. Mikumbune | 360 | 17 |
| 11. Gaatia | 348 | 16 |
| 12. Kiamakoro | 336 | 15 |
| 13. Mitunguu | 320 | 15 |
| 14. Chuka | 284 | 13 |
| 15. Igoji | 276 | 12 |
| 16. Maara | 272 | 12 |
| 17. Gaitu | 262 | 11 |
| 18. Kirinyaga | 248 | 11 |
| 19. Embu – Mbeere | 238 | 10 |
| 20. Abogeeta | 228 | 9 |
| 21. Kiija | 204 | 9 |
| Total | 8006   /2 | 367 |

## 3.7 Instrumentation

The instruments that were used to gather data for this investigation are described in this section.

### 3.7.1 Questionnaire

Questionnaires were used to collect data from participants in the selected circuits in MCK Nkubu Synod. Two well-trained research assistants were resourceful in answering respondents' related queries while administering the questionnaire. To develop the questionnaire, consultation from previously related literature addressing aspects in this study was carried out. The questionnaires comprise five sections ordered per the study objectives.  Section A contains nine items on demographic information of the respondents. Information sought from the demographic section addressed research objective four; namely, the effect of marriage characteristics on the level of marital satisfaction in MCK Nkubu Synod. Section B contains 4 items on social media use which addressed objective one; the influence of social media use on the level of marital satisfaction in MCK Nkubu Synod. Moreover, section C contains 5 items on gaming based on objective two; influence of mobile game use on the level of marital satisfaction in MCK Nkubu Synod. Equally, sections D comprise 3 items on mobile phone calls based on objective three; the influence of Mobile phone calls on the level of marital satisfaction in MCK Nkubu Synod. The dependent variable of this study; level of marital satisfaction is captured in section E of the questionnaire, where 14 items address level of marital satisfaction among couples in MCK Nkubu Synod. Under section E, the Revised Dyadic Adjustment Scale was adopted to measure the level of marital satisfaction.

### 3.7.2 Focus Group Discussions Guide

A guide on focus group discussions was formulated to capture qualitative data. Focus group discussion allowed participants to discuss the items presented, and the researcher was able to make follow-ups or seek clarifications (Nyumba et al., 2018). A focus group discussion was conducted in each of the six selected circuits. The focus group discussion was held during the scheduled circuit quarterly meetings where three men and three women meeting the study inclusion criterion were included.

### 3.7.3 Interview Schedule

The interview schedule comprising of semi-structured statements was constructed so that the purposively selected heads of the six circuits included in the study would give their valuable oral insights. The circuit heads are ordained ministers of the Word of God referred to as superintendent ministers. To develop the interview items, the existing literature and published studies on mobile device use and marital satisfaction were referred to. The interview items were aligned with the research objectives.

### 3.8 Pre–Testing of Research Instruments

According to Orodho (2014), conducting a pre-test on another sample with standard features to the actual study sample ensures the efficiency of the questionnaires and reduces or eliminates the shortcomings. Mugenda and Mugenda (2003) state that the size of the sample for the pre-test should range from 1% to 10%. The pre-test for the questionnaire involved 24 respondents from Kaaga Synod neighbouring Nkubu Synod which translates to 6.5% of the sample size. Besides, one superintendent minister from the Kaaga Synod was included for purposes of pre-testing the interview schedule. Moreover, 3 ladies and 3 men were selected to pre-test the focus group discussion guide.

Kaaga Synod was chosen for the pilot study since it neighbours Nkubu Synod and is also located in Meru County. Due to its proximity to Nkubu Synod, the respondents in Kaaga Synod were most likely to encounter similar experiences in terms of mobile device usage. Members of the two Synods share the same culture and also engage in similar socio-economic activities.

**Table 3. 4**

*Pre-test sampling distribution*

| Age distribution | Percentage distribution | No of respondents |
|---|---|---|
| 20-30 | 40% | 10 |
| 30 -40 | 30% | 7 |
| 40-50 | 20% | 5 |
| 50-60 | 10% | 2 |
| Total | 100% | 24 |

Obtaining the pre-test sample was done through purposive sampling. Piloting helped in eliminating researcher bias, eradicating ambiguities of the items, and assisting the researcher to assess the possible responses and the scrutiny of the information that was gathered.

### 3.8.1 Validity of the Research Instruments

Validity is an evaluation of how well the instrument performs its intended purpose (Robson, 2011). Furthermore, it is evidenced by how accurate and relevant the conclusions or interpretations based on the study findings are. In other words, validity

may be defined as the degree to which conclusions derived from data analysis accurately reflect the phenomena under investigation. When there is high validity, meaningful and accurate conclusions and inferences are arrived at based on such information. Creswell (2014) affirms that the validity of a behavioural measure depends on its ability to achieve what it was intended to measure. Having a variety of items to measure the various aspects of the three independent variables ensured content validity or sampling validity. Additionally, content validity was further ensured by the results of the pilot study.

The study also considered content and criterion validity, where under content validity, a variable was regarded to be varied if it was in general agreement with existing literature (Zohrabi, 2013). The level to which a single variable predicts or relates to other variables is determined by criterion validity (Gail & Sullivan, 2011). Therefore, both criterion and content validity were used in this study.

Also, this study used the experience of lecturers to enhance the validity of the instruments. Borg and Gall (2007) aver that expert judgment is one of the most crucial methods for improving the validity of an instrument. The instruments were given to lecturers in the department to determine the relevance of content validity, and their inputs were helpful in the revision of the tools. Equally, expert judgment was sought from the examiners during the presentation of the research proposal, thus helping enhance the content validity. The necessary change was made based on the expert opinion on the research instrument to improve validity.

Validity was also enhanced by comparing responses from closed-ended items (quantitative data) with responses from the clergy interview schedule (qualitative data). Orodho (2014) asserts that triangulation can be utilized to get credible findings.

According to Creswell (2014), using a multi-model data gathering approach eliminates the risk of obtaining erroneous data. The use of suitable font size, line spacing, and logical item layout in data gathering devices improved validity. The instruments' wording was straightforward to guarantee that the respondents were able to comprehend and interpret the meaning.

## 3.8.2 Reliability of the Standardized Research Instruments

This implies the degree or extent to which a questionnaire, observation, test, or any measurement technique, generates similar outcomes on repeated experiments (Orodho, 2014). The study utilized internal consistency reliability, which involves the degree to which things on the test or instruments are estimating a similar thing (Yin, 2013). Cronbach's alpha provides the maximum utility for multi-item scales at the interval level of measurement (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016). It just takes one administration and offers a quantitative measure of a scale's consistency reliability. The higher the internal consistency dependability, the closer Cronbach's alpha coefficient is near 1. Cronbach's alpha of 0.8 is considered good; 0.7 is considered adequate, while 0.6 and below, are bad (Kothari and Garg, 2014). Field (2009) suggests that Cronbach's alpha should not be smaller than 0.7 for the research instrument to be considered excellent and reliable. Hence, during the pilot study, Cronbach's alpha coefficient for each of the study variables was computed. The value of Cronbach's alpha informed the appropriate action to be taken on the scales enumerating low scores. The alpha coefficient was determined as below;

$$a = \frac{n}{n-1} \{1 - \frac{\sum s_j^2}{s_j^2}\}$$

Where;

a is Cronbach's alpha

n is the number of measurement items,

Is the variance of the total value measurements?

A form was considered reliable if α was more than 0.7. The reliability test was performed on the ten instruments obtained in a pilot study (Orodho, 2002).

## 3.9 Data Collection Procedure

To begin with, an introductory letter from Kenya Methodist University's Ethical Review Board was sought by the researcher. With the help of this letter, the researcher also sought permission from the National Commission for Science, Technology, and Innovation (NACOSTI). Nkubu Synod bishop and the superintendent ministers of the different circuits were also consulted by the researcher. The researcher sought an appointment with the respective superintendent ministers to sensitize them on the significance of the study. Since a superintendent minister is in charge of a circuit, the researcher was guided on the scope of each circuit to ensure that the respondents came from the sampled circuits.

The focus group discussions were held during quarterly circuit meetings where eight participants comprising four men and four women, shared their experiences based on the FGD schedule. During the focus group discussions, the researcher wrote the main highlights from the responses. The questionnaires were distributed to the respondents during the weekday fellowships and quarterly meetings organized for women's fellowships as well as men's fellowships. The prior arrangement was made with the

conveners of the meetings for a slot in sensitization on the study and subsequent data collection. The researcher trained and engaged two research assistants to assist in data collection. Both researcher assistants had master's degrees.

## 3.10 Data Analysis Procedures

Data analysis involves classifying and summarizing the collected data to acquire responses to the research questions. The data for the study was both qualitative and quantitative. The qualitative data from all the instruments apart from the closed-ended responses was analyzed through themes. The data were arranged into categories where the most frequent categories forming the major themes were identified. Thematic approach was employed in selecting the most emergent themes from qualitative data (Herzog et al., 2019). The responses from the focus group discussions were grouped into categories. The themes were formed by combining the categories. The researcher chose the majority of keywords from the respondents and coded the phrases that related to the study questions and the topic of interest.

Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) was used to modify, code, input, and analyse quantitative data from the form. In addition, the study's data analysis included both inferential and descriptive statistics. Inferential statistics aided explanation for the influence of mobile device use on the level of marital satisfaction among couples in MCK Nkubu Synod. Moreover, inferential statistics was key in drawing conclusions in a fundamentally different way from descriptive statistics that merely summarize data. Descriptive statistics including frequencies, mean, standard deviation, and percentages, were used to present the results.

The study used multiple regression analysis to show the relationships that existed between the independent and dependent variables. Normality, linearity, multicollinearity and homoscedasticity were tested before running the multiple linear regression to ascertain that none of the conditions was violated.

The Linear regression model for the study is expressed as follows:

$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 P + \beta_2 B + \beta_3 W + e$

Where:

Y is the level of marital satisfaction

$\beta_0$ is the intercept

$\beta_1,$ $\beta_2,$ and $\beta_3$ are the regression coefficient for the contribution of each independent variable (social media use, mobile game use, and mobile phone calls) to the level of marital satisfaction.

e is the residual of the regression equation

To examine the effect of marriage characteristics on the level of marital satisfaction, one-way ANOVA and Pearson correlation analysis was utilized. Specifically, the effect of length of marriage and age at marriage on the level of marital satisfaction utilized Pearson correlation analysis since the variables involved were continuous. The effect of education and social-economic status on the level of marital satisfaction utilized one-way ANOVA since the two variables had more than two categories and the dependent variable was continuous.

## 3.11 Ethical Considerations

Kenya Methodist University's Ethical Review Board provided the researcher with an introductory letter. The researcher got permission from NACOSTI. Approval of the Nkubu Synod bishop and the circuit superintendent ministers was also sought.

The researcher sought informed consent of respondents through a letter explaining the purpose of the data collected, the identity of the researcher, and how the results would be used (Cresswell, 2014). To protect human rights, ethical concerns such as informed consent, confidentiality, privacy, and security were closely monitored throughout the research. In the first place, the researcher thoroughly explained the study to the respondents in advance, and this helped in obtaining consent. The researcher got a go-ahead from the targeted respondents through an allowed permit for them to participate in the study voluntarily. Sincerity, honesty, truthfulness and confidentiality in collecting data were highly ensured. This was achieved by assuring the respondents that the data obtained would only be used for academic purposes.

Consequently, the information that was presented by the respondents was treated confidentially and anonymously presented. Anonymity particularly was ensured by refraining from soliciting the participants' names. Instead, the different participants of this study were given codes instead of being referred to by their names.

# CHAPTER FOUR

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### 4.1 Introduction

In this chapter, the findings of the study have been presented, interpreted and discussed. The same have been organized according to the main variables of the study. For each variable, the results based on quantitative data are presented, whose interpretation has been enhanced by incorporating the consolidated qualitative data gathered through focused group discussions and interviews of key informants. The results on diagnostic tests are then presented which are followed by correlation analysis and multiple linear regression analysis. This enabled the researcher to test the overall purpose of the study. The results on moderation effect of marriage characteristics are then presented. The chapter starts by presenting the findings on reliability of the data, the response rate and then background information regarding the respondents.

### 4.2 Results on Reliability Test

In this study, the correctness and relevancy of items in the instruments of collecting data was assessed by carrying out the correlation of items of main research variables using the mean values. The Cronbach Bach alpha values obtained were presented in Table 4.1.

**Table 4. 1**

*Reliability result on items in the main variables of the study*

| Main constructs of the study  (N = 226) | Cronbach's Alpha |
| --- | --- |
| Social media use (X1) | 0.872 |
| Mobile game use (X2) | 0.841 |
| Mobile phone calls (X3) | 0.938 |
| Marriage characteristics (Moderator) | 0.812 |
| Level of marriage satisfaction (Y) | 0.791 |

The Cronbach's Bach value was more than 0.7, ($\alpha$<0.700) for each main variable of the study. This indicated that the data were reliable to be used in the analysis.

**4.3 Response Rate**

 The study had administered 367 questionnaires to couples in Nkubu Synod, out of which 226 (61.6%) valid questionnaires were returned and used in the analysis. As for superintendent ministers, the study had intended to interview 6 members, and all of them (100%) were available for the interview session. As for the Focused Group Discussion, the study targeted 6 members of clergies (3 men and 3 ladies) from the 6 circuits in Nkubu Synod, and all of them (100%) turned up for the discussion.

**4.4 Results on Marriage Characteristics and the Level of Marital Satisfaction**

The marriage characteristics of couples were very significant in this study and constituted research objective four. The marriage characteristics helped to understand the dynamics which informed the interpretation of the findings. The results on marriage characteristics of couples were later used in 4.12 to assess their moderating effects on the mobile

devices. Alongside the marriage characteristic were other background information of respondents which were gathered and discussed herein. This study covered characteristics such as gender, age, educational background, length in marriage, age when one got married, type of marriage, and average monthly income. Morris et al. (2011) demonstrated a relationship between marriage characteristics and high levels of marital happiness. This gave the current study confidence to carry out an empirical investigation to understand how the influence of mobile devices usage on marital satisfaction was moderated by marriage characteristics.

In this study, 141 (62.4%) of the respondents were of male gender, while 85 (37.6%) were of female gender. Meaning, most respondents in this study were men. The gender imbalance was attributed to the fact that questionnaires were administered to church members after a Sunday service; hence, most married female respondents declined to participate in the study giving reasons like they were in a hurry to go home to feed their children or to attend to other family duties. Several married females who took questionnaires to fill at home did not return them.

The age of respondent was also sought. It was significant in informing the perspectives and other observations made regarding the phenomena of the study. Information regarding age of respondents was summarized and presented in Table 4.2.

**Table 4. 2**

*Age of respondent*

| Age range | Frequency | Percent |
|---|---|---|
| Below 30 years | 68 | 30.1 |
| 30 to 39 years | 45 | 19.9 |
| 40 to 49 years | 55 | 24.3 |
| 50 to 59 years | 28 | 12.4 |
| Above 59 years | 30 | 13.3 |
| Total | 226 | 100.0 |

The results show that approximately 30% of the married church members were below 30 years of age. It is also clear that most married church members 100(44.2%) were between 30 years and 49 years, while, 28(12.4%) were between 50 and 59 years. According to Bett et al. (2017), majority of married couples in Kenya fall between the age brackets of 40-49 years. The results of Kariuki (2018) revealed that most married couple are majorly young; between the ages of 31 and 40, and therefore, they are actively involved in the process of educating themselves and their children. This indicates that most married church members were in their productive age as noted by Mutunga (2020) and Kariuki (2018), and hence were likely to be vibrant users of the social media, mobile games and making phones calls. With the current level of technology use and integration, the information on age was very significant in this study, considering that people are likely to utilize mobile phones to progress their productive activities.

Although there was a noticeable gender imbalance among respondents as noted above, married church members had good level of education as shown in Table 4.3.

**Table 4. 3**

*Educational background of couples at MCK Nkubu Synod*

| Education qualifications | Frequency | Percent |
|---|---|---|
| Primary school certificate | 9 | 4.0 |
| Secondary school certificate | 30 | 13.3 |
| College diploma | 79 | 35.0 |
| Degree | 90 | 39.8 |
| College certificate | 18 | 8.0 |
| Total | 226 | 100.0 |

The findings indicate that most married church members of Nkubu Synod, 90 (39.8%) held a degree, 79 (35.0%) diplomas; 30 (13.3%) had secondary school certificate, and 18 (13.3%) had college certificate. Only 9 (4.0%) had a primary school certificate. This shows that the married church members from Nkubu Synod were relatively literate, and that the education level did not vary with gender. This was because Chi-square P value was greater than 0.05 as shown in Table 4.4. According to Bett et al. (2017), most of married individuals are career couples as represented by the majority of them being in possession of undergraduate educational attainment. Maigallo (2019) and Mutunga (2020) also noted that most couples in Nairobi and Meru Counties had secondary school certificates; hence, it was worth noting that Christian couples were characterized with moderate levels of literacy and independency. Considering the gender imbalance reported above, the study went ahead to cross-tabulate the gender and education level of a respondent so as to understand whether the education level varied with gender. The results of Chi-square test is shown in Table 4.4.

**Table 4. 4**

*Chi-Square Test for Gender and level of education* **of married church members at Nkubu Synod.**

|  | Value | df | Asymptotic Significance (2-sided) |
|---|---|---|---|
| Pearson Chi-Square | 9.127[a] | 4 | .058 |
| Likelihood Ratio | 9.121 | 4 | .058 |
| Linear-by-Linear Association | 7.094 | 1 | .008 |
| N of Valid Cases | 226 | | |

a. 1 cells (10.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 3.38.

The Pearson Chi-Square showed asymptotic significance of 0.058 which was great than 0.05; hence, there was no statistically significant difference of the level of education across gender. Disparity in the level of education was reported by Zang (2022) as key contributor to marital conflict and distress. However, in the current study, the findings meant that any marital dissatisfaction noted among married couples in Nkubu Synod was not as a result of education disparity among couples, but could be attributed to something else. Aseka et al. (2021), Bravo and Mrtinez (2017) and Ngigi and Chepchieng (2020) underscored that marital dissatisfaction amongst couples resulted from a number of causes amongst which were; poor sex life, poor communication, age characteristics, infidelity, getting married at teenage age, financial problems and drug and substance abuse.

The study further sought to establish the number of years the respondent had been married. The length in marriage was critical in understanding the perspectives that one

had about different aspects of marital satisfaction was investigated in the study. The responses gotten were summarized as shown in Table 4.5.

**Table 4. 5**

*Number of years the respondent had been married*

| Age range | Frequency | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| Between 0 - 1 years | 12 | 5% |
| Between 2 - 5 years | 71 | 31% |
| Between 6 -10 years | 23 | 10% |
| Between 11 - 20 years | 60 | 27% |
| Between 21 - 30 years | 34 | 15% |
| 31 years and above | 26 | 12% |
| | 226 | 100% |

Slightly more than a third of the married church members in Nkubu Synod were young in marriage; where, 83 (36%) had been in marriage between 0 and 5 years; while, 23 (10%) were between 6 and 10 years. The total number of respondents who had been in marriage for 10 years and below were 106 representing 46%. This indicates a need for marital guidance in order for couples to enjoy effective marriage companionship. Bravo and Mrtinez (2017) noted that most married couples in churches had stayed in marriage between 0-10 years, and that age characteristics in a marriage were linked to sexual satisfaction. When arguing for the essence of marriage therapy and counselling, Kaushik et al. (2021) said its significance in improving marital stability, lessens divorce cases and promotes healthy communication among couples. The findings show that 60 (27%) had been in marriage between 11 and 20 years; while, 34 (15%) were between 21 and 30 years.  Only 6 (12%) had 31 years and above in marriage. According to Karimi et al. (2019), the longevity in marriage may indicate shared experiences and interests or may demonstrate some level of tolerance for each other in marriage companionship.

The study was further interested in establishing the age one was at the time he or she was getting married. Respondents indicated ages between 20 and 33 years. A break down on how old one was at the time of getting married is shown in Table 4.6.

**Table 4. 6**

*The age when one got married*

| Age when one got married (N = 226) | Frequency | Percent |
|---|---|---|
| 20 and 22 years | 29 | 12.8 |
| 23 and 25 years | 83 | 36.7 |
| 26 – 29 years | 84 | 37.1 |
| 30 and 33 | 30 | 13.3 |

The findings show that 84 (37.1 %) of couples in MCK Nkubu Synod got married between age 26 and 29 years; followed by 83 (36.7%) who were married between 23 and 25 years old; 30 (13.3%) were between 30 and 33 years, while 29 (12.8%) were between 20 and 22 years old. The study by Kariuki (2018) reported that most church members got married between the age of 23 and 30, and that this specific age bracket was associated with very low cases of getting remarried. This indicates that one's age at the time of getting married is an important factor for consideration towards good companionship and long-lasting matrimony. Ngigi and Chepchieng (2020) also termed age characteristics as key for marriages to thrive and for meeting high levels of marital satisfaction.

The other demographic characteristics sought was about average monthly income for the family in Kenyan shillings. The information gathered was summarized and presented in Table 4.7.

**Table 4. 7**

*Average monthly income for the family*

| Average monthly income for the family | Frequency | Percent |
|---|---|---|
| Below 10,000 | 29 | 12.8 |
| 10,000 to 20,000 | 59 | 26.1 |
| 20,001 to 40,000 | 58 | 25.7 |
| 40,001 to 100,000 | 59 | 26.1 |
| Above 100,000 | 21 | 9.3 |
| Total | 226 | 100.0 |

The results in Table 4.7 show that 59 (26.1%) of married church members of Nkubu Synod were earning between Kes 10,000 and 20,000, while, a similar number was earning between Kes 40,001 and 100,000. Another size number, 58 (25.7%) was earning between Kes 20,001 and 40,000. Only 21 (9.3%) had family earnings above Kes 100,000 per month. The information indicates a relatively low economically empowered couples, considering that nearly three quarters ($^3/_4$); 146 (64.6%) of married church members of Nkubu Synod were earning from Kes 40,000 and below. These findings concur with those reported by Odhiambo (2021) who noted that the annual income of married career couples was dismal and that the economic capacity as a demographic factor possessed significant influence on the marital satisfaction of the families. The level of family livelihood has been noted as a key determinant in the quality of life; hence, had some influence on marital satisfaction as noted by Mutai (2019).

### 4.4.1 Access to Internet

Considering that the study was interested in determining the influence of mobile device use on the level of marital satisfaction of couples in MCK Nkubu Synod, it was important to first find out how the married church members were accessing internet and social media. This is shown in Figure 4.1.

**Figure 4. 1**

*How couples in MCK Nkubu Synod access internet and social media*
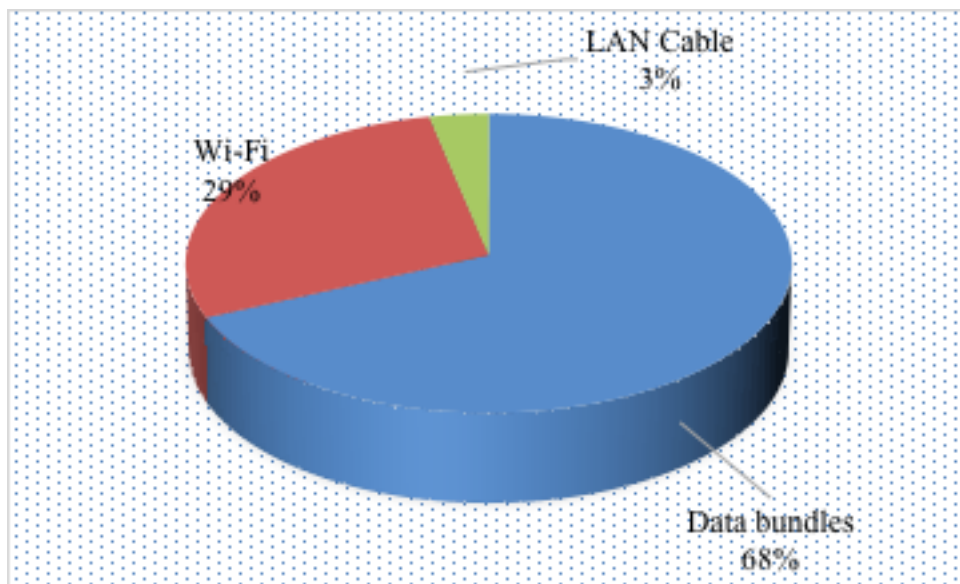


The findings in Figure 4.1 show that 185 (68%) of married church members from MCK Nkubu Synod were accessing internet and social media via data bundles; 77 (29%) were using wi-fi, while 9 (3%) has LAN connections. Information gathered further indicated almost all (99%) had smartphone as shown in Table 4.8. These findings are in agreement with those presented by Nyambura (2020) and Kimeto (2016) who noted that majority of family members utilized their personal gadgets to access social media sites, and very few working individuals made use of the institutional Wi-Fi and LAN connections in their

office desktops to log in and briefly check for updates among their preferred social networking sites before logging out.

**Table 4. 8**

*Mobile devices one uses and the Social media sites visited often*

| Mobile devices one uses | Frequency | Percentage | Social media sites one visit often sites | Frequency | Percentage |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| • Smartphone | 223 | 99% | • Facebook | 126 | 56% |
| • Tablet | 56 | 25% | • WhatsApp | 172 | 76% |
| • Laptop computer | 56 | 25% | • Instagram | 22 | 10% |
| • Personal gaming device | 3 | 1% | • Twitter | 34 | 15% |

It was also clear that a quarter, 56 (25%) of the church members of MCK Nkubu Synod had laptop; while another quarter had tablets. Only 3 (1%) said that they had a personal gaming device. This shows that since the majority had smart phone, they were able to access internet via their phones. This explains why the majority 85 (68%) of the married church members said they were accessing internet and social media via data bundles. The findings concur with the report presented by Aljasir (2022) who noted that the mobile phone was the most utilized device to facilitate social media usage, internet surfing and gaming. Sharaievska (2012) also noticed that couples mostly used their smartphones, laptop and computers to access Facebook, WhatsApp, snap chat, twitter and infiltrate into their partners' sites and profiles.

When asked to indicate the social media sites one was visiting often, three quarters, and 172 (76%) said that they were accessing WhatsApp. A hundred and twenty six (56%) was accessing Facebook, 22 (10%) Instagram; while 34(15%) were accessing Twitter. Ngozi (2019) also concurred that Facebook and WhatsApp usage among couples surpassed all the other media platforms. These results are also consistent with the findings of Kimeto (2016) who examined and found out that couples liked Facebook and WhatsApp sites. On the one hand, Gull et al. (2019) noticed that in the Middle East, the most popular social media sites liked by married couples were WhatsApp, followed by Twitter and then Snapchat. On the other hand, Toma and Choi (2016) noticed that in the US, the most preferred media was Facebook and Twitter.

The study further sought to establish how many times one was visiting social networking sites in a day. Table 4.9 shows the results.

**Table 4. 9**

*Number of times one visits social networking sites in a day*

| Number of times one visits social networking sites in a day | Frequency | Percent |
|---|---|---|
| One | 14 | 6.2 |
| Two | 32 | 14.2 |
| Three | 41 | 18.1 |
| Four | 11 | 4.9 |
| Five and above | 128 | 56.6 |
| Total | 226 | 100.0 |

According to the results in Table 4.9, 48 (25.1%) married church members were visiting social media from five times and above within a day. Slightly more than a third, 84 (37.2%) were visiting between two and four times a day. This shows that married church members were active on social media sites; hence, establishing how much visiting social

media was impacting on the level of marital satisfaction was necessary. These findings were consistent with Ngozi (2019) who had established that that most married couples spent 3-4 (active usage) hours of their day, on a daily basis to surf social media sites. Moreover, Ngozi (2019) concluded that such time depicted very high rate of social media usage.

**4.8 The Level of Marital Satisfaction of Married Couples in MCK, Nkubu Synod**

The level of marital satisfaction of married couples in MCK Nkubu Synod was the dependent variable in this study. The study intended to establish the marital satisfaction level of married couples in MCK Nkubu Synod. The outcome on marital satisfaction level of the married was to be correlated with the findings brought from the predictor variables covered in the previous sections. With a view to determine the extent to which the marital satisfaction was affected by the use of the mobile devices. In measuring the dependent variable, the Revised Dyadic Adjustment Scale (RDAS) was applied to determine the level of marital satisfaction among married couples in MCK Nkubu Synod. In this scale, fourteen standardized statements were posed to respondents – all of which covered seven broad areas. The areas were: decision making, values, affection, stability, conflict, activities, and discussion. These aspects reflect the key areas that are weighty bearing on marital satisfaction. As noted by Crane, Middleton and Bean (2000), the seven areas were hence broadly classified into three key categories; consensus, satisfaction and cohesion. According to RDAS scale, the 14 items of measure have scores that range from 0 to 69. In this study, each of the 14 items was measured in a scale of 6 points, except item number eleven which had 5 points. According to the Revised Dyadic Adjustment Scale, the overall maximum total points of all the 14 items was 69. To get the average

score for each item in the scale, the mean was calculated accordingly. The mean score for each statement was computed to help visualize the average point. The results were summarized as shown in Tables 4.10 and 4.11.

**Table 4. 10**

*The Revised Dyadic Adjustment Scale on marital satisfaction level of couples at MCK Nkubu Synod*

| Statements on marital satisfaction (N = 226) | Always Disagree (0) | Almost Always Disagree (1) | Frequently Disagree (2) | Occasionally Agree (3) | Almost Always Agree (4) | Always Agree (5) | Mean score | Score out of 69 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Religious matters | 0(0%) | 5(2.2%) | 18(8.0%) | 49(21.7%) | 68(30.1%) | 86(38.1%) | 3.94 | 54 |
| 2. Demonstrations of affection | 5(2.2%) | 6(2.7%) | 34(15.0%) | 74(32.7%) | 61(27.0%) | 46(20.4%) | 3.41 | 47 |
| 3. Making major decisions | 1(0.4%) | 11(4.9%) | 41(18.1%) | 53(23.5%) | 70(31.0%) | 50(22.1%) | 3.46 | 48 |
| 4. Sex relations | 8(3.5%) | 19(8.4%) | 24(10.6%) | 71(31.4%) | 68(30.1%) | 36(15.9%) | 3.24 | 45 |
| 5. Conventionality (correct or proper behavior) | 2(0.9%) | 13(5.8%) | 40(17.7%) | 65(28.8%) | 68(30.1%) | 38(16.8%) | 3.32 | 46 |
| 6. Career decisions | 12(5.3%) | 11(4.9%) | 19(8.4%) | 69(30.5%) | 81(35.8%) | 34(15.0%) | 3.32 | 46 |

| Question | All the Time (0) | Most of the time (1) | More often than not (2) | Occasionally (3) | Rarely (4) | Never (5) | Mean |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 7. How frequently do you talk or contemplate divorce, separation, or ending your relationship? | 88(38.9%) | 51(22.6%) | 42(18.6%) | 23(10.2%) | 11(4.9%) | 11(4.9%) | 1.34 19 |
| 8. How frequently do you and your partner argue? | 29(12.8%) | 65(28.8%) | 79(35.0%) | 31(13.7%) | 15(6.6%) | 7(3.1%) | 1.82 25 |
| 9. Do you ever wish you hadn't married (or lived together)? | 83(36.7%) | 51(22.6%) | 50(22.1%) | 21(9.3%) | 11(4.9%) | 10(4.4%) | 1.36 19 |
| 10. How frequently do you and your partner "get on each other's nerves"? | 11(4.9%) | 78(34.5%) | 81(35.8%) | 30(13.3%) | 12(5.3%) | 14(6.2%) | 1.98 27 |

| Question | Every day (4) | Almost Every day (3) | Occasionally (2) | Rarely (1) | Never (0) | | Mean | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 11. Do you and your partner share any outside interests? | 48(21.2%) | 97(42.9%) | 51(22.6%) | 22(9.7%) | 8(3.5%) | | 2.69 | 37 |
| Statement | Never (0) | Less than once a month (1) | Once or twice a month (2) | Once or twice a week (3) | Once a day (4) | More often (5) | Mean | |
| 12. Have a stimulating exchange of ideas | 13(5.8%) | 42(18.6%) | 44(19.5%) | 34(15.0%) | 20(8.8%) | 73(32.3%) | 3.00 | 41 |
| 13. Work together on a project | 21(9.3%) | 27(11.9%) | 45(19.9%) | 39(17.3%) | 17(7.5%) | 77(34.1%) | 3.04 | 42 |
| 14. Calmly discuss something | 10(4.4%) | 27(11.9%) | 37(16.4%) | 32(14.2%) | 43(19.0%) | 77(34.1%) | 3.34 | 46 |

The marital satisfaction of couples has many dimensions. One of the dimensions assessed in this study was the rating on consensus on six items; namely, religious matters, demonstrations of affection, making major decisions, sex relations, conventionality (correct or proper behavior), and career decisions. The results in Table 4.10 show that 86 (38.1%) of the married in MCK, Nkubu Synod indicated that as marriage partners, they were always agreeing on religious matters; 68 (30.1%) almost always agree, 49 (21.7%) occasionally agree; while only 5 (2.2%) almost always disagree. The majority of the married couples, 74(32.7%) said that they occasionally agree on demonstrations of affection; 61(27.0%) almost always agree, 46(20.4%) always agree; while 34(15.0%) frequently disagree. Regarding consensus in making major decisions, 70(31.0%) almost always agree, 53(23.5%) occasionally agree, 50(22.1%) always agree; while, 41(18.1%) frequently disagree.

For sex relations, the consensus was also slightly above average, at a mean of 3.24; where, 71(31.4%) occasionally agree, 68(30.1%) almost always agree, 36(15.9%) always agree, 24(10.6%) occasionally agree; while, 19(8.4%) almost always disagree. When asked about conventionality (correct or proper behavior), 68(30.1%) of married couples said that they almost always agree, 65(28.8%) occasionally agree, while 40(17.7%) occasionally agree. The last item in the first category was testing for consensus on career decisions, where majority 81(35.8%) said that they almost always agree, 69(30.5%) occasionally agree, while 19(8.4%) almost always disagree.

The findings show a moderate score (mean score was approximately 3.4 in a range of 0 to 6) on consensus category. This score is approximately at average and indicates that majority of the married couples in MCK, Nkubu Synod reported consensus that can be described as moderate on issues regarding religious matters, demonstrations of affection, making major decisions, sex relations, conventionality (correct or proper behavior), and career decisions. Notably, lack of consensus especially in making major decisions can cause strife, ruin companionship, distort the desired vision, and can eventually cause marital dissatisfaction, which will fall short of the observations of Koval (2020) who assured that collaborative decision-making by couples enabled them to maneuver through and tackle very complex decisions. Rosenkrants (2015) also noted that financial decisions were a common source of disagreement for couples and, that intensified conflicts between couples led to divorce.

The second dimension was about satisfaction. It had four items which sought to establish the frequency at which a marriage partner contemplate divorce, separation, or ending relationship; argue, wish hadn't married (or lived together), and getting on each other's nerves. Surprisingly, the results indicate that most married people in MCK, Nkubu Synod, 88(38.9%) contemplated divorce, separation, or ending their relationships all the time; 51(22.6%) said most of the times, 42(18.6%) more often than not, and 23(10.2%) occasionally. Only 11(4.9%) said that they had never contemplated divorce, separation, or ending relationship. The idea of contemplating divorce, separation, or ending relationship is usually driven by situations, encounters, events, experiences, unmet needs and other distressing issues in life. These findings indicate a problem, which, if not addressed may lead to actual divorce, separation, or termination of relationship among

married couples, which were noted by clergies in a focus group discussion, and by Superintendent Ministers in an interview. Moleka (2021) and Amaand Odi (2018) associated the ascendency rate of divorce among Christian couples with issues of infidelity, financial expenditure issues, family interference and poor communication. It was clear that lack of stamina to deal with marriage dissatisfaction issues prompted partners to think of separating.

Respondents were further asked to state the frequency at which one argue with his / her partner, to which 79(35.0%) of respondents said that it happens more often than not; 65(28.8%) indicated most of the times, while 29(12.8%) said that they argue all the time. Along the same vein, respondents were asked to indicate the frequency at which they "get on each other's nerves". An almost equivalent number of respondents 81(35.8%) said that it happens more often than not; 78(34.5%) most of the times, while 11(4.9%) indicated that they get on each other's nerves all the time. The findings show that argument among married couples happen more often than not, most of the time and to others, it happens all the time. Findings are in agreement with the report presented by Lippe et al. (2014) who found that European women and men were in constant disagreements with their partners on a daily basis. According to Tasew et al. (2018), couples faced daily strife, disagreements, stress and depression due to quarrelsome partners. The issue of dissension was largely because of economic matters, sexual issues, psychological, and emotional conflicts. Tasew stressed that the rate of occurrence of daily conflicts among married people was influencing quitting, separating and divorcing decisions.

Although argument in marriage is common, the rate of its occurrence signifies the level of congruence in perspectives, interests and values. The argument can be triggered by re-occurrence of behavior or failure to adhere to agreed matters. The persistence of the argument usually steals away happiness and joy. This may predispose one to seeking happiness and joy elsewhere, for example, by chatting with other friends via social media, text or even making calls. One may also think of spending time away from home, for example playing online games. The findings of Castonguay (2019) concurred that conflicts between spouses was directly related to marital dissatisfaction. Isanejad (2018) reported similar findings that many couples engaged in online infidelity out of push for compensation and gratification due to undone responsibility by the other partner. That some join some social networking sites like Facebook, WhatsApp and Twitter with an aim of filling the left gap.

The married couples were also asked to indicate whether one had ever wished they had not married (or lived together). Surprisingly, majority of the married couples, 83(36.7%) said that they wished it all the time, 51(22.6%) most of the time, 50(22.1%) more often than not; while only 10(4.4%) said that they have never wished it. This means that given a chance, majority of the married couples would walk out of their marriages. Tasew et al. (2018) reported that spouses in a marriage thought regularly about ending the marriage life with the current partner because of frequent disagreements attributed to poor decision making on family financial management and infidelity. These findings corroborate with the results on contemplating divorce, separation, or ending relationship where most respondents said that they think about it all the time. This is a clear exhibition of dissatisfaction among the married couples at MCK Nkubu Synod. Tasew et al. (2018)

reported an increase in divorce cases among married which they said were threatening the marriage institutions. Castonguay (2019) noted poor marital satisfaction was correlated with addictive social media use, regular disagreements, issues of infidelity, poor financial management, and continuously distracted face-to-face communication whenever spouses were physically together during family time.

The last dimension was about cohesion. It had four indicators that covered issues about the sharing of outside interests, exchange of ideas, ability to work together in a project, and ability to discuss issues calmly. In the first instance, respondents were asked to rank the way they share any outside interests. The majority, 97(42.9%) said that they share outside interests almost every day; 51(22.6%) do it occasionally, 48(21.2%) every day, while 22(9.7%) said that they rarely share. In the second instance, respondents were asked to state whether they have a stimulating exchange of ideas to which, 77(34.1%) said that they were doing it more often. Others, 45(19.9%) were doing it once or twice a month, 42(18.6%) indicated less than once a month, while 21(9.3%) said that they had never shared. Regarding working together on a project, the majority of the married couples, 77(34.1%) do it more often, 45(19.9%) said once or twice a month, 39(17.3%) once or twice a week, while, 21(9.3%) said they had never worked together on a project. The last indicator was the ability to discuss issues calmly, where majority of respondents, 77(34.1%) were doing it more often, 43(19.0%) were having it once a day, while 10(4.4%) had never calmly discussed something with their marriage partner.

From the above findings, it is clear that the issue of cohesion is weighty, and lack of the same can cause serious disharmony among married couples. There are a lot of situations in life that require discussion in order to take appropriate course of actions. Married

people therefore consult each other and discuss issues all the time. The failure to involve indicates exclusion and one may end up feeling wasted, used, unworthy, unwanted and belittled. According to clergies and superintendent ministers, use of social media and mobile phones calls were contributing to these emotional and psychological feelings. The quality of discussion is usually characterized by calmness, and its absence may result to conflicts and fighting. This worsens the marital dissatisfaction. The married couples are also expected to work collaboratively for effective accomplishment of agreed projects. Working together in a given project indicate unity of direction and cohesion among married couples. It also demonstrates the strength of interactions and the level of agreement. Aseka et al. (2019) also highlighted the strength of couples finding satisfaction in their marriage life which they said was based on support for each other in undertaking the agreed family decisions, such as advancing career or any other big achievements. Barongo and Onderi (2018) as well reported that social, moral, economic and mental support among couples boosted their decision-making, where consensus was described as a key factor towards reducing marriage distress and conflicts. The study by Markman et al. (2020) argued that the couples who work together in a project are very successful.

In view of the foregoing results and discussion, the study further categorized the Revised Dyadic Adjustment scores of married couples in MCK, Nkubu Synod into subscale with a view to clearly understand the magnitude of each indicator. According to Crane, Middleton and Bean (2000), the Revised Dyadic Adjustment subscale can be used to determine non-distressed or distressed marriages. Computations were done regarding the

three key areas as guided by Bean (2000); and the subscale were generated as shown in Table 4.11.

**Table 4. 11**

*The Dyadic Subscale on Marital Satisfaction of Couples in MCK Nkubu Synod*

| Category | Key factors | Items from the revised Dyadic scale | Item score | Category score |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Consensu s | Decision Making: Items | 3 and 6. | 6.8 | |
| | Values: Items | 1 and 5 | 7.3 | 20.7 |
| (0 to 30) | Affection: Items | 2 and 4 | 6.6 | |
| Satisfacti on | Stability: Items | 7 and 9 | 2.7 | |
| (0 to 20) | Conflict: Items | 8 and 10 | 3.8 | 6.5 |
| Cohesion | Activities: Items | 11 and 13 | 5.7 | |
| (0 to 19) | Discussion: : Items | 12 and 14 | 6.3 | 12.1 |
| | Total score | | 39.3 | 39.3 |

Table 4.11 provides a summary of the three categories of aspects (satisfaction, consensus, satisfaction and cohesion) for determining marital satisfaction. In this scenario, consensus recorded an aggregate score of 20.7 out of 30, satisfaction had 6.5 points out of 20, while cohesion scored 12.1 out of 19. This shows that the rate of consensus among the married couples at MCK, Nkubu Synod was approximately at $^2/_3$, which was equivalent to 69%. This can be described as a moderate level of consensus. However, the satisfaction elements scored a low value, 6.5 out of 20. This score was below the average value designated for this category. The cohesion category had 12.1 points out of 19 scores which are designated for this category. This was equivalent to 63.7%.

The overall Dyadic score for this study was 39.3 out of 69 points. According to Crane, Middleton and Bean (2000), the maximum score is 69; hence, the overall marital satisfaction level in this study was 39.3, which was equivalent to 57%. This level of marital satisfaction was below the cut off points of 48, as indicated in the revised Dyadic adjustment scale. According to the revised Dyadic adjustment scale, the scores that are above 48, indicate non-distress in marriage; while, 47 scores and below, indicate spousal distress. Therefore, with marital satisfaction level being at 39.3 (Dyadic score = 39.3), there is sufficient evidence for presence of spousal distress among the married couples at MCK, Nkubu Synod.

The spousal distress reported in the above results is at a level that cannot be ignored. Notably, the results show some level of substantial agitation which is attributed to instability and conflict related items and elements. This means that, there was evidence of instability and conflicts in most marriages among married couples in MCK Nkubu Synod. When the marriage relationship is unstable, it creates room for conflicts, hence, high level of marital dissatisfaction. Aseka et al. (2019) concurred with these findings arguing that poor family relationships were significantly and positively related to poor marital satisfaction among spouses. Barongo and Ondieri (2018) also reported that regular family conflicts were a major source of couple distress and poor psychological and emotional support, and this would result to poor marital satisfaction.

It is also clear from the results that there was little cohesion between partner and his / her spouse, especially in activities such as working together in a project. Another element that had a low score in the scale was discussion. This means that there were issues which

seemed to interfere with the manner in which spouses discuss and agree on various issues in marriage. Similar results were reported by Dixon (2020) who noted that poor emotional attachment and supportive reasoning was a major predicament affecting marriage unions in which there was mishandling of social media. Aseka et al. (2019) also noted a weakness among couples as presented by the average distress they faced in marriage. This dissatisfaction was as a direct influence of the extent to which couples agreed on family issues; got involved in each discussion on family projects and was satisfied by each other. This study argued that marital dissatisfaction was partly attributed to mobile device uses and; hence, there was need to empirically assess the hypothesized relationship. McDaniel and Coyne (2016) also considered regular conflicts among married couples over personal cellphone gadgets, laptops and unbalanced social networking as a major cause for lack of harmony and marital happiness.

## 4.5 Social Media Use and the Level of Marital Satisfaction of Couples

This objective was determined to assess the influence of social media use on the level of marital satisfaction in MCK, Nkubu Synod, Meru County in Kenya. Having confirmed the wide use of social media among couples in MCK, Nkubu Synod as indicated in the above findings, the study went deeper to interrogate the same to establish the extent to which it was affecting the level of marital satisfaction of couples in MCK, Nkubu Synod. This helped to address the first objective of the study which sought to assess the influence of social media use on the level of marital satisfaction of couples in MCK, Nkubu Synod, Meru County. In assessing this variable, several statements on the use of social media among couples were presented to respondents in a 5-level Likert scale. Which required them to indicate the extent of their agreement with each statement in a table. The rating

for each statement was coded in SPSS; where, 1 represented strongly disagree, 2 for disagree, 3 for neutral, 4 for agree and 5 was coded to represent strongly agree. The statements focused on aspects such as frequency of social media usage, monitoring of partners' usage of social media, quality of interactions with spouse and other friends, interruptions caused by social media usage, attentiveness to spouse when using social media, complaints and suspicion arising from the manner in which social media was used. In interpreting and reporting the results, the total number that agreed and those who strongly agreed was summed up to represent the agreement status; while the total number that disagreed and those who strongly disagreed was summed up to represent the disagreement status. The mean score for each statement in a table was computed to help visualize the average value of the responses out of a ranking of 5 points in a Likert Scale. Summary of the responses gotten is presented in Table 4.12.

**Table 4. 12**

*Social Media Use and the Level of Marital of Couples in MCK, Nkubu Synod*

| Social Media Use and the Level of Marital of Couples in MCK, Nkubu Synod  (N = 226) | Strongly agree | Agree | Neutral | Disagree | Strongly Disagree | Mean |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| I monitor my spouse's social media to see who his or her friends are and what he or she publishes. | 89 (39.4%) | 57 (25.2%) | 27 (11.9%) | 33 (14.6%) | 20 (8.8%) | 3.72 |
| My spouse, I suspect, is utilizing social media to look for romantic partnerships. | 89 (39.4%) | 58 (25.7%) | 27 (11.9%) | 31 (13.7%) | 21 (9.3%) | 3.72 |
| I am not comfortable leaving my phone with my spouse since he/she can view my social media discussions with pals. | 69 (30.5%) | 67 (29.6%) | 39 (17.3%) | 28 (12.4%) | 23 (10.2%) | 3.58 |
| When I see social media interactions between my spouse and their friends on social media, I often feel bitter. | 67 (29.6%) | 63 (27.9%) | 44 (19.5%) | 30 (13.3%) | 22 (9.7%) | 3.54 |
| Because of my usage of social media, I have very little time to interact with my marital spouse. | 80 (35.4%) | 44 (19.5%) | 30 (13.3%) | 33 (14.6%) | 39 (17.3%) | 3.41 |
| Because of my social media usage, I sometimes pay little attention during my chat with my spouse. | 64 (28.3%) | 60 (26.5%) | 29 (12.8%) | 48 (12.2%) | 25 (11.1%) | 3.40 |
| My spouse complains that how I spend so much time on Social Media (especially WhatsApp). | 52 (23.0%) | 66 (29.2%) | 37 (16.4%) | 40 (17.7%) | 31 (13.7%) | 3.30 |
| I occasionally argue with my partner over their social media usage and conduct. | 49 (21.7%) | 60 (26.5%) | 39 (17.3%) | 29 (12.8%) | 49 (21.7%) | 3.14 |
| I occasionally use social media late at night. | 30 (13.3%) | 46 (20.4%) | 55 (24.3%) | 62 (27.4%) | 33 (14.6%) | 2.90 |
| Even when my spouse is there, I am on social networking sites. | 27 (11.9%) | 30 (13.3%) | 40 (17.7%) | 89 (39.4%) | 40 (17.7%) | 2.62 |

The results in Table 4.12 show that nearly three quarters, 146 (64.6%) of married members of MCK church, Nkubu Synod usually monitor their spouse's social media to see the friends and what one publishes online.  Only 53 (23.4%) indicated that they don't monitor. The number of those who monitor their partner's social media postings was high (mean = 3.72), which shows the extent to which a spouse interrogates each other's online digital interactions with other friends. Obviously, upon browsing friends and related postings, one is likely to see uncomfortable messages and contents which may raise suspicions (Aziz & Buhari, 2018). This may result to bitterness, a fact which 130 (57.5%) respondents admitted that they often become bitter when they see social media interactions between their spouses and friends. The results show that the suspicions make one to conclude that the partner was utilizing social media to look for romantic encounters; where, 89 (39.4%) strongly agreed, while 58 (25.7%) agreed. This shows that, 147 (65.1%) married couples from MCK Nkubu Synod were suspecting that the spouses were utilizing social media to look for romantic partnerships.

Since social media enables people to have live chats regardless of one's location, it therefore increases the chances for unacceptable marital behavior, such as looking for romantic partnerships outside marriage. For fear of being noted of suspicious interactions which a partner may be having with pals on social media, the majority, 136 (60.1%) of married couples at MCK, Nkubu Synod said that they were not comfortable leaving phone with spouses. This was because, they were afraid that the spouse can view social media discussions with pals. Only 23 (10.2%) said that they had no problem leaving phone with spouses. These results and aspects noted herein are indicating an existence of suspicion in marriage which is occasioned by the use of social media tools. Notably, all

the statements discussed herein showed a high mean value (from 3.4 and above). This confirms high level of suspicion and discomfort in marriage, which gradually blossoms marital dissatisfaction among married couples. The studies by Katherine and Markie (2018) and Ngozi (2019) were consistent in the argument that social media utilization bred negative perception which was disrupting harmonious living of couples. The two studies argued that bitterness, hatred and spending money for virtual affairs were associated with regular conflicts at home for couples who talked with friends online. However, Gull et al. (2019) had a contrary opinion. Gull and colleagues found that marriage partners were not interested in surveying their partner's phones and social media sites.

The findings in Table 4.12 are show that social media was limiting spousal interaction. This was because slightly more than half, 124 (54.9%) of the married members of MCK, Nkubu Synod said that they had little time to interact with their marital spouses due to social media engagement. Moreover, 124 (54.8%) of couples admitted paying little attention to their spouses when they were engaged in social media chats with other people. This shows the extent to which lack of control on social media use may inhibit communication between a husband and wife. According to Bowen family system theory, couples should be sensitive to partners' needs, expectations and sufferings, failure of which results to unhealthy relationship. Lack of communication further limits interaction. Good communication has been noted by Mrtinez (2017) and Ngigi and Chepchieng (2020) as a key factor for marital happiness and satisfaction. It has been described as an essential virtue for any successful marriage. Githae (2021) and Aseka et al. (2021) also

noted that effective communication among couples paved way for amicable conflict resolution, and fostered quick healing and consensus; and played a key role in alleviating vices that are a threat to marriage companionship. The findings by Aziz and Buhari (2018) stressed on the need for couples to have control mechanisms on social media usage. Balanced utilization of the internet and social sites was found significant in establishing in family a harmonious living, loyalty, and increase in sexual intimacy.

The views of the members of clergy and the superintendent ministers were sought through focused group discussions and interviews respectively regarding the influence of social media use on the level of marital satisfaction among couples in MCK in Nkubu Synod. From the FGD of clergies, 56 phrases and themes were identified during the conversations. To facilitate better understanding, the phrases and themes were further put into categories through the induction process. The induction process entailed putting related phrases and themes together to represent a broad theme. The main variable hinted to the development of broad themes and categories. This process resulted to categorization of the identified phrases and themes into four key areas associated with social media use. The four identified categories were: the predisposing factors and behavioral constructs; emotional disengagement and related outcomes; worst outcomes in the use social media, and the positive use of social media. The first three categories were largely describing the negative effects of social media use among couples. The three categories had twenty three themes which were tabulated and presented in Table 4.13.

**Table 4. 13**

*Themes reflecting the negative effects of social media use among couples*

| Predisposing factors and behavioral constructs | Emotional disengagement and related outcomes | Worst outcomes in the use social media |
|---|---|---|
| 1. Dating sites avenue | 1. Suspicious | 1. Conflicts |
| 2. Comparison of spouse | 2. Feeling hurt | 2. Fighting |
| 3. Wrong impression | 3. Feeling ignored | 3. Separation |
| 4. Socialize more with friends online than with spouse | 4. Feeling less important | 4. Divorce |
| 5. Socializing steals precious family moments, decreases the quality of time spent causes limited interactions and bonding time with a partner | 5. Physically interaction withers | |
| 6. Distraction in communication, poor communication, miscommunication | 6. Jealousy | |
| 7. Non-meaningful /unconstructive conversations | 7. Lying | |
| 8. Misunderstanding | 8. Cheating /infidelity | |
| 9. Disagreements | 9. Retaliation | |
| 10. Boredom | | |

Table 4.13 shows that the social media use among married couples was predisposing

them to behaviors which were negatively affecting marriage relationship and bonding.

From the findings, it is clear that a married person who regularly uses the social media,

usually has the opportunity to meet different people who have diverse interests and

orientations. Depending on extremes, one may sometimes be interested to check social

dating sites and hook up with pals thereof. Unfortunately, people chatting on social media

may sometimes fail to be genuine or may cause one to have wrong impression about his/

her spouse. Frequent interactions may result to one comparing his/her spouse with others

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met on social media. The comparison of couples may make one to magnify the weaknesses of a spouse, and, if the practice becomes persistent, it may slowly affect the physical attractions between spouses. A study by Gull et al. (2019) shows that people in a marriage relationship do not like to be compared. The comparison may raise jealousy and cause unnecessary suspicions which hasten marital dissatisfaction.

As noted by couples in Table 4.12, spending time on social media deny one an opportunity to be with the marriage partner. Similarly, clergies observed that social media causes couples to spend more time socializing with other online friends than chatting with a spouse. This decreases the quality of time couples spend together and squeezes interactions and bonding one has with the spouse. It may eventually lead to lying, cheating and other related misconduct. When contacted during interview session, the Superintendent Minister Number 4 said, *"The excess use of social media while the partner is in the house is injurious and is a threat to marital satisfaction"*

The findings in Table 4.13 have also indicated that social media can cause serious distractions in communication. This finding corroborates with the results in Table 4.12, where, couples admitted that some partners usually engage in side-chatting. Specifically, concurrent WhatsApp chats when one is still having a conversation with the spouse. Superintendent Minister Number 6 noted, *"Frequent complaint from couples is about a spouse spending too much time on a phone"*. This complaint mean that one can be pre-occupied with live chats on social media; something that can deny couples time to engage actively in constructive conversations. This indicates that social media use can divide the attentions of a person; hence, the other spouse feels ignored, belittled, and hurt emotionally. The situation may result to serious misunderstanding and

miscommunication, and when a conversation arises, it may not be constructive or fruitful (Abbasi, 2019). A partner who is experiencing such feelings will eventually become bored and may start disengaging. The study by Oliveira (2016) also noted concerns brought about by prolonged use of smartphones among spouses. Oliveira (2016) said that the practice usually took place during wake-up time for couples. The same caused quarrels, conflicts, and dwindling physical interaction between spouses. Quick replying of text messages while a family were together made the other partner to devalue themselves and would dictate the reactions of the affected partner. Gottman and Silver (2015) recommended that individuals manage such behavior by being disciplined on technological device usage. Failure to that would fathom family conflicts, and this would eventually graduate to separation and /or divorce. Aseka et al. (2021) stressed the importance of clear communication and agreement amongst a couple in order to dampen cases of misunderstanding.

The persistence of above issues which were noted to be accelerated by the use of social media may go out of hand and eventually graduate to worst scenarios. It was clear that some couples would start experiencing incongruence in values and interests which may result to sharp disagreements, squabbles and conflicts due to mistrusts as observed by Duraes et al. (2020). These issues indicate danger in a marriage relationship and may partly explain the low level of marital satisfaction reported in this study. The most horrible outcomes may be separation, divorce and in some circumstances, it may lead to depression and death in isolated cases. The Superintendent Minister number one said, *"There is a lot infighting among couples which is attributed to the use of social media"*.

This superintendent minister further noted that sometimes, the issues of misunderstanding are precipitated by mistrust, suspicion and allegations; hence serious marital dissatisfaction in couples. Gull et al. (2019) noted that married couple who were unable to control their utilization of social networking sites suffered marital unhappiness, fights and ultimately divorce. Social media usage was largely linked to marital divorce and many other negative couple outcomes (Suhag et al., 2016). Additionally, González-Rivera et al. (2019) also condemned the undisciplined social media surfing by couples which was linked to increasing cases of infidelity, poor sexual intimacy and high rates of divorce among young couples.

Beside the social evils and psychosocial mistrust and worst outcomes that are associated with the use of social media by married couples, the members of clergy who took part in the focused group discussions; and three quarters of the Superintendent Ministers agreed that social media plays a significant role in enhancing communication. They noted that it also enhances bonding for long distance relationships. The members of clergy in a focused group discussion also agreed by claiming that social media has been used by couples to kick off debates over contentious issues where varied views are solicited within very short duration of time. The Superintendent Minister number one noted, *"An individual is able to contribute a point in a given debate regardless of being physically shy"*. This Superintendent Minister added, "*Some members have been able to seek help regarding some issues they are experiencing in life through social media."* The member of clergy further agreed during focused group discussion that sharing of knowledge has been made possible, hence saving on costs. They also noted how the social media has reduced bulk of album photos to a great extent. According to Shootfactory (2022), the use

of social media has enabled families to build heirlooms, capture beauty of environment and historical events. Some of the applications used in preserving photos via social media are iCloud and photo stream among others.

**4.6 Mobile Game Use and the Level of Marital Satisfaction of Couples**

The second objective of the study was to determine the influence of mobile game use on the level of marital satisfaction of couples in MCK, Nkubu Synod, Meru County. Gaming in this context, usually takes place via mobile devices joysticks, smartphones, or any other mobile game device such as play station. To assess this variable, several statements on the mobile game use were presented to couples in MCK, Nkubu Synod on a 5-level Likert scale, requiring respondents to indicate the extent of their agreement with each statement. The response on rating for each statement was coded in SPSS; where, 1 represented strongly disagree, 2 for disagree, 3 for neutral, 4 for agree and 5 for strongly agree. The statements focused on factors such as argument arising from use of games, preferences, and partner's interests in video games, addiction to video games, and adverse effects of gaming on couples.

In reporting and interpreting the results, the total number that agreed and those who strongly agreed was summed up to represent the agreement status; while the total number that disagreed and those who strongly disagreed was summed up to represent the disagreement status. The mean score for each statement was computed to help visualize the average points of the responses out of the rank of 5 points in a Likert Scale. Summary of the responses gotten is presented in Table 4.14.

**Table 4. 14**

*Mobile game use and the level of marital satisfaction of couples*

| Statements on mobile games use  (N = 226) | SA | A | N | D | SD | Mean |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| • I occasionally argue with my partner over video games and their conduct. | 78(34.5%) | 46(20.4%) | 29(12.8%) | 35(15.5%) | 38(16.8%) | 3.40 |
| • I prefer video games with friends rather than spending quality time with my spouse. | 90(39.8%) | 66(29.2%) | 27(11.9%) | 20(8.8%) | 23(10.2%) | 3.80 |
| • I would rather play video games than go out with others. | 93(41.2%) | 52(23.0%) | 16(7.1%) | 38(16.8%) | 27(11.9%) | 3.65 |
| • My partner and I share interests in gaming | 26(11.5%) | 39(17.3%) | 51(22.6%) | 76(33.6%) | 34(15.0%) | 2.77 |
| • I choose to play video games than spend time on physical exercise. | 74(32.7%) | 49(21.7%) | 23(10.2%) | 32(14.2%) | 48(21.2%) | 3.31 |
| • I frequently lose sleep as a result of late-night surfing. | 91(40.3%) | 47(20.8%) | 29(12.8%) | 28(12.4%) | 31(13.7%) | 3.62 |

The results in Table 4.14 show that although not many couples had personal gaming machine, majority of respondents, 156 (69%) indicated that they would prefer video games with friends rather than spending quality time with their spouses. This confession was alarming and indicated a diminished cohesion between couples and loss of interest for one another (Abbasi, 2019). This agrees with the findings regarding common interests on games, where almost half of the respondents, 110 (48.6%) disagreed that they share common interests with partners in gaming.

In studies by Bradford et al. (2018) and Wang et al. (2018), the married couples that spent quality time together reported happiness in marriage. If one partner feels the need to be away gaming is more satisfying than being together with the spouse, then the marital commitment is at stake. Ahlstrom et al. (2012) also commented that the ability of one partner getting committed to gaming led to lower marital satisfaction. It also created opportunities for daily quarrels due to one spouse getting to bed very late at night. Additionally, Bradford et al. (2018) disclosed that distractions of the phone or gaming while a companion is present lowered the level of couple emotional attachment, relationship satisfaction, poor quality marital interaction and also bred depression in the non-gaming partner.

Another key finding reflected in Table 4.14 is that 145 (64.2%) of married people in MCK, Nkubu Synod would rather play video games than go out with others. Only 65 (28.7%) disagreed, while 16 (7.1%) were neutral. This finding meant that the couple's involvement in gaming was not only affecting partner-spousal relationship, but was also affecting how one was relating with others in the social circles. A gaming expedition can be termed as a driver for anti-social behavior if it doesn't one from a spouse and other

members. The anti-social behavior is a dangerous vice to marital satisfaction. The results show a major deficiency as a result of the impact of playing videogames, not only to the couple themselves, but also to the general friendship, family and relationship of the gamers. Wang et al. (2017), Von DerHeiden et al. (2019) and Schneider et al. (2018) observed that gaming made participants anti-social; that is, they hardly check their friends. They also experience psychological malfunctioning, diminished self-esteem, lower educational and career attainment, and poor engagement in taking care of their children. However, Wen et al. (2015) observed that video gaming had positive outcomes, such as bringing families together and increasing their ultimate interactions.

The findings further indicate that couple's involvement in games and gaming sites was sometimes causing disagreement and argument among them, as indicated by 78(34.5%) responses. When asked about this, most of married people from MCK, Nkubu Synod confessed that they occasionally argue with their partners over video games and the associated conduct. Since it was clear that many couples were desiring to spend more time in the game than with their partners, continuous use of games was ushering in disagreement. A prolonged state of disagreement between couples may graduate to serious conflicts. This state of affairs may affect marital satisfaction to a great extent. Coyne et al. (2012) also reported family conflicts resulting from much time spent playing and surfing Internet. Other outcomes by Bradford et al. (2018) indicated that in marriages where couples were involved in gaming, increased aggression, quarrels, sharp disagreements, poor intimacy and divorce were frequent.

The findings show that a deeper involvement in games usually affect one's quality of life. This is evidenced by the fact that 138 (61.1%) of married church members from MCK, Nkubu Synod agreed that they were frequently losing sleep as a result of late-night surfing. Another sizeable percentage, 123 (54.4%) said that they would rather play video games than spend time on physical exercise. According to Jiannine (2018), failure to have adequate sleep and lack of body exercises affect one's quality of life. This is because, one is not able to refresh and replenish the body. Basically, after a hard work, the body needs to rest (through sleeping); while, body exercises help to improve the flow of blood along the capillaries; hence, one is able to address and overcome various lifestyle sicknesses (Jiannine, 2018). Studies such as Zamani et al. (2012) and Esomba et al. (2016) have shown that good body exercises and quality of sleep improve one's sexual relationship with a partner.

The long time spent online, explains why most married church members from MCK, Nkubu Synod were losing sleep. This was also denying them time for body exercises. The impact of these two aspects is weighty and would affect marital satisfaction of married couples. This finding was consistent with Pelletier et al. (2018) who found that much time spent by a partner playing video games contributed immensely to the deterioration of the individual's physical health. Video gaming was associated with body and joint pains, body fatigue, little sleep, and poor food consumption. These may adversely affect the frequency of intimacy among married couples; hence, marital dissatisfaction. Moreover, Zamani et al. (2012) asserted that computer games not only ruined the physical wellbeing of individuals, but it also impaired mental, social and psychological body functioning. Sensone et al. (2017) further observed that continuous

video gaming by a couple made them stay even for a month without undertaking their conjugal responsibilities, while, addicted men experienced premature ejaculation and low sexual desires. This marks the genesis of marital dissatisfaction among couples.

Both the members of clergy and the superintendent ministers were asked in a focused group discussion and interview respectively, to briefly describe the influence of video gaming on the level of marital satisfaction. The responses from these two categories of respondents were analyzed thematically where the common phrases and themes were noted and then grouped inductively. The grouping of categories resulted to a few themes which were twofold; the negative effects of video games and the gainful use of video games by married couples. The descriptors associated with negative effects of video games in married couples were: time consuming, addictive, argument, aggression, conflict, boredom, loss of interest, pornographic movies, and negligence of duties and competition of resources.

During the focused group discussion, all the members of clergy had a consensus that video games are very addictive and time consuming. The thematic observation on gaming being addictive, concurred with the views of the couples who said that the time spent in games, usually interferes with one's quality of life. The Superintendent Minister Number five exclaimed, *"Video games are not only additive but usually drains someone's mental energy due to high level of concentration required. This kind of involvement makes one to unconsciously lose interest in family matters and values"*. According to Smith (2019), over involvement in gaming makes one to disengage with his / her spouse due to boredom. This scenario may become the genesis of marital dissatisfaction. Sensone et al. (2017) further reported that addictive video gaming was associated with negligence of

sexual responsibilities by a partner, such that, they could go for two weeks without engaging in sex affairs. Moreover, during the time of engagement, male partners experienced premature ejaculation and this led to poor sexual satisfaction. Aziz et al. (2018) also maintain that non-playing spouses experienced loneliness and diminished intimacy when their partners were deeply engaged in gaming which ultimately resulted in deteriorating sexual interest.

Some video games are resource intensive, and therefore, if one partner is continuously involved in gaming, it may cause misunderstanding and wrong investment decisions due to competing interests (Schneider et al., 2017). This statement supports the argument that excessive involvement in games may cause a couple to error in setting priorities and in the utilization of resources. This may elicit sharp disagreement, misunderstanding, strife, mistrust and lack of transparency. These aspects may eventually lead to distorted unity of purpose, lack of oneness, argument and conflict between marriage partners. A couple that is experiencing such matters cannot have full joy, hence, their potential to cause unprecedented marital dissatisfaction. Arnold (2018) also admitted that both social media and online entertainment activities caused people to make impulsive and unplanned subscriptions, spend more money on data bundles and Wi-Fi, and this disrupted the saving patterns of the affected people.

Since the majority of couples said that they would prefer to spend time in games than being at home with the spouse (see Table 4.14), it then means that one can be away from his or her home for most of the time; hence, one may miss the opportunity to address critical issues that would have required his/her attention. This state of affairs may nurture an irresponsible behavior and negligence of family duties. When one partner has

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neglected his / her family duties, the negligence may promote disharmony, lack of respect and loathsomeness which are significant catalysts of marital dissatisfactions. Andreassen et al., (2016) and Sensone et al. (2017) also concurred that spouses' addictive involvement in other pleasures apart from spending time with their partners caused irresponsible behavior.

Despite the above negative effect of mobile games, the members of clergy and Superintendent Ministers claims that it works well in a situation where both partners are interested and are involved in video games. The Superintendent Minister number two argued, "*Video games help a young couple to bond especially when both are interested and play together. In such scenarios, video gaming improves their level of interaction and helps in knowing each other's strength and weakness*". This finding agreed with those reported by Wen et al. (2015); who observed that video gaming practice among spouses enabled the family to stay together and enjoy entertainment together.

The Superintendent Minister number four cautioned that,

> *"When both married partners are interested in video gaming, it may lead to increased level of interaction between them. If only one partner is interested in video gaming, he/she may spend a lot of time in gaming and leaving little time for the other partner, and this may bring disharmony in a marriage relationship."*

Another theme noted during the focused group discussion was education, where, members of clergy described some video games as very educative since they contain content that is intellectually challenging. The Superintendent Minister number three and one described some video games as sources of entertainment. That gaming fosters

relaxation and hence reduces stress in married couples. In the contrary, Von DerHeiden et al. (2019) and Schneider et al. (2018) argued that despite the simultaneous engagement in playing video games by both partners, this addictive exercise cultivated some behaviors of being anti-social, poor keeping of friends' relationships, demeaned educational and career attainment and poor engagement in taking care of the children. Unlike Von DerHeiden et al. (2019) and Schneider et al. (2018) who refuted the study findings, De-Sola Gutiérrez et al. (2016) discovered the positive implications of video gaming such as the development of intellectual alertness and entertainment that came with surfing the internet and even getting involved in recreational activities which were compassionate when not overdone by a married couple.

## 4.7 Mobile Phone Calls and the Level of Marital Satisfaction of Couples

The third objective of the study was to examine the influence of mobile phone calls on the level of marital satisfaction of couples in MCK, Nkubu Synod, Meru County. Phone calls are essential in business activities, professional sphere and social interactions. However, they can be misused and/ or mishandled (Njoh, 2018). The use of mobile phones by couples was determined by assessing various indicators such as length of time spent on calls, time calls are made, conflict over phone calls and frequency of receiving and making calls, extent of concealment when making or receiving calls, and conflicts attributed to phone calls. Several closed-ended and open-ended questions were posed to the respondents. In the first instance, the researcher intended to establish approximate amount of money a married person from MCK, Nkubu Synod was spending per month on phone calls. The same was summarized and presented in Figure 4.2.

**Figure 4. 2**

*Approximate amount of money respondent spend on airtime per month*
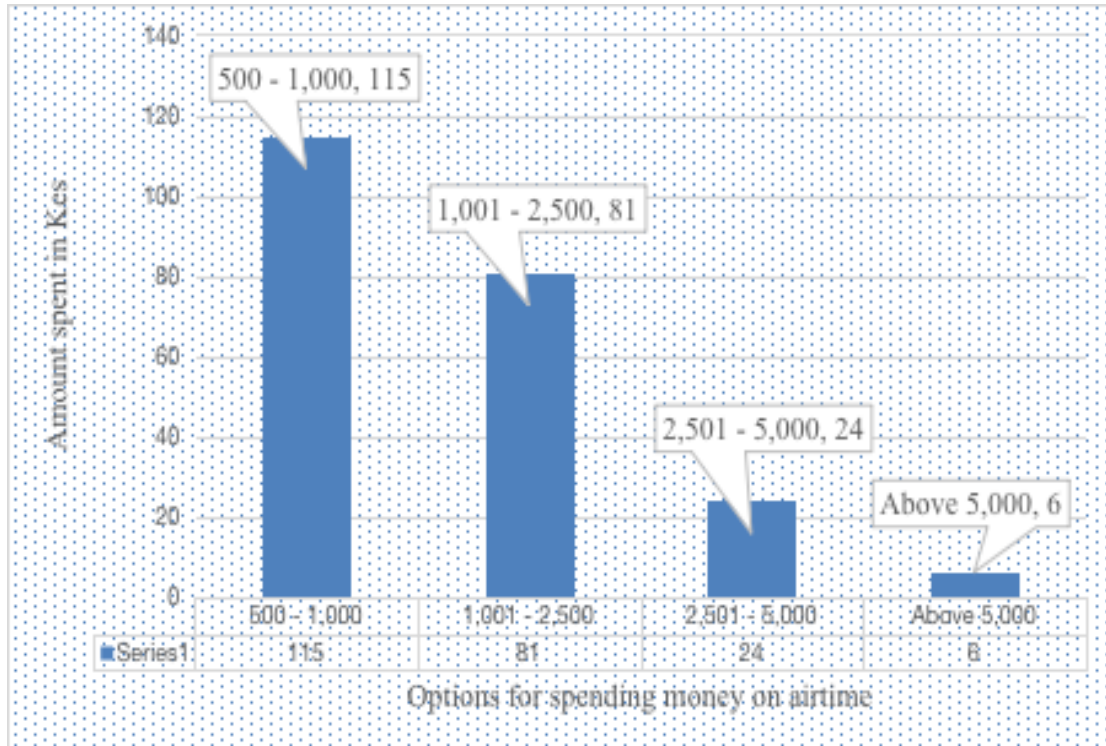


Figure 4.2 indicate that half 115 (50.9%) of married church members from MCK Nkubu Synod were spending between Kes 500 and 1,000 shillings per month on making calls. Approximately, a third 81 (35.8%) spend between Kes 1,000 and 2,500 shillings per month, while 24 (10.6%) spends between Kes 2,501 and 5,000 shillings per month. According to Chan (2017) the cost of buying a new brand smartphone superseded the monthly expenditures incurred to enable one to make video calls, interact with social networking sites and making regular subscriptions, which made them spend more money. In order to gain deeper understanding of this construct, several statements regarding mobile phone calls use were further presented to couples in MCK, Nkubu Synod, in a 5-

level Likert scale, requiring them to indicate the extent of their agreement with each statement provided in a table. The responses on the rating for each statement was coded in SPSS; where, 1 represented strongly disagree, 2 for disagree, 3 for neutral, 4 for agree and 5 for strongly agree. In reporting and interpreting the results, the total number of responses that agreed and those who strongly agreed was summed up to represent the agreement status, while the total number that disagreed and those who strongly disagreed was summed up to represent the disagreement status. The mean score for each statement was computed to help visualize the average of points of responses out of the rank of 5 points in a Likert Scale. The statements focused on the length of time and frequency of receiving and making calls, extent of concealment when making or receiving, conflicts attributed to phone calls, and related behavior. Summary of the responses gotten is presented in Table 4.15.

**Table 4. 15**

*Mobile phone calls of married couples in MCK Nkubu Synod*

| Phone call Item   (N = 226) | SA | A | N | D | SD | Mean |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| • I make or receive very many calls between 5 pm-10 pm and early morning between 4-7 am. | 53(23.5%) | 47(20.8%) | 28(12.4%) | 30(13.3%) | 68(30.1%) | 2.94 |
| • I make more calls than I receive | 30(13.2%) | 47(20.8%) | 58(25.7%) | 53(23.5%) | 38(16.8%) | 2.94 |
| • I do not hide from my spouse when making or receiving calls | 12(5.3%) | 16(7.1%) | 46(20.4%) | 83(36.7%) | 69(30.5%) | 2.20 |
| • I am concerned about leaving my phone with my spouse because one can answer my calls. | 51(22.6%) | 58(25.7%) | 26(11.5%) | 38(16.8%) | 53(23.5%) | 3.07 |
| • I spend more time making and receiving mobile phone calls than I spend with my family. | 69(30.5%) | 57(25.2%) | 47(20.8%) | 29(12.8%) | 24(10.6%) | 3.52 |
| • I feel neglected and left with no quality time with my spouse due to the time spent on mobile. | 62(27.4%) | 49(21.7%) | 47(20.8%) | 31(13.7%) | 37(16.4%) | 3.30 |
| • We usually have a conflict with my spouse due to prolonged phone calls. | 57(25.2%) | 58(25.7%) | 28(12.4%) | 48(21.2%) | 35(15.5%) | 3.24 |
| • My spouse pulls out and examines phone throughout dinner while we are together. | 63(27.9%) | 60(26.5%) | 56(24.8%) | 33(14.6%) | 14(6.2%) | 3.55 |
| • During our physical chats, my partner writes messages or emails to others. | 48(21.2%) | 41(18.1%) | 45(19.9%) | 59(26.1%) | 33(14.6%) | 3.05 |
| • Whenever my partner's phone rings, even if we are in the middle of a discussion, he or she pulls it out. | 44(19.5%) | 54(23.9%) | 37(16.4%) | 59(26.1%) | 32(14.2%) | 3.08 |

The findings in Table 4.15 show the extent to which phone calls affect family time. The repercussions of the same are also clearly demonstrated. When it comes to making more calls than receiving, the majority of the respondents, 58 (25.7%) were neutral; 91 (40.3%) agreed, while only 77 (34%) disagreed. This shows that married couples sometimes make more calls than they receive; while in other times, they receive more calls than they make. The study went ahead to find out the time when phone conversation was taking place with a view to understand whether the same was interfering with the family time. Interestingly, a sizeable number of the respondents, 100 (44.3%) said that they make or receive very many calls between 5pm and 10pm and early morning between 4am and 7am. Similarly, about the same number, (98, 43.4%), disagreed with the statement. This finding meant that making or receiving calls between 5.00pm and 10.00pm; 4.00am and 7.00am was likely to interfere with the family time. If this is not checked, it may result to some level of dissatisfaction in the family. Kadylak et al. (2018) claimed that the utilization of cell phones when spouses were spending time together was the main cause of poor intimacy, sexual dissatisfaction and divorce. Karimi (2019) also established that the utilization of mobile phones was directly correlated with marital unhappiness.

The results in Table 4.15 regarding the extent to which phone calls affect family time corroborate with the findings that 126 (55.7%) of the married couples in MCK, Nkubu Synod admitted that they spend more time making and receiving mobile phone calls than they spend with their families. The results show that phone calls can trigger a behavior which may affect the quality of time couples spend together. They also show the priority one has for his or her spouse. When couples have little attention for one another, it raises the question of emotional attachment that one has for his/her spouse. This is a challenge

which has potential to ruin marital affection and relationship as pointed out by Stritof (2020). In addition, Kadylak et al. (2018) and Kirimi (2019) ascertained that most break ups among married couples emerged from the excessive utilization of phones with friends. The two studies noted that spouses developed divided attention when engaging with their phones while their partners were physically present. Negative aspects that came out of the behavior are poor intimacy and suspicion.

The above findings have hinted on the possibility of suppressed quality of life among the married couples. The same was confirmed where approximately, half (111 (49.1%, mean = 3.3) of the respondents admitted that they felt neglected and denied quality time with the spouse due to the time the partner was spending on mobile device. The situation where one partner starts feeling neglected and deserted becomes the basis for marital dissatisfaction as noted by Jenkins (2021). Moreover, the findings in Table 4.15 show that slightly more than half, 123 (54.4%) of the married couples from MCK, Nkubu Synod said that their spouses usually pull out and examine their phones throughout dinner time. This shows that some couples had no respect for the family time and that they make or receive calls during the family-prioritized moments. The persistence of this behavior affects the quality of life of married couples; and fosters a growing level of marital dissatisfaction. These results were consistent with the findings by Christensen (2018) who noted that addictive use of cell phones when a family is physically present was hurting. Specifically, a spouse listening to the conversations of his or her other partner over the phone felt depressed, irritated, ignored, distracted and deprived of quality family time. Christensen argued that, lack of control of this behavior was affecting

spouse's romantic relationship. Oliveira (2016) also warned that cell phone usage during couple wake up time was associated with very bad outcomes.

The study further posed a statement to respondents with a view to establish the effect of prolonged phone calls on married couples. According to the findings in Table 4.13, 115 (50.9%) married people in MCK, Nkubu Synod confessed that they usually have conflict with their spouses due to prolonged phone calls. This confession supports the proposition held by this study; that, mobile devices use partly contributed to the increased marital dissatisfaction among married couples.

The results in Table 4.13 show how mobile calls can cause dissension, malice and conflict, and eventually marital dissatisfaction. A prolonged marital dissatisfaction may account for the increase in cases of separation and divorce among married people. The outcome arising from the continued use of mobile phones by a spouse affirms the argument of the cognitive behaviour theory. This is because, the experiences and the meanings, judgments, appraisals and assumptions resulting hitherto, usually drives hard feelings and demeanour towards marriage relationship; and this may eventually militate the adaptation mechanisms expected of married couples.

Oliveira (2016) reported prevalence of separation decisions among married couples due to continued quarrels, conflicts, irritation and dissatisfaction arising from phone calls. Gottman and Silver (2015) also stressed that the use of mobile devices during family time was a threat to cohesion and love among spouses.

Both the members of clergy and the superintendent ministers were asked in a focused group discussion and interview respectively, to state their opinions regarding the

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influence of mobile phone call abuse on marital conflict among married couples. The responses from these two categories of respondents were analyzed thematically; where, common phrases and descriptor words were noted and then grouped inductively. The categorization resulted to a few themes and descriptor words which were grouped into three key areas associated with the influence of mobile phone calls marital satisfaction. The three identified theme categories were: the behavior triggered by mobile phone calls, the resulting emotional and psychological behavior, and the worst outcomes for mobile phone calls. Table 4.16 provides a summary.

**Table 4. 16**

*Themes reflecting the negative effects of mobile phone calls among couples*

| Behavior triggered by mobile phone calls | The resulting emotional and psychological behavior | Worst outcomes for mobile phone calls |
| --- | --- | --- |
| • Suspicion | • Partner feel neglected | • Confrontations |
| • Speculation | • Partners talking less | • Cheating |
| • Doubt | • The strength of bonding start withering | • Depression |
| • Spying | • Distract communication | • Violence |
| • Misunderstanding | • Partners feel ignored | • Conflicts |
| • Confusion | • Partners feel belittled | • Fighting |
| • Annoyance | • Partners feel neglected | • Separation |
| • Anger | • Partners feel lonely | • Divorce |
|  | • Partners feel insecure |  |

The results show the extent to which making and or receiving mobile phone calls can be abused, and hence affect marital satisfaction of couples. The Superintendent Minister Number six remarked, *"Mobile phone calls especially if made during odd hours, are*

*often prolonged, taken or made in non-transparent manner and usually cause a lot disharmony and discomfort in married couples".* The results in Table 4.16 show that mobile phone calls have potentials to cause suspicions and speculation. When a partner forms a habit of taking too long on phone, withdrawing from people when making or receiving calls; and doing it during odd hours, it is not only annoying, but, it may cast doubt on the spouse who may be tempted to spy partner's phone with a view to find the truth. The information obtained may cause confusion, misunderstanding, mistrust, and raise anger which may result to confrontations. These issues and experiences have potentials to negatively affect marital satisfaction. According to De-Sola Gutiérrez et al. (2016), more mobile voice calls in the presence of a marriage partner were linked to decreased feelings of security, the continued need to speak in private, disruption, anxiety, stress, depression and deprived loyalty. These outcomes are against the intended purpose of a mobile phone as stipulated by Hoffmann (2017). Hoffmann argued that mobile phones are expected to play a role in helping couples to entertain and connect with their loved ones. Alizadeh et al. (2019) also noted that when one spouse is occupied by phone calls all the time, it gradually lead to mistrust, anxiety and create an environment where spouses live in suspicion.

Although the above issues may not be intentional, when they happen, the affected couples get injured emotionally and psychologically, hence threatening marital satisfaction. The results show that a partner may feel neglected, ignored, lonely, belittled, and insecure. These feeling do not only distract communication between married partners, but they also cause the couple to minimize communication and bonding between them. These issues indicate adverse signs of marital betrayal which avert the

expected happiness and pave way for regrets. Other outcomes noted by Wang et al. (2017) and Lenhart and Duggan (2014) were conflict and anger which may eventually lead to divorce.

The handling of the situation may eventually lead to the worst outcomes of mobile phone call abuse. This is because some partners may confront each other, quarrel, argue and fight. The result may be very stressful and may eventually lead to depression (Wallace, 2019). Other spouses may retaliate by cheating their partners. The worst of all is when separation or divorce is found as a solution. These worst scenarios are clear indicators of serious marital dissatisfaction. Similar observations were reported by Miller-Ott and Kelly (2015) among married couples where calls were made or received frequently. Miller-Ott and Kelly, however, noted that newly married partners lacked the courage to speak out their minds concerning what irritates them in their relationship and the same was leading to frequent separations and divorces. The study by Kirimi (2019) reported that many divorcees in Kenya claimed that their spouses were too engrossed on their phones and social media, hence raising suspicion for infidelity. This shows that inappropriate use of mobile phones devices can cause disastrous decisions among married people.

## 4.10 Mobile Device use and the Level of Marital Satisfaction among Couples

The results in the above sections have provided the findings regarding marriage characteristics, social media use, mobile game use, mobile phone calls, and the level of marital satisfaction. Mobile device uses which were the main input variables, have been proven as having the potential to cause a lot of agitations in marriage. The study further established that the low level of marital dissatisfaction was evident among married

couples in MCK, Nkubu Synod. It was therefore necessary to assess the presumed influence of each mobile device use covered in this study to establish whether and the extent to which each of these predictor variables (social media use, mobile game use, mobile phone calls) accounted for the low level of marital dissatisfaction noted in the previous section.  In order to test the level of prediction, the study first carried out diagnostic tests to help in deciding the appropriate statistical test to be adopted. The study intended to use regression analysis and therefore, tests assumption had to be carried out. The first one was to assess the normality of the data. Other tests carried out were: linearity, autocorrelation, heteroscedasticity, and multicellularity. The findings on these tests are presented in the sections that follows.

### 4.9.1 The normality test

A survey research usually assume that data is drawn from a normally distributed population. The normality test was the first condition to be checked. Most studies assume that research data is collected from a normally distributed population, hence, the need for normality test to check the normal distribution condition. In the first instance, the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test was used to evaluate the normality of the data for the study's variables since the population was large. The same was counter-checked by cross-checking the Kurtosis and Skewness values.  The histograms, Q-Q plots and box plots were used to confirm the extent of the skewness. The results of the P-values based on the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test and Shapiro-Wilk tests are presented in Table 4.17.

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**Table 4. 17**

*Tests of normality on main variables of the study*

|  | Kolmogorov-Smirnov[a] | | | Shapiro-Wilk | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
|  | Statistic | df | Sig. | Statistic | df | Sig. |
| X1 | .071 | 226 | .008 | .981 | 226 | .003 |
| X2 | .120 | 226 | .000 | .938 | 226 | .000 |
| X3 | .073 | 226 | .005 | .981 | 226 | .004 |
| Y | .121 | 226 | .000 | .965 | 226 | .000 |

a. Lilliefors Significance Correction

The results in Table 4.17 show that the P-values (both the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test and Shapiro-Wilk) are significant for each variable, P-value is less than 0.05 level of significance (Y= .000; $X_1$ = .008; $X_2$ = .000; $X_3$ = .005; $P < 0.05$). This shows that data was not normally distributed. In order to counter-confirm the extent of normality of the data, the study computed the Kurtosis and skewness values. The decision used for checking Kurtosis and skewness was the Kurtosis and skewness values to be between -2 and +2. The skewness statistics determine asymmetry to which a value deviate from the mean. The distribution is regarded symmetrical when the computed skewness value is between -2 and +2. The Kurtosis values usually demonstrate peachiness and flatness of data distribution. If the data are flatter, they show a negative Kurtosis value, while positive Kurtosis value is depicted by a peaked shape (Kothari, 2014). The same is demonstrated using decision of Kurtosis value being between -2 and +2. The results of both the Kurtosis and skewness of the data are presented in Table 4.18.

**Table 4. 18**

*Test of normality of data on independent and dependent variables: Kurtosis and Skewness*

| Variables N = 226 | Mean | Std. Deviation | Kurtosis | Std. Error | Skewness | Std. Error | Decision |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| $X_1$ (Social media use) | 3.2196 | .87329 | -.421 | .322 | -.221 | .162 | Normal |
| $X_2$ (Mobile game use) | 2.2474 | .46538 | 2.306 | .322 | .327 | .162 | Normal |
| $X_3$ (Mobile phone calls) | 3.0907 | .86598 | -.609 | .322 | -.197 | .162 | Normal |
| Y (Level of marital satisfaction) | 3.4680 | .39810 | .916 | .322 | -.651 | .162 | Normal |

According to the results in Table 4.18, $X_1$ (social media use) had a Kurtosis value of -.421 and skewness of -.221; $X_2$ (mobile game use) had a Kurtosis value of 2.306 and skewness of -.197; while Y (Level of marital satisfaction) had a Kurtosis value of .916 and skewness of -.651. The findings show that all the values for predictor variables and for the outcome variable were acceptable because the corresponding Kurtosis and skewness values were found to be between -2 and +2; hence, the study concluded that the data was normally distributed.

The researcher decided to also use the graphical methods to further confirm the normality condition noted in the above results. This was checked especially for the dependent variable. The outcome is shown in Figures 4.3, 4.4 and 4.5 respectively.

**Figure 4. 3**

*Histogram: The level of marital satisfaction in married couples in MCK Nkubu Synod*



**Histogram**
Dependent Variable: Y

Mean = -9.28E-16
Std. Dev. = 0.993
N = 226
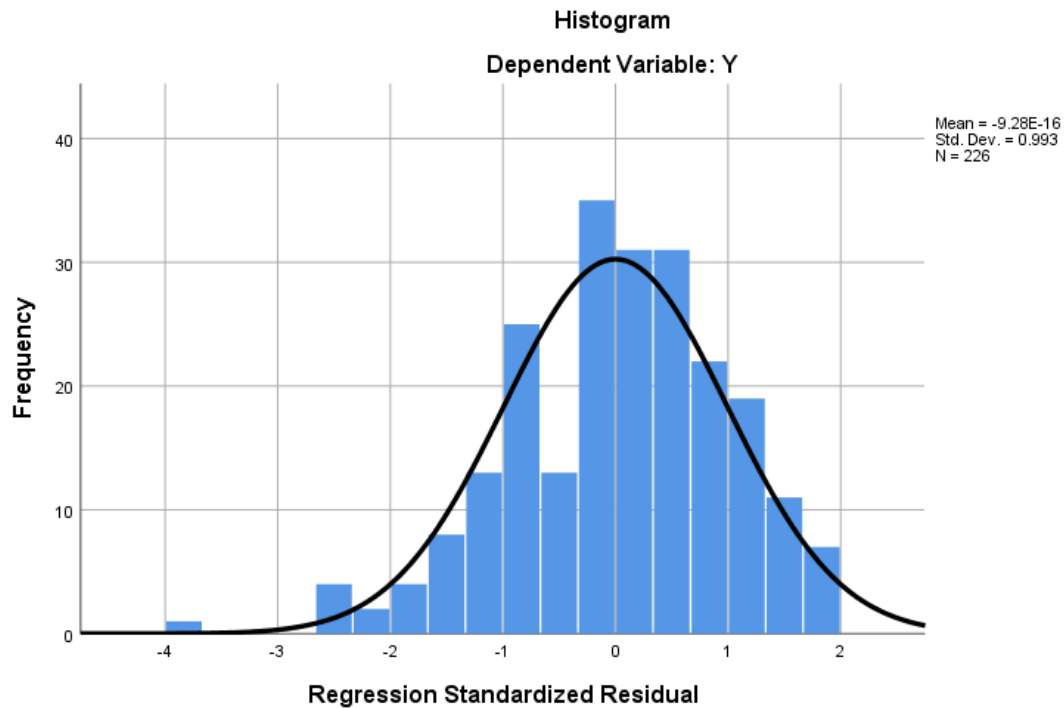
According to the findings in Figure 4.3, there is slight skewness in the manner in which the data is distributed; hence, the study concluded that the negative skewness noted above does not show significant abnormality in the distribution. The standard Q-Q plots were further generated to provide a clear visualization of the status of the normality condition. The Q-Q plots are presented in Figure 4.4.

**Figure 4. 4**

*Q-Q on the level of marital satisfaction in married couples in MCK Nkubu Synod*
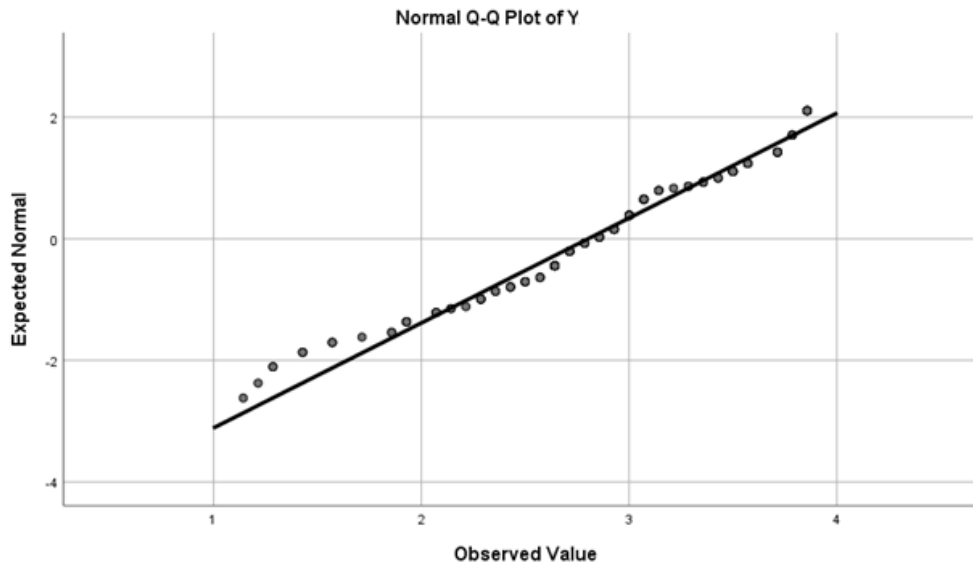


The results of Q-Q plot shown in Figure 4.4 indicate that there are very few points of the Q-Q plot that are not fitted along the line of the best fit. However, the few points that are not well fitted do not show significant deviation; hence, good linearity of the data is noticed. This led to a conclusion that there was a normal distribution in the data. A box plot was also generated with a view to check full compliance to the normality assumption condition. The results are shown in Figure 4.5.

**Figure 4. 5**

*Box plot on the level of marital satisfaction in married couples in Nkubu Synod*
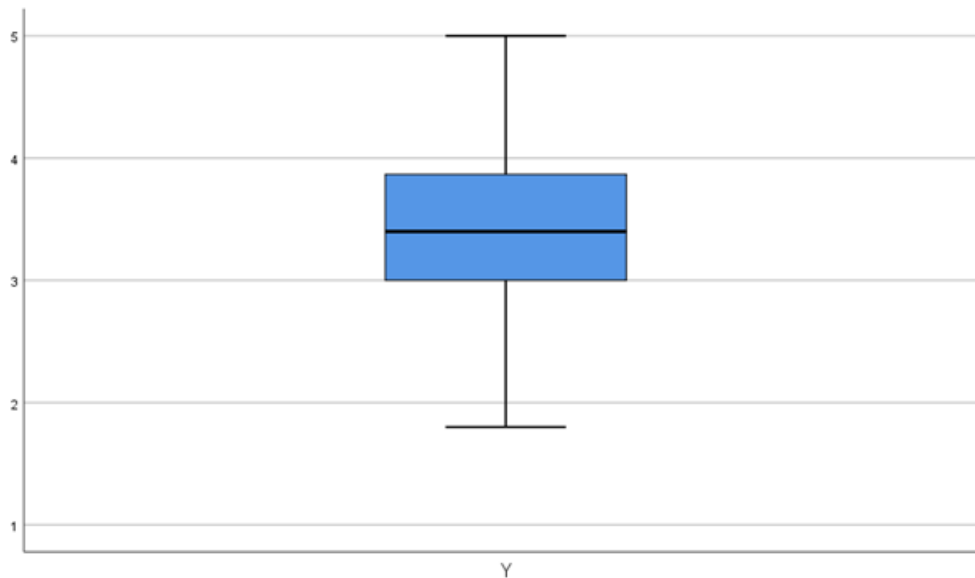


The whickers in the box plot presented in Figure 4.5 indicate a slight skewedness in the data. Again, the observed skewedness does not show significant deviation of whiskers; hence, data was normally distributed.

The above results and discussion have demonstrated the normality and linearity of the data which suggested the adoption of parametric tests in the analysis of the hypothesized relationship between the dependent and independent variables. Considering that the study was contemplating to use correlation and multiple linear regression, it was important to first check whether data had problem of heteroscedasticity, autocorrelation and multicollinearity. The results of autocorrelation and multicollinearity tests are presented in Table 4.19.

**Table 4. 19**

*Autocorrelation and multicollinearity on mobile device use in married couples in MCK Nkubu Synod*

| Variables | R square change | Durbin-Watson | VIF |
|-----------|-----------------|---------------|-----|
| X1 | .071 | 1.820 | 1.086 |
| X2 | .001 | 1.738 | 1.008 |
| X3 | .023 | 1.748 | 1.090 |

In this study, the Durbin-Watson values were used to check the autocorrelation problem in the predictor variables. The autocorrelation mostly occurs when there is a correlation in responses regarding an item across several observations (Thrane, 2022). The results in Table 4.17 show Durbin-Watson values where $X_1 = 1.820$; $X_2 = 1.738$; $X_3 = 1.748$. The Durbin-Watson value is around 2 for each study variable; hence, the study concluded that data had no autocorrelation problem.

The next assumption of regression analysis to be tested was multicollinearity condition. In this study, the multicollinearity problem was tested by computing the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF). The VIF values between 1 and 5 show absence of multicollinearity problem, while, the VIF values above 5 indicate a multicollinearity problem. The presence of multicollinearity among the predictor variables usually lowers the power to estimate the regression coefficients (Waithima, 2020). According to the findings in Table 4.17, the VIF values for predictor variables are, $X_1 = 1.086$; $X_2 = 1.008$; $X_3 = 1.090$. The VIF values show that there was no multicollinearity problem in the data. In this study, the VIF value is more than 0.5 and is less than 5 for each explanatory variable.

Another condition tested was the heteroscedasticity problem. In checking for heteroscedasticity condition in the data, a scatter graph was generated using standardized

predicted residuals and mean standardized residuals. In the scatter graph, the points were

checked whether they formed a given pattern. The output was presented in Figure 4.6.

**Figure 4. 6**

*Heteroscedasticity test on the level of marital satisfaction in married couples in MCK*
*Nkubu Synod*


Scatterplot
Dependent Variable: Y
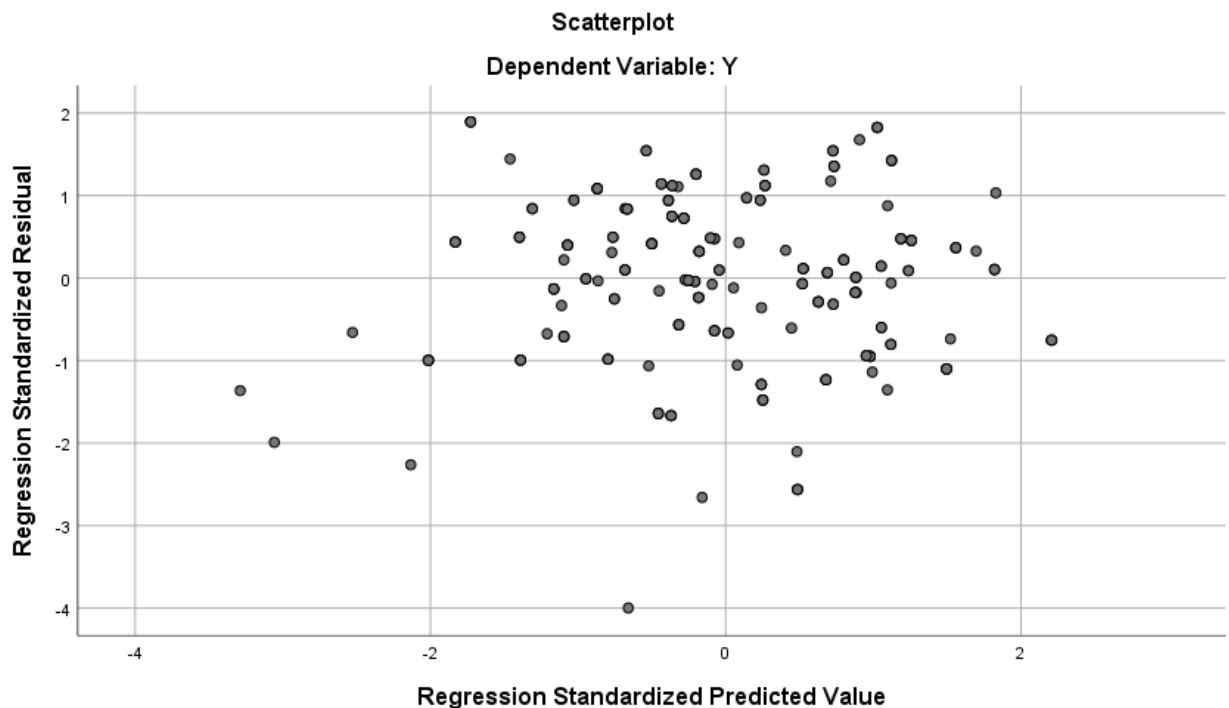
The findings show scatter points that are dispersed without any form of established

pattern as one moves from left to right. This implies the absence of heteroscedasticity

problem in the data. In order to counter-check this condition, the predictor variables were

regressed on the squared residuals values with underlying null hypothesis stating that,

data is heteroscedastic. Results are presented in Table 4.20.

**Table 4. 20**

*Heteroscedasticity Test: ANOVA results on the squared residuals values*

| Model | | Sum of Squares | df | Mean Square | F | Sig. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Regression | 2.185 | 3 | .728 | .310 | .818[b] |
| | Residual | 439.693 | 187 | 2.351 | | |
| | Total | 441.878 | 190 | | | |

a. Dependent Variable: Square residuals

b. Predictors: (Constant), X3, X1, X2

The findings in Table 4.18 show a P value that is greater than 0.05; P = 0.767; hence, the study failed to reject the null hypothesis that the data is heteroscedastic. A conclusion was therefore made that there was no heteroscedasticity problem in the data. Considering that the data did not show violations of the aforementioned conditions, (normality, linearity, autocorrelation, multicellularity and heteroscedasticity), the parametric statistical tests were therefore adopted in testing the proposition of this research and in assessing the overall purpose of the study. The proposition of this research was assessed as guided by research questions.

### 4.9.2 Answering of Research Questions

Following the findings on diagnostic tests presented in the foregoing section, a Pearson correlation analysis was adopted in assessing the influence of mobile phone device use on marital satisfaction among married couples at MCK Nkubu Synod. The Pearson correlation analysis was specifically used to test the first three research questions, while regression analysis was used to test the fourth research question as well as the overall purpose of the study. The strength of correlation analysis was performed, where the level of significance for correlation coefficients was measured at P< 0.05. The results of a Pearson correlation analysis for the first three research questions of the study are

presented in Table 4.19, while, the interpretation and discussion of the same follows subsequently.

### 4.9.3 Research question one on social media use and the level of marital satisfaction

The first research question stated: *To what extent do social media use influence the level of marital satisfaction of couples in MCK Nkubu Synod, Meru County?* To answer this research question, a Pearson correlation analysis was conducted whose results are presented in Table 4.21.

**Table 4. 21**

*Correlations analysis of mobile device and marital satisfaction of couples at MCK Nkubu Synod*

|  |  | Y | X1 | X2 | X3 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| X1 (Social media use) | Pearson Correlation | .267** | 1 | | |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | .000 | | | |
| | N | 226 | 226 | | |
| X2 (Mobile game use) | Pearson Correlation | -.036 | .053 | 1 | |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | .593 | .424 | | |
| | N | 226 | 226 | 226 | |
| X3 (Mobile phone calls) | Pearson Correlation | .152* | .280** | .081 | 1 |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | .022 | .000 | .228 | |
| | N | 226 | 226 | 226 | 226 |

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).
*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

The findings regarding correlation analysis shown in Table 4.21 indicate the Pearson correlation value for the first predictor variable was r =.267** and a P value which is less than 0.05. The P-value shows a statistically significant (r=.267, P< 0.05) influence of social media use on marital satisfaction among married couples. This led to the conclusion that social media use was statistically significant in influencing the marital

satisfaction of couples at MCK Nkubu Synod.  Findings of Dixon (2020) also agreed that there exists a very positive and significant relationship between unbalanced utilization of social networking platforms on the spouse's marital satisfaction. On the same note, the results corroborate with Yacoub et al. (2018) that established social media use among couples predicted relationship dissatisfaction. The positive association between the two variables implies that an increase in the predictor variable (social media use) causes an increase in the outcome variable (the marital satisfaction of couples at MCK Nkubu Synod).

The results have provided evidence to link the adverse effects of social media use to the low level of marital satisfaction reported in this study. When contacted for comments, the clergies and superintendent ministers condemned the lack of control, which they said was hurting many marriages. The findings in section 4.5 indicated that there were issues in the manner in which married couples were using social media. A situation that was resulting to withdrawals, suspicions, mistrust, infidelity and conflicts was blamed for affecting quality of interactions, communication and bonding among married couples. Yacoub et al. (2018) also noted that misuse of social networking for a spouse in marriage was dangerous because one admired what others were posting and they could not find pleasure in what the partner was offering. Yacoub and colleagues argued that this behavior was robbing family time and distracted communication to a great extent. On a similar note, González-Rivera et al. (2019) found that social networking sites were the genesis of funny virtual relationships which promoted poor emotional attachment, poor marital satisfaction, conflicts and infidelity among married people.

**4.9.4 Research question two on mobile game use and the level of marital satisfaction**

The second research question stated: *To what degree do mobile game use influence the level of marital satisfaction of couples in MCK, Nkubu Synod, Meru County*? The findings on correlation analysis shown in Table 4.21 indicate a Pearson correlation value of -.036 and a P value of .593 for the second predictor variable (mobile game use). The P-value (P = .593) is statistically insignificant, (r=.-036, P> 0.05), which indicates a lack of influence of mobile game use on marital satisfaction among married couples. This led to the conclusion that mobile game use was not statistically significant in influencing the marital satisfaction of couples at MCK, Nkubu Synod. The statistical insignificant p-value did not necessitate the interpretation of the correlation value for this variable. Coyne et al. (2018) reported a lot of harm emanating from playing internet games such as late retiring to bed, addiction and spouse violence; hence, supporting the proposition that internet gaming possessed significant inverse relationship with marital dissatisfaction.

 Although the findings presented and discussed in section 4.6 regarding the mobile game use show their potentials in causing addictive behavior, diminished cohesion, social interaction, disagreement and argument; and low quality of life among other social evils, the Pearson correlation analysis showed that the extent of their influence on marital satisfaction was insignificant. This was probably because, the effects of mobile game use were not rampant among married couples, and hence, its effects on marital satisfaction were not weighty. This finding and observation led to the critical analysis of the responses gotten from couples regarding frequency on various aspects of mobile phone usage in order to confirm the claim reported in this section. The results of frequency of

interferences attributed to mobile games use were therefore summarized and presented in

Table 4.22.

**Table 4. 22**

*Frequency at which couples experience shortcomings due to gaming behavior*

| Statements on mobile game use   (N = 226) | Rarely | Occasionally | Frequently | Often | Always | Mean |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| • How frequently do you wonder when you'll be able to get back into the game? | 160(70.8%) | 37(16.4%) | 24(10.6%) | 0(0%) | 5(2.2%) | 1.46 |
| • How frequently do you worry life is dull and empty for not playing online video game? | 167(73.9%) | 30(13.3%) | 11(4.9%) | 12(5.3%) | 6(2.7%) | 1.50 |
| • How frequently do you snap, shout, or act irritated when someone annoys you while you're playing a game? | 159(70.4%) | 28(12.4%) | 23(10.2%) | 7(3.1%) | 9(4.0%) | 1.58 |
| • How frequently do you lose sleep as a result of late-night play sessions? | 161(71.2%) | 41(18.1%) | 12(5.3%) | 7(3.1%) | 5(2.2%) | 1.47 |
| • How frequently are you preoccupied with gaming while not connected to the internet | 155(68.6%) | 38(16.8%) | 19(8.4%) | 6(2.7%) | 8(3.5%) | 1.56 |
| • How frequently do you find yourself saying "just a couple extra minutes" when playing a game? | 151(66.8%) | 28(12.4%) | 23(10.2%) | 17(7.5%) | 7(3.1%) | 1.68 |
| • How frequently do you repeatedly fail to shorten the time you spend gaming? | 163(72.1%) | 37(16.4%) | 11(4.9%) | 11(4.9%) | 4(1.8%) | 1.48 |
| • How frequently do you try to conceal your gaming history? | 150(66.4%) | 39(17.3%) | 27(11.9%) | 5(2.2%) | 5(2.2%) | 1.57 |
| • How frequently do you prefer to spend your time gaming over socializing? | 158(69.9%) | 40(17.7%) | 16(7.1%) | 3(1.3%) | 9(4.0%) | 1.52 |
| • How frequently do you feel melancholy, moody, or worried when you are not gaming | 151(66.8%) | 43(19.0%) | 8(3.5%) | 12(5.3%) | 12(5.3%) | 1.63 |

The results in Table 4.22 show that an overwhelming majority, 69.7% ($^2/_3$) of couples in MCK Nkubu Synod rarely experience shortcomings due to gaming behavior. It is very clear from the results that all the statements meant to establish frequency at which couples experienced shortcomings due to gaming behavior had a very low mean (average mean was 1.545). These finding are consistent with the results on correlation analysis shown in Table 4.22 regarding the relationship between mobile games use and marital satisfaction, this confirms that the effects of mobile game use on marital satisfaction was not weighty.

The low prevalence in the use of mobile games among married couple was linked to the fact that the majority (50%) of couples who responded to this survey were from age 40 years and above (see Table 4.2). According to Brown (2017), mobile video games are associated with young people and therefore, the couples whose ages are from 40 years and above, may not necessarily be interested in mobile video games. However, the findings disagree with those of Hertlein and Hawkins (2015) who argued that mobile, video and internet gaming complicated spouse relationships due to addiction, intimacy disruption, spouse violence and poor family time, regardless of one's age. Andreassen et al. (2016) also highlighted that a gaming partner lacked time for their spouse, promoted conflicts, breakups, increased feeling of insecurity in a relationship, and fathoms irresponsibility behavior.

### 4.9.5 Research question three on mobile phone calls and the level of marital satisfaction

The third research question stated: *To what extent do mobile phone calls influence the level of marital satisfaction of couples in MCK Nkubu Synod, Meru County?* The findings on correlation analysis shown in Table 4.21 indicate a Pearson correlation value of .152 and a P value of .022 for the third predictor variable (mobile phone calls). The P-value shows a statistically significant (r=.152, P< 0.05) influence of mobile phone calls on marital satisfaction in married couples. This led to the conclusion that mobile phone calls were statistically significant in influencing the marital satisfaction of couples at MCK, Nkubu Synod. The positive association between the two variables implies that an increase in the predictor variable (mobile phone calls) causes an increase in the outcome variable (the marital satisfaction of couples at MCK, Nkubu Synod).

The evidence which has been proven here regarding how mobile phone call use affect marital satisfaction helps to validate the observations made in section 4.7. The study noted that the length, time and frequency of receiving and making calls, extent of concealment when making or receiving calls had potentials to cause agitations, restlessness, suspicions, argument, misunderstandings, confusion, quarrels, conflicts, fighting, and depression in affected couples. These things may advance and cause a feeling of desertion, neglect, hated, less loved and other emotionally and psychologically injurious feelings. The weight of these issues steals the joy and happiness; hence, high level of marital dissatisfaction. This was also supported in the findings of De-Sola Gutiérrez et al. (2016) who found that excessive mobile phone voice calls especially during odd hours or when with a partner were linked to relationship insecurity and breach

of loyalty. Additionally, Wang et al. (2017) supports the current findings further in their observations which asserted that spouses felt ignored as a result of their spouse's phone or tablet addiction which led to conflicts, resentment, relationship break down and the spouse developing a suspicious behavior which bred daily quarrels and mistrust.

## 4.11 Findings on the Overall Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to assess the influence of mobile device use on the level of marital satisfaction of couples in MCK Nkubu Synod, Meru County, with a view to suggesting remedial measures. In the previous sections, the findings on the prediction of the independent variables based on the first three research questions have been provided. The overall purpose as well as the conceptual framework (Figure 2.1) indicated a need to check the influence of the three predictor variables when regressed together. This was assessed using a multiple linear regression analysis, where, the dependent variable (the level of marital satisfaction of couples in MCK Nkubu Synod, Meru County) was regressed on the three independent variables (the mobile device use in MCK Nkubu Synod, Meru County) in a combined model to determine the prediction capacity.

In this study, the coefficient of determination (R-Square value) was used to determine the nature of the variance that was accounted by the three predictor variables (social media use, mobile games use and mobile phone calls). The R-value reflected the strength of the relationship between the mobile device use and the marital satisfaction of couples at MCK Nkubu Synod. The statistical values in the ANOVA table were helpful in determining whether the model was statistically significant and valid to be used in the analysis. In this study, the alpha level of significance was, $P = \leq 0.05$. The regression

coefficients were used to show the lowest beta value of each predictor variable when all of them (the social media use, mobile games use and mobile phone calls) are combined in one model. Therefore, the regression weights help to show the effect of change in the marital satisfaction of couples as compared to one unit change in the corresponding independent variables (the social media use, mobile games use, and mobile phone calls), while, all other factors in the combined model were held constant. Tables 4.23, 4.24, and 4.25 show the results of a multiple linear regression.

**Table 4. 23**

*Model summary results on the mobile device uses*

| Model | R | R Square | Adjusted R Square | Std. Error of the Estimate | Durbin-Watson |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | .284[a] | .081 | .068 | .38423 | 1.822 |

a. Predictors: (Constant), $X_3$, $X_1$, $X_2$
b. Dependent Variable: Y

Table 4.23 shows that when the three variables (social media use (X1), mobile games use (X2), and mobile phone calls (X3) were assessed in a single model, they show a positive correlation with the dependent variable (the marital satisfaction of couples); this is because, the R-value is 0.284. The findings further show that the three predictors' variables have R-square value ($R^2$= .081) which indicates that the three predictor variables account for variation in the outcome variable to the tune of 8.1%. The ANOVA findings in Table 4.24 helped to assess the validity of the model.

**Table 4. 24**

*ANOVA results on the mobile device uses*

| Model | | Sum of Squares | df | Mean Square | F | Sig. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Regression | 2.884 | 3 | .961 | 6.513 | .000[b] |
| | Residual | 32.775 | 222 | .148 | | |
| | Total | 35.659 | 225 | | | |

a. Dependent Variable: Y
b. Predictors: (Constant), X3, X2, X1

The results on model validity which is demonstrated using the ANOVA Table 4.24, shows that the model is a good fit of the data; where, $(F_{(3,222)} = 6.513, P < .005)$. This meant that the three predictor variables (the social media use, mobile games use and mobile phone calls) generate a statistically significant model for explaining variances in the marital satisfaction of couples at MCK, Nkubu Synod. To demonstrate how change in the independent variable was causing a change in the dependent variable, the regression coefficients were computed accordingly. Table 4.25 shows the values of the regression weights for each predictor variable in the combined model.

**Table 4. 25**

*Regression weights results on the mobile device uses*

| Model | | Unstandardized Coefficients | | Standardized Coefficients | | | Collinearity Statistics | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | B | Std. Error | Beta | t | Sig. | Tolerance | VIF |
| 1 | (Constant) | 3.090 | .165 | | 18.721 | .000 | | |
| | X1 | .112 | .031 | .245 | 3.659 | .000 | .920 | 1.086 |
| | X2 | -.048 | .055 | -.056 | -.866 | .388 | .992 | 1.008 |
| | X3 | .040 | .031 | .088 | 1.308 | .192 | .917 | 1.090 |

a. Dependent Variable: Y

The results of the regression coefficients (see Table 4.25) for each predictor variable in the model, shows the unstandardized B-coefficient values of .112, -.048, and .040 for $X_1$, $X_2$ and $X_3$ respectively. The results indicate that the P-values for $X_1$ was significant, but the ones for $X_2$ and $X_3$ had an insignificant P-value. The study considered and interpreted the unstandardized B-coefficient values since the constant value was statistically significant; that is, $P<0.05$. The results show that although the three predictor variables are jointly statistically significant in the combined regression model, it is the social media use that exerts more influence on the changes in the marital satisfaction of couples in MCK, Nkubu Synod. The other predictors cease to be significant in the combined model ($P>0.05$).

Consequently, the initial regression model was confirmed. That is,

$Y = B_0 + B_1X_1 + B_2X_2 + B_3X_3 + e$, where:

Y= the marital satisfaction of couples

$\beta_0$ = Constant

$\beta_1, \beta_2, \beta_3$ = regression coefficient weights for $x_1, x_2, x_3$ as shown below:

$X_1$ = Social media use

$X_2$ = Mobile games use

$X_3$ = Mobile phone calls

$\varepsilon$ = is the estimated error of the model.

The resulting multiple linear regression model is:

The marital satisfaction of couples = $3.090 + .112X_1 + -.048X_2 + .040X_3 + e$

The resulting multiple linear regression model shows that the marital satisfaction of couples = $(.112X_1$ social media use$) + (-.048X_2$ mobile games use$) + (.040X_3$ mobile phone calls$) + 3.090)$. In this model, 3.090 is the threshold value which is linked to the independent mobile devices use. This implies that 3.090 is the same for each mobile device use indicator. The findings show that all the three mobile device use, that is, social media use $(X_1)$ mobile games use $(X_2)$, and mobile phone calls $(X_3)$ when combined together, forms a model that is statistically significant in determining the marital satisfaction of couples in MCK, Nkubu Synod, Meru County. However, in the combined model, it is the social media that is statistically significant $(X_1)$, $(\beta_1 = .112, p = .000)$. The mobile phone calls, $(X_3)$, $(\beta_2 = .040, p = .192)$, become insignificant in the model. The mobile phone calls is followed by the mobile games use which was also insignificant $(X_2)$ $(\beta_2 = -.048, p = .388.)$

The results underscore the influence of social media on marital satisfaction. The findings indicate that all the three predictor variables are jointly exerting a lot of pressure on marital satisfaction among the married couples in MCK Nkubu. However, the influence of the social media use is the one that was weighty as compared to the other two mobile devices. Studies by Wang et al. (2017), De-Sola Gutiérrez et al. (2016), Andreassen et al., (2016), Coyne et al. (2018), Dixon (2020) and Yacoub et al. (2018) had one common variable and, each of them also reported the weighty influence of social media, cell phones and internet or online gaming exert on marriage relationship and satisfaction.

This study had postulated that the extent of the influence of mobile device use was moderated by marriage characteristics. The nature of statistical relationship existing between each independent variable and the dependent variable was demonstrated using the Pearson Correlation analysis whose findings are presented in Table 4.19. When jointly regressed together, the three mobile devices covered in this study were noted to explain 8.1% of the variation in the marital satisfaction (see Table 4.20). The weight of the influence was argued to be moderated by the marriage characteristics. The determination of the moderating influence of the marriage characteristics on the relationship between the mobile device use and the marital satisfaction is covered in the next section.

## 4.12 Moderating Effect of Marriage Characteristics

The fourth research question stated, *"To what extent does marriage characteristics moderate the relationship between mobile device use and the level of marital satisfaction of couples in MCK Nkubu Synod, Meru County?"* In answering this research question, three features that characterizes marriage were considered when assessing the relationship in question. These are education, number of years in Marriage, and income of married couples from MCK Nkubu Synod. The moderation effect of each of these three characteristics was examined using a Moderated Multiple Regression model (MMR). The MMR enabled assessment of the influence of the three mobile devices on marital satisfaction of couples. This was termed as model one. Each marriage characteristic was then added, one at a time, to the combined impact, to assess the effect of the same on marital satisfaction of couples. The resulting model was regarded as model two. The third model was generated after adding an interaction term, herein

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referred to as the moderator, into the second model. This helped to determine the moderation effect sought in this study.

In order to determine the moderation effect of marriage characteristics, the R square change statistics from the summary of the MMR model was considered and interpreted while the P-value were used to indicate the statistical significance of the model's interaction term. Hence, the moderation effect of given marriage characteristic was determined.

The MMR model used in this study is shown below.

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + \beta_j Z_j + \beta_{ij} X_i Z_j + \varepsilon$$

The same was broken down into three models as described below;

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + \varepsilon \ldots\ldots\ldots\ldots\ldots \text{(i)}$$

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + \beta_z Z_j + \varepsilon\ldots\ldots\ldots\ldots\ldots \text{(ii)}$$

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + \beta_j Z_j + \beta_{ij} X_i Z_j + \varepsilon\ldots\ldots\ldots\ldots \text{(iii)}$$

Where:

Y is the marital satisfaction in married couples in MCK Nkubu Synod.

$\beta_0$ is the constant,

$\beta_1, \beta_2, \beta_3$ represent coefficients of mobile devices

$X_1$, $X_2$ and $X_3$ are the predictor variables (social media use, mobile games use and mobile phone calls)

$Z_j$ is the moderating variable

$B_j$ is the coefficient of the moderator as a predictor

$X_i Z_j$ is the interaction term between variable $X_i$ ($i = 1, 2, 3$) and moderating variable

Bij is the coefficient of the interaction term.

$\varepsilon$ is the error term.

In this study, the moderating effect of each of the three aspects of marriage characteristics (education, length in marriage and income) was assessed separately. Therefore, the first model assessed the relationship between the predictor variables and the marital satisfaction of couples (the mobile devices). The second model incorporated a moderating variable (Zj, education, length in marriage and income) each at a time into the multiple regression model, while the third model constituted the interaction terms (Xi*Zj) and the elements of the second model. This process and procedure for testing moderation was repeated for each marriage characteristics.

### 4.12.1 Moderating effect of the education level and marital satisfaction of couples

The findings on the moderating effect of the education level and marital satisfaction of couples were generated and presented in Tables 4.26, 4.27 and 4.28, and thereafter discussed accordingly.

**Table 4. 26**

*Moderation effect of the education level of couples: Model validity*

| Model | | Sum of Squares | df | Mean Square | F | Sig. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Regression | 2.884 | 3 | .961 | 6.513 | .000[b] |
| | Residual | 32.775 | 222 | .148 | | |
| | Total | 35.659 | 225 | | | |
| 2 | Regression | 4.058 | 4 | 1.015 | 7.095 | .000[c] |
| | Residual | 31.601 | 221 | .143 | | |
| | Total | 35.659 | 225 | | | |
| 3 | Regression | 4.058 | 5 | .812 | 5.651 | .000[d] |
| | Residual | 31.601 | 220 | .144 | | |
| | Total | 35.659 | 225 | | | |

a. Dependent Variable: Y
b. Predictors: (Constant), X3, X2, X1
c. Predictors: (Constant), X3, X2, X1, Zj_Edu
d. Predictors: (Constant), X3, X2, X1, Zj_Edu, EDU_Interactions

Table 4.26 shows F $_{(3, 222)}$ = 6.513, $P$ < .000 for model one. This indicates that the model is statistically significant; hence, valid for further analysis. When the education level of couples was added as an explanatory variable in the second model, the F statistics, F $_{(4, 221)}$ = 7.095, $P$ < .000, showed that the second model was also statistically significant in influencing the marital satisfaction of couples. In the third model, the statistics were; F $_{(5, 220)}$ = 5.651, $P$ < .000 which indicated that the model was also valid (was statistically significant) after the interaction term (EDU_interaction) was introduced. The results implied that the three predictors that were entered into the model were jointly statistically significant in influencing the marital satisfaction of married couples in MCK Nkubu Synod.

Having established the prediction capacity, the study had to examine the results in the model summary table to determine the effect of the moderating variable in the hypothesized relationship. The findings are presented in Table 4.27.

**Table 4. 27**

*Moderation effect of the education level of couples: Model Summary*

| Model | R | R Square | Adjusted R Square | Std. Error of the Estimate | R Square Change | F Change | df1 | df2 | Sig. F Change |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | | Change Statistics | | | | |
| 1 | .284[a] | .081 | .068 | .38423 | .081 | 6.513 | 3 | 222 | .000 |
| 2 | .337[b] | .114 | .098 | .37814 | .033 | 8.209 | 1 | 221 | .005 |
| 3 | .337[c] | .114 | .094 | .37900 | .000 | .000 | 1 | 220 | .988 |

a. Predictors: (Constant), X3, X2, X1
b. Predictors: (Constant), X3, X2, X1, Zj_Edu
c. Predictors: (Constant), X3, X2, X1, Zj_Edu, EDU_Interactions

According to the information provided in Table 4.27, all the three mobile device usage explain 8.1% of the total variations in the marital satisfaction of couples ($R^2 = .081$). When the level of education (the moderator) was introduced into the model, the $R^2$ value increased by 3.3 percent, and the model significant, ($R^2 = .033$, p =.005). This implied that, when the moderator (the level of education) was added, the model was still statistically significant in influencing the marital satisfaction of couples.

The interaction factor, EDU_interaction (Z1*Xi) was introduced in MMR model three. However, the R square remained unchanged, while the P-value became statistically insignificant, ($R^2 = .114$, p =.988). Consequently, the level of education was noted to be a statistically insignificant moderator between the mobile device use and the marital satisfaction of couples in MCK, Nkubu Synod, Meru County. In view of this finding, the study looked at the regression weights whose results are shown in Table 4.28.

**Table 4. 28**

*Moderation effect of the education level of couples: Regression weights*

| Model | | Unstandardized Coefficients | | Standardized Coefficients | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | B | Std. Error | Beta | t | Sig. |
| 1 | (Constant) | 3.090 | .165 | | 18.721 | .000 |
| | X1 | .112 | .031 | .245 | 3.659 | .000 |
| | X2 | -.048 | .055 | -.056 | -.866 | .388 |
| | X3 | .040 | .031 | .088 | 1.308 | .192 |
| 2 | (Constant) | 3.219 | .168 | | 19.101 | .000 |
| | X1 | .086 | .031 | .188 | 2.720 | .007 |
| | X2 | -.065 | .055 | -.076 | -1.188 | .236 |
| | X3 | .039 | .030 | .085 | 1.282 | .201 |
| | Zj_Edu | .081 | .028 | .192 | 2.865 | .005 |
| 3 | (Constant) | 3.219 | .181 | | 17.820 | .000 |
| | X1 | .085 | .032 | .188 | 2.695 | .008 |
| | X2 | -.065 | .057 | -.076 | -1.141 | .255 |
| | X3 | .039 | .031 | .085 | 1.270 | .205 |
| | Zj_Edu | .083 | .135 | .197 | .614 | .540 |
| | EDU_Interactions | -.001 | .048 | -.005 | -.015 | .988 |

a. Dependent Variable: Y

The results in Table 4.25 show that in the combined moderated multiple regression model, it is only the social media use that remained statistically significant after introducing the interaction terms of the moderating variable. Since the introduction of the interaction terms of the moderating variable did not improve the MMR model, the study did not bother to interpret the standardized coefficients of the model.

## 4.12.2 Moderating effect of the number of years in marriage and marital satisfaction of couples

The findings on the moderating effect of the length in marriage and marital satisfaction of couples in MCK Nkubu Synod were generated and presented in Tables 4.29, 4.30 and 4.31, and thereafter discussed accordingly.

**Table 4. 29**

*Moderation effect of the number of years in marriage: Model validity*

| Model | | Sum of Squares | df | Mean Square | F | Sig. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Regression | 2.884 | 3 | .961 | 6.513 | .000[b] |
| | Residual | 32.775 | 222 | .148 | | |
| | Total | 35.659 | 225 | | | |
| 2 | Regression | 2.933 | 4 | .733 | 4.952 | .001[c] |
| | Residual | 32.726 | 221 | .148 | | |
| | Total | 35.659 | 225 | | | |
| 3 | Regression | 4.742 | 5 | .948 | 6.748 | .000[d] |
| | Residual | 30.917 | 220 | .141 | | |
| | Total | 35.659 | 225 | | | |

a. Dependent Variable: Y
b. Predictors: (Constant), X3, X2, X1
c. Predictors: (Constant), X3, X2, X1, Zj_Yearsmarried
d. Predictors: (Constant), X3, X2, X1, Zj_Yearsmarried, Yearsinmarriage_Interactions

Table 4.29 shows F $_{(3, 222)}$ = 6.513, $P < .000$ for model one. This indicates that the model is statistically significant; hence, valid for further analysis. When the number of years in marriage was added as an explanatory variable in the second model, the F statistics, F $_{(4, 221)}$ = 4.952, $P < .000$, showed that the second model was also statistically significant in influencing the marital satisfaction of couples. In the third model, the statistics were; F $_{(5, 220)}$ = 5.651, $P < .000$ which indicated that it remained valid (statistically significant) after the interaction term (Years_interaction) was introduced. The results implied that the three

predictors that were entered into the model were jointly statistically significant in influencing the marital satisfaction of married couples in MCK Nkubu Synod.

Having established the prediction capacity, the study had to examine the results in the MMR model summary table to determine the effect of the moderating variable in the hypothesized relationship. The findings are found in Table 4.30.

**Table 4. 30**

*Moderation effect of the number of years in marriage: Model Summary*

| Model | R | R Square | Adjusted R Square | Std. Error of the Estimate | R Square Change | F Change | df1 | df2 | Sig. F Change |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | .284[a] | .081 | .068 | .38423 | .081 | 6.513 | 3 | 222 | .000 |
| 2 | .287[b] | .082 | .066 | .38481 | .001 | .329 | 1 | 221 | .567 |
| 3 | .365[c] | .133 | .113 | .37488 | .051 | 12.868 | 1 | 220 | .000 |

a. Predictors: (Constant), X3, X2, X1
b. Predictors: (Constant), X3, X2, X1, Zj_Years married
c. Predictors: (Constant), X3, X2, X1, Zj_Years married, Years in marriage Interactions

According to the information provided in Table 4.30, all the three mobile device usage explain 8.1% of the total variations in the marital satisfaction of couples ($R^2$ = .081). When the number of years in marriage (the moderator) was introduced into the model number two, the $R^2$ value increased by one percent, but the model became insignificant, ($R^2$ =.001, p =.567). This implied that, when the moderator (the number of years in marriage) was added, the model became statistically insignificant in influencing the marital satisfaction of couples.

The next step entailed introducing the interaction factor of the moderator, Years in marriage _interaction (Z1*Xi), into MMR model number three to help ascertain the moderating effect. In the model number three, the R square increased by 5.1% to 13.3% (R-square change = .051, and the P-value became statistically significant, ($R^2$ =.133, p =.000). Consequently, the number of years in marriage was noted to be a statistically significant moderator between the mobile device use and the marital satisfaction of couples in MCK, Nkubu Synod, Meru County. The study therefore concluded that the number of years in marriage moderated the relationship between the media device and the marital satisfaction of couples in MCK Nkubu Synod, Meru County. According to Bett et al. (2017), spouse demographic characteristics such as age, educational levels and the number of children influence how the couples relate in marriage. However, they did not include the aspects of social media in the study.

In view of this finding, the study went ahead to interpret the regression weights whose results are shown in Table 4.31.

**Table 4. 31**

*Moderation effect of the number of years in marriage: Regression weights*

| Model | | Unstandardized Coefficients | | Standardized Coefficients | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | B | Std. Error | Beta | T | Sig. |
| 1 | (Constant) | 3.090 | .165 | | 18.721 | .000 |
| | X1 | .112 | .031 | .245 | 3.659 | .000 |
| | X2 | -.048 | .055 | -.056 | -.866 | .388 |
| | X3 | .040 | .031 | .088 | 1.308 | .192 |
| 2 | (Constant) | 3.097 | .166 | | 18.685 | .000 |
| | X1 | .112 | .031 | .246 | 3.663 | .000 |
| | X2 | -.052 | .056 | -.061 | -.938 | .349 |
| | X3 | .041 | .031 | .090 | 1.331 | .185 |
| | Zj_Yearsmarried | -.001 | .002 | -.037 | -.574 | .567 |
| 3 | (Constant) | 3.089 | .161 | | 19.127 | .000 |
| | X1 | .107 | .030 | .235 | 3.587 | .000 |
| | X2 | -.028 | .055 | -.032 | -.502 | .616 |
| | X3 | .031 | .030 | .068 | 1.032 | .303 |
| | Zj_Yearsmarried | -.046 | .013 | -1.515 | -3.635 | .000 |
| | Yearsinmarriage_Interactions | .015 | .004 | 1.501 | 3.587 | .000 |
| a. Dependent Variable: Y | | | | | | |

The results in Table 4.28 show that, social media use is statistically significant in predicting the marital satisfaction of couples in all the three models, while mobile games use and mobile phone calls were statistically insignificant. However, when the interaction terms were introduced into model number three, it became statistically significant ($\beta_1$ = .1.501, P =.000). This supports the finding and conclusion that the number of years in marriage moderate the relationship between the mobile devices' usage and marital satisfaction of couples in MCK, Nkubu Synod.

The resulting Moderated Multiple Regression model was generated using the standardized coefficients because the scale used was different. The model was:

$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1X_1 + \beta_2X_2 + \beta_3X_3 + \beta jZj + \beta ijXiZj + \varepsilon$, hence,

Marital satisfaction of couples $= -3.089 + .235X_1 + -.032X_2 + .068X_3 + -1.515Zj \ 1.501Zj + \varepsilon$.

The resulting moderated multiple regression model shows that the marital satisfaction = (.235$X_1$social media use) + (-.032$X_2$mobile games use) + (.068$X_3$mobile phone calls) - 1.515 number of years in marriage) -1.501interaction terms -3.089). In this model, -3.089 is the baseline value which is linked to the predictor variables. This implies that -3.089 is the same for each predictor variable in the moderated multiple regression model. These results show that the relationship between mobile device use and the marital satisfaction is moderated by the number of years in marriage.

The findings show that the number of years in marriage has a statistically significant moderating effect on the relationship between mobile device use and marital satisfaction in married couples in MCK, Nkubu Synod. This meant that the impact of the use of social media, mobile games and mobile phone calls on marital satisfaction varied depending on how long a couple had been married. This implied that as married couples advance in marriage, they are able to develop coping mechanisms and hence, the pressure of social media, mobile games and mobile phone calls are moderated, such that, they amass less impact on marital satisfaction. Bett et al. (2017) also identified the spouse

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demographic characteristics such as age in marriage, educational levels and the number of children as weighty factors in determining the nature of marriage relationship.

### 4.12.3 Moderating effect of income and marital satisfaction of couples

The findings on the moderating effect of income and marital satisfaction of couples were generated and presented in Tables 4.32, 4.33 and 4.34, and discussed accordingly.

**Table 4. 32**

*Moderation effect of income: Model validity*

| Model | | Sum of Squares | df | Mean Square | F | Sig. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Regression | 2.884 | 3 | .961 | 6.513 | .000[b] |
| | Residual | 32.775 | 222 | .148 | | |
| | Total | 35.659 | 225 | | | |
| 2 | Regression | 3.238 | 4 | .810 | 5.518 | .000[c] |
| | Residual | 32.421 | 221 | .147 | | |
| | Total | 35.659 | 225 | | | |
| 3 | Regression | 3.406 | 5 | .681 | 4.646 | .000[d] |
| | Residual | 32.253 | 220 | .147 | | |
| | Total | 35.659 | 225 | | | |

a. Dependent Variable: Y
b. Predictors: (Constant), X3, X2, X1
c. Predictors: (Constant), X3, X2, X1, Zj_Income
d. Predictors: (Constant), X3, X2, X1, Zj_Income, Income_Interactions

Table 4.32 show $F_{(3, 222)} = 6.513$, $P < .000$ for model one. This indicates that the model is statistically significant, hence, valid for further analysis. When income was added as an explanatory variable in the second model, it generated F statistics $F_{(4, 221)} = 5.518$, $P < .000$, which showed that the second model was also statistically significant in influencing the marital satisfaction of couples. In the third model, the statistics were; $F_{(5, 220)} = 4.646$, $P < .000$ which indicated that it remained valid (statistically significant) after the

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interaction term (Income interaction) was introduced. The results implied that the three predictors that were entered into the model were jointly statistically significant in influencing the marital satisfaction of married couples in MCK Nkubu Synod.

Having established the prediction capacity, the study had to examine the results in the model summary table to determine the effect of the moderating variable in the hypothesized relationship. The findings are found in Table 4.33.

**Table 4. 33**

*Moderation effect of income: Model Summary*

| Model | R | R Square | Adjusted R Square | Std. Error of the Estimate | Change Statistics R Square Change | Change Statistics F Change | Change Statistics df1 | Change Statistics df2 | Change Statistics Sig. F Change |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | .284[a] | .081 | .068 | .38423 | .081 | 6.513 | 3 | 222 | .000 |
| 2 | .301[b] | .091 | .074 | .38302 | .010 | 2.411 | 1 | 221 | .122 |
| 3 | .309[c] | .096 | .075 | .38289 | .005 | 1.143 | 1 | 220 | .286 |

a. Predictors: (Constant), X3, X2, X1
b. Predictors: (Constant), X3, X2, X1, Zj_Income
c. Predictors: (Constant), X3, X2, X1, Zj_Income, Income_Interactions

According to the information provided in Table 4.33, all the three mobile device usage explain 8.1% of the total variations in the marital satisfaction of couples ($R^2$ = .081). When income (the moderator) was introduced into the second model, the coefficient of determination ($R^2$ value) increased by one percent (1%); however, the model became insignificant, ($R^2$ =.091, p =.122). This implied that, when the moderator (income) was added, the model become statistically insignificant in influencing the marital satisfaction of couples.

The interaction factor, Income_interaction (Z1*Xi) was then introduced into the MMR

model number three to help ascertain the moderating effect. Here, the R square was

noticed to have increased marginally by 0.5% to 9.6% (R-square change = .005, and the

P-value remained statistically insignificant, ($R^2$ =.096, p =.286). This meant that the 3rd

model that had the interaction terms of the moderator was also statistically insignificant.

The study therefore concluded that income was a statistically insignificant moderator

between the mobile device use and the marital satisfaction of couples in MCK Nkubu

Synod, Meru County. The study further interpreted the regression weights whose results

are shown in Table 4.34.

**Table 4. 34**

*Moderation effect of income: Regression weights*

| Model | | Unstandardized Coefficients | | Standardized Coefficients | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | B | Std. Error | Beta | t | Sig. |
| 1 | (Constant) | 3.090 | .165 | | 18.721 | .000 |
| | X1 | .112 | .031 | .245 | 3.659 | .000 |
| | X2 | -.048 | .055 | -.056 | -.866 | .388 |
| | X3 | .040 | .031 | .088 | 1.308 | .192 |
| 2 | (Constant) | 3.172 | .173 | | 18.361 | .000 |
| | X1 | .094 | .032 | .207 | 2.907 | .004 |
| | X2 | -.052 | .055 | -.061 | -.940 | .348 |
| | X3 | .035 | .031 | .076 | 1.131 | .259 |
| | Zj_Income | .036 | .023 | .109 | 1.553 | .122 |
| 3 | (Constant) | 3.153 | .174 | | 18.157 | .000 |
| | X1 | .097 | .033 | .213 | 2.976 | .003 |
| | X2 | -.045 | .055 | -.053 | -.810 | .419 |
| | X3 | .031 | .031 | .066 | .976 | .330 |
| | Zj_Income | -.091 | .121 | -.271 | -.749 | .455 |
| | Income_Interactions | .045 | .042 | .385 | 1.069 | .286 |

a. Dependent Variable: Y

The results in Table 4.34 show that in the combined moderated multiple regression model, it is only the social media use that remained statistically significant across all the models, even after introducing the interaction terms of the moderating variable. Since the introduction of the interaction terms of the moderating variable did not improve the MMR model, the study did not bother to interpret the standardized coefficients of the model. In agreement, Christensen (2018) found that social media usage among spouses was positively and statistically correlated with marital happiness. Other researchers which found similar results in terms of the significant impact that social media posed on marriages and families were: Hertlein and Hawkins (2015), Wang et al. (2017), De-Sola Gutiérrez et al. (2016), Andreassen et al., (2016), Coyne et al. (2018), Dixon (2020) and Yacoub et al. (2018).

# CHAPTER FIVE

## SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### 5.1 Introduction

This chapter provides articulate synopsis of the study findings, the conclusions derived from the results presented in chapter four, and recommendations. The last part of the thesis describes other areas that require further investigation with respect to this study's topic. The study was set out to assess the influence of mobile device use on couples' marital satisfaction levels in MCK, Nkubu Synod, Meru County, with a specific interest in social media use, mobile game use and mobile phone calls. Moreover, the effect of marriage characteristics on the influence of mobile phone device use on the level of marital satisfaction was also determined. The family systems and cognitive behaviour theories were the significant theories that guided the investigation of phenomena in this study.

### 5.2 Summary of Findings of the Study

The study achieved an overall response rate of 26 (61.6%) for the valid questionnaires returned, six (100%) interviews for the superintendent ministers (3 men and 3 ladies) from the six circuits in Nkubu Synod; and (100%) for the Focused Group Discussion. The presented results attracted a Cronbach's Bach value of more than 0.7. This meant that the data was both reliable and adequate. Key summaries were presented systematically and thematically in line with the study variables.

**5.2.1 Background Information of Respondents**

The study showed that most of the couples were young and in their productive age, as represented by 30% of couples below 30 years of age, and 44.2% between 30 and 49 years old. Also, these couples were relatively literate, with 39.8% having bachelor's degrees, 35.0% having college diplomas, 13.3% having college certificates, and only 4.0% having primary school certificates. The study noted that their education level did not vary with gender (Asymptotic Significance of 0.058). It was also clear that slightly more than a third of the church members in MCK, Nkubu Synod were young in marriage, where 46% had stayed for ten years and below. Moreover, most respondents established that the age at which one got married was between 20 and 33 years.

However, the background findings on earnings indicated that the couples were relatively low economically, considering that nearly three quarters, 64.6% of married church members of Nkubu Synod were earning Kes 40,000 and below. It was also noted that the majority of married church members from MCK Nkubu Synod were accessing the internet and social media via data bundles, 68%; which also explained why most of the couples had smartphones. Analyzed information indicated that the married couples from the MCK Nkubu Synod were predominantly visiting social media sites that included WhatsApp, Facebook and Instagram. Results show that the couples visited the social media sites five times a day.

**5.2.2 Level of Marital Satisfaction of Married Couples in MCK, Nkubu Synod**

This was the dependent variable of the study. Moderate scores were reported regarding the marital satisfaction dimensions of religious matters, demonstrations of affection, significant decisions, sex relations, conventionality (correct or proper behaviour), and

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career decisions. However, some dissatisfaction among couples was evident in the higher cases of married couples contemplating divorce, separation, or ending their relationships, often arguments as a result of situations, encounters, events, experiences and unmet needs. This meant that, given a chance, the majority of the married couples from the MCK, Nkubu Synod would walk out of their marriages. Moreover, little cohesiveness and failure of involvement in decision-making were also evident, which implied that there was sufficient evidence for spousal distress among married couples. Lastly, there was evidence of marital dissatisfaction among married couples, partly attributed to social media platforms' utilization.

### 5.2.3 Social Media Use and the Level of Marital Satisfaction of Couples

Apart from confirming the wide use of social media among couples, the first objective was also to determine how social media use influences the level of marital satisfaction of couples in MCK Nkubu Synod, Meru County of Kenya. The findings indicated that most couples monitor their spouse's social media to see their partners' friends. They also check what their partners publish online. This practice of scrutinizing usually makes them see uncomfortable messages and contents, which generally raises some suspicions that their partners could be looking for romantic partnerships outside marriage. The feelings typically cumulate to bitterness. As a result, the married couples said they were uncomfortable leaving their phones with their spouses.

The findings further showed that social media was limiting spousal quality time interaction. Respondents said it inhibited the couple's communication and predisposed other behaviours that negatively affected marriage relationships and bonding; such as

lying and cheating. It also elicited emotional and psychological downtime, where some felt ignored, belittled, and were hurt emotionally. The persistence of this behaviour usually becomes a source of sharp disagreements, disputes and conflicts due to mistrust. These feelings and behaviours may lead to separation and divorce; in some circumstances, it might lead to depression and death. Despite the negative perceptions and misuse, the couples agreed that social media played a significant role in enhancing communication and bonding in long-distance relationships. The statistical analysis also confirmed that social media use was statistically significant in influencing couples' marital satisfaction at MCK, Nkubu Synod.

## 5.2.4 Mobile Game Use and the Level of Marital Satisfaction of Couples

The study's second objective was to determine the influence of mobile game use on couples' marital satisfaction levels in MCK Nkubu Synod, Meru County. The findings show that although not many couples had personal gaming machines, most preferred video games to spending time with their spouses, families, friends and relatives. This love for gaming was attributed to negative experiences of regular spouse disagreement, argument, serious conflicts, conflicts, poor intimacy, diminished marital satisfaction, sleeplessness, lack of physical exercise, addiction, time-wasting and wrong financial investment priorities. However, when both spouses agreed to do the video gaming together, it caused increased young couple bonding, enhanced interaction, provided entertainment, and got the educated through the intellectually challenging content. Despite the side effects of mobile game use, it was found not individually statistically significant in influencing couples' marital satisfaction at MCK, Nkubu Synod.

### 5.2.5 Mobile Phone Calls and the Level of Marital Satisfaction of Couples

The assessment of the influence of mobile phone calls on the level of marital satisfaction of couples revealed that personal cell phones might be misused and or mishandled by couples. Findings revealed that couples spent a lot of monthly income to buy airtime and data bundle subscriptions. This negatively affected family time because calls were received and made during family hours and dinner time, causing discomfort. Other adverse outcomes were dissension, malice, suspicion, speculation, feeling neglected, ignored, lonely, belittled, insecure, and conflict with spouses due to prolonged phone calls. These aspects were agitating marriages; hence, causing unprecedented marital dissatisfaction. The statistical analysis also confirmed that mobile phone calls significantly influenced couples' marital satisfaction at MCK, Nkubu Synod.

### 5.2.6 The Overall Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to assess the influence of mobile device use on the level of marital satisfaction of couples in MCK Nkubu Synod, Meru County, with a view to suggesting remedial measures. The findings of multiple linear regression show that all the three mobile device use investigated in this study; that is, social media use, mobile games use, and mobile phone calls, when combined, formed a model that was statistically significant in determining the marital satisfaction of couples in MCK, Nkubu Synod, Meru County. However, the results of regression weights indicated that although the three predictor variables were jointly statistically significant in a combined model, social media use exerted more influence and variation in couples' marital satisfaction in MCK, Nkubu Synod.

## 5.2.8 Moderating effect of Marriage Characteristics and Level of Marriage Satisfaction

The fourth research variable aimed to assess the extent to which marriage characteristics (education, length of marriage and income) moderated the relationship between mobile phone device use and the level of marital satisfaction of couples in MCK Nkubu Synod, Meru County. The findings showed that the level of education and income were statistically insignificant moderators between mobile device use and couples' marital satisfaction in MCK Nkubu Synod, Meru County. However, the number of years in marriage was a statistically significant moderator on the relationship between mobile device use and couples' marital satisfaction in MCK, Nkubu Synod, Meru County.

## 5.3 Conclusions

The study noted that most couples in the MCK Nkubu Synod were young in marriage and were actively engaged in social media. The computed revised Dyadic adjustment scale of the couples was 39.3 out of 69, indicating spousal distress; hence low marital satisfaction. The marital distress was evidenced by minimal cooperation in collaborative decisions, disharmony and incongruence in values and interests, deprived concession in family projects and poor communication. This was causing substantial agitations, which were graduating to conflicts, infidelity, and fighting; hence, a high level of marital dissatisfaction. The persistence of dissatisfaction opened the door for divorce, separation, or ending their relationships. The married couples reported moderate satisfaction levels in dimensions such as religious matters, demonstrations of affection, significant decisions, sex relations, conventionality, and career decisions.

Social media use was statistically significant in influencing couples' marital satisfaction at MCK, Nkubu Synod. The couples' activities on social media elicited marriage distress, hence the high level of marital dissatisfaction. The study noted that although social media enhanced communication and bonding for long-distance relationship couples, it posed severe adverse effects on spouse quality time for interaction. It also inhibited cordial communication between marriage partners, caused regular suspicions, and facilitated infidelity, conflicts, fighting, separation and divorce, thereby severely threatening couples' marital satisfaction in MCK, Nkubu Synod.

Concerning the second objective on mobile gaming use, it was conclusively found to be statistically insignificant in influencing the marital satisfaction of MCK, Nkubu Synod couples. This was because mobile game use was not rampant among married couples; hence, its effects on marital satisfaction were not weighty. Nevertheless, some couples expressed preferences for video games which were noted to contributeto regular to spouse disagreement, lack of physical togetherness, and economic-related conflicts.

Regarding objective three, the study found that mobile phone calls were statistically significant in influencing couples' marital satisfaction at MCK Nkubu Synod. It was clear that the length of time and frequency of receiving and making calls, and the extent of concealment when making or receiving calls were raising weighty suspicions, hence, a high level of marital unhappiness.

In a nutshell, the study noted that when combined, social media use, mobile gaming and mobile phone calls formed a model that was statistically significant in determining couples' marital satisfaction in MCK, Nkubu Synod, Meru County. However, in an

integrated model, social media was weightier compared to the other two mobile device uses.

Regarding the moderating effect of marriage characteristics (level of education, number of years in marriage and income), the study concluded that the level of education and the income both had statistically insignificant moderation effect on the relationship between mobile device use and the marital satisfaction of couples in MCK, Nkubu Synod, Meru County. However, the number of years in marriage was the statistically significant moderator on the relationship between media device use and couples' marital satisfaction in MCK Nkubu Synod, Meru County.

## 5.4 Recommendations

The study came up with recommendations based on the findings, and further described the implication of the results on theories, policies and practices.

### 5.4.1 Recommendations based on the Findings of the Study

The spousal distress, evidenced by low levels of marital satisfaction among couples in MCK Nkubu Synod, indicates a need to develop and strengthen the institutional-based and societal-based solutions which will enhance the institution of marriage. The spousal distress attests to the need to establish marital counselling programs for married people in the local churches. This has implications on clergies and superintendent ministers considering their role in providing leadership to the congregation and ensuring harmonious relationships among married couples.

The facets of marital satisfaction require the pastoral team and church counsellors to be knowledgeable on each aspect so that they can be helpful to married couples. The key areas include participative decision-making, career growth and development aspirations, demonstration of affection, sexual relations, religious matters and concession in all cases touching the partners and the family. The findings also highlight the need to consider establishing a counselling office in every local church.

The study also recommends that MCK, Nkubu Synod couples establish sensitization programs regarding the misuse of social media, and guide spouses on digital communication etiquette owing to its threat to marital satisfaction. Married couples need to be regularly guided and counselled by the church through the engagement of qualified marriage counsellors who, among other issues, should cover how to manage social media to minimize its adverse effects on communication and interactions in marriage. The knowledge will also help the church address the critical areas and issues threatening the harmonious marriage relationship among couples. This initiative has implications for training colleges for pastors and counsellors.

Mobile game use should be significantly managed in order to ensure enjoyment of marital satisfaction among married couples. The clergy members and superintendent ministers of MCK, Nkubu Synod should develop awareness programs and campaigns regarding mobile gaming. The programs should also underscore the importance of constructive conflict resolution to enhance marital satisfaction among Christian couples. This necessitates the need to readdress the local churches' spousal guidance and counselling services.

The MCK Nkubu Synod should educate and train the couples through workshops and seminars on phone etiquette, and sensitize them on how to moderate phone conversations during family times. Each spouse should be taught to devise deliberate strategies for managing mobile calls, the calling time, length, and the frequency so that such engagements do not interfere with the quality of interaction and marital companionship.

The study recommends the development of comprehensive guidance and counselling church training curriculum which aims at equipping the couples with knowledge on drivers of marriage dissatisfaction, including the effective use of social media, mobile games and mobile phone calls, to ensure marital satisfaction among the married Christian couples.

Considering that the number of years in marriage moderates the relationship between mobile device usage and couples' marital satisfaction, it would be necessary for the MCK Nkubu Synod to encourage older couples to mentor young couples. The couples who are older in marriage will share their experiences and strategies on marital satisfaction and how they have mitigated the adverse effects of social media, mobile games and mobile phone calls. This will create an environment for sharing ideas.

## 5.4.2 Implications of the Findings on Theories, Practices and Policies

The study findings concluded that social media use, mobile games use, and mobile phone calls combined formed a statistically significant model in determining couples' marital satisfaction in MCK, Nkubu Synod, Meru County. These findings supported the main argument of the family systems and the cognitive behaviour theories, such as understanding the environmental threats, which, in this case, were the phone device use (social media use, gaming, mobile phone calls). Other issues underpinned include

communication, consensus in decision making, collaborations, and expressions of love to achieve marital satisfaction.

The results will affect modes of marriage counselling services in the local churches. They also point out a need to change the church employment practices to enable the local church to engage in professional counselling services. The findings further implicate the need to have comprehensive couple guidance and counselling curriculum in the local churches and the need to identify couples who are mentors. These will be useful in sharing experiences and acting like role models in nurturing newly married individuals to uphold marital satisfaction.

The state of affairs indicates a need for MCK to revisit its training policy to accommodate the emerging issues, such as the impact of social media use, mobile games use, and mobile phone calls and marital satisfaction. These have financial implications considering that churches have to organize regular couple training workshops and seminars; strive to meet the cost of hiring professional marriage counsellors. This will help to institutionalize the culture of responsibility among couples and foster respect for family times.

## 5.5 Recommendations for Further Studies

a) This study investigated the influence of mobile device use on the level of marital satisfaction among couples in MCK, Nkubu Synod in Meru County. Another study may be carried out in other counties in Kenya.

b) While conducting the study, the place of communication, guidance and counselling among couples was discovered as a central practice for decision-making, discussing future career aspirations, managing social media use, and

conflict resolution. This indicates a need for another study to critically examine these facets in enhancing the satisfaction in marriages.

c) The study was biased toward married Christian couples; a similar study may be carried out from different faiths, such as Muslims.

d) The high level of marital dissatisfaction was noted among couples in MCK Synod. The percentage explained by the mobile devices was small; therefore, another study should investigate other drivers of marital satisfaction among married couples in MCK, Nkubu Synod.

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# APPENDICES

## APPENDIX I: INTRODUCTION LETTER

**Dear Sir/Madam,**

**RE: PERMISSION TO CARRY OUT RESEARCH**

As a doctoral student pursuing counselling psychology at Kenya Methodist University, I am obliged, as part of my research work evaluation, to produce a research thesis on "Mobile Devices Usage and Quality Marital Satisfaction in the Methodist Church in Kenya, Nkubu Synod." You have been chosen to participate in the research, and to do this, I humbly request that you respond to the items listed below. This information will be used just for academic purposes, and your identity will not be revealed in the report. The research findings will be made available to you on request.

Your help and cooperation would be much appreciated.

Thank you in advance.

Yours faithfully,

Mutua Catherine Kagwiria

**APPENDIX II: INFORMED CONSENT FORM**

Dear respondent,

Catherine Kagwiria Mutua

Kenya Methodist University

P.O. Box 267 – 60200.

Dear respondent,

I am writing to request for consent to participate in my study which will help me to actualize my academic research that investigates on *Influence of mobile devices use on the level of marital satisfaction among couples in MCK Nkubu Synod, Meru.* This research hopes to shed light on how mobile devices are affecting marriages, to enhance marital satisfaction.

**Discomforts and risks**

In this study, there are no risks of participating in the research. The reputation of the participant will also not be injured. The respondent is welcome to discontinue participation in the study at any time, should one wish to do so due to discomfort. You may also stop the interview at any time. The interview may take about 30 minutes to complete.

**Benefits**

If you participate in this study you will help us to strengthen the academic performance of hearing impaired learners in primary schools in Kenya. Your input is therefore critical

in generate new knowledge and will go a long way in strengthening assistive technology availed to learners with hearing challenge in primary schools.

**Rewards**

There is no reward for anyone who chooses to participate in the study.

**Confidentiality**

Your participation and those of the pupils will remain strictly confidential. No name will be recorded on the questionnaire or attached to any of the data you provide. The data collection will be kept in a confidential location after collection and in future and, moreover, will not have anything to identify you.

**Contact Information**

Should you have questions regarding your participation, please contact me on catherinemutuaj@gmail.com. You may also contact my research supervisor at rebecca.wachira@kemu.ac.ke

I am kindly asking you to sign the consent form (below) indicating agreement for you to participate in the study.

**Participant's Statement**

The above statement regarding my participation in the study is clear to me. I have been given a chance to ask questions and my questions have been answered to my satisfaction. My participation in this study is entirely voluntary. I understand that my records will be kept private and that I can leave the study at any time. I understand that I will not be victimized at my place of work whether I decide to leave the study or not and my decision will not affect the way I am treated at my work place.

Name of Participant…………………………………… Date…………………………..

Signature…………………………………………….

**Investigator's Statement**

I, the undersigned, have explained to the volunteer in a language s/he understands the procedures to be followed in the study and the risks and the benefits involved.

Name of

Interviewer……………………………………………Date…………………….

Interviewer Signature…………………………………………

**APPENDIX III QUESTIONNAIRE FOR THE RESPONDENTS**

**SECTION A: DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION**

*Instruction: Please tick against your most appropriate answer and fill the spaces provided.*

1. Gender

    a. Male         [ ]

    b. Female      [ ]

2. Age group

    a. Below 30 years    [ ]

    b. 30 to 39 years    [ ]

    c. 40 to 49 years    [ ]

    d. 50 to 59 years    [ ]

    e. Above 59 years    [ ]

3. What is your Educational background?

    a. Primary certificate  [ ]

    b. Secondary certificate [ ]

    c. College diploma    [ ]

    d. Degree         [ ]

    e. Others         [ ]

4. For how long have you been married? ……………………….. (Indicate years)

5. How old were you when you got married? …………………………….

6. Which of the following best describes the average monthly income for your

    family in shillings?

     a. Below 10,000          [  ]

     b. 10,000 to 20,000      [  ]

     c. 20,001 to 40,0000     [  ]

     d. 40,001 to 100,000     [  ]

     e. Above 100,000          [  ]

7. What is your type of marriage?

     a) Customary marriage ( )

     b) Civil marriage         ( )

     c) Christian marriage   ( )

     d) Cohabitation          ( )

8. How do you access internet/ social media

     a) Data bundles ( )

     b) Wi-Fi( )

     c) LAN Cable ( )

     d) Others     ( )

9. Please mark the mobile devices below that you own

     a. Smartphone                 [  ]

     b. Tablet                           [  ]

c. Laptop computer　　　　　　[ ]

d. Personal gaming device　　　[ ]


## SECTION B: SOCIAL MEDIA USE

10. Which social media sites do you visit often?

　　Facebook ( ) whatup ( ), Instagram ( ), twitter ( )


11. On average, how many times do you visit Social Networking Sites in a day?

　　a) One　　　☐

　　b) Two　　　☐

　　c) Three　　☐

　　d) Four　　　☐

　　e) Five and above ☐


10. What would you say are the effects of social networking sites usage on the level of marital satisfaction?

a. Positive

_____

_____

_____

b. Negative

_____

Indicate your level of agreement with the following statements on a Likert scale of 5.

Please tick the most appropriate. Where **1=strongly disagree 2= Disagree, 3=neutral, 4=agree, 5= strongly agree.**

| | Strongly agree | Agree | Neutral | Disagree | Strongly Disagree |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| I frequently use social media platforms such as Telegram, LinkedIn, Facebook, Snapchat, WhatsApp and Instagram. | | | | | |
| I occasionally use social media late at night. | | | | | |
| I monitor my spouse's social media to see who his or her friends are and what he or she publishes. | | | | | |
| I am not comfortable leaving my phone with my spouse since he/she can view my social media discussions with pals. | | | | | |
| Even when my spouse is there, I am on social networking sites. | | | | | |
| My spouse complains that how I spend so much time on Social Media (especially WhatsApp). | | | | | |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| I occasionally argue with my partner over their social media usage and conduct. | | | | |
| When I see social media interactions between my spouse and their friends on social media, I often feel bitter. | | | | |
| My spouse, I suspect, is utilizing social media to look for romantic partnerships. | | | | |
| Because of my usage of social media, I have very little time to interact with my marital spouse. | | | | |
| Because of my social media usage, I sometimes pay little attention during my chat with my spouse. | | | | |

12. To what extent do you think your social media sites affect the level of marital satisfaction?

   (a) Very Small extent ( ) small extent () mild extent () large extent () very large extent ( )

**SECTION C: GAMING**

13. Please mark how much you agree or disagree with each of the following statements about how you communicate with your spouse. Please select the most suited option. Where 1 means strongly disagree 2 means disagree, 3 means neutral, 4 means agree, and 5 means strongly agree.

| | SA | A | N | D | SD |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| I occasionally argue with my partner over video games and their conduct. | | | | | |
| I prefer video games with friends rather than spending quality time with my spouse. | | | | | |
| I would rather play video games than go out with others. | | | | | |
| Do you and your partner share any outside interests? | | | | | |
| I choose to play video games than spend time on physical exercise. | | | | | |
| I frequently lose sleep as a result of late-night surfing. | | | | | |

14. 15. Do you currently participate in any online role-playing games (MMORPGs)? (Please mark any that apply)

   (a) World of Warcraft

(b) Everquest

(c) Habbo Hotel

15. Indicate the frequency in which you experience each of the following in relation to your gaming behaviour.

| | Rarely | Occasionally | Frequently | Often | Always |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| How frequently do you wonder when you'll be able to get back into the game? | | | | | |
| How frequently do you worry that life would be dull, empty, and joyless if you didn't play your online video game? | | | | | |
| How frequently do you snap, shout, or act irritated when someone annoys you while you're playing a game? | | | | | |
| How frequently do you lose sleep as a result of late-night play sessions? | | | | | |
| How frequently are you preoccupied with gaming while not connected to the internet, or | | | | | |

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| think about being back in the game? | | | | | |
| How frequently do you find yourself saying "just a couple extra minutes" when playing a game? | | | | | |
| How frequently do you repeatedly fail to shorten the time you spend gaming? | | | | | |
| How frequently do you try to conceal your gaming history? | | | | | |
| How frequently do you prefer to spend your time gaming over socializing? | | | | | |
| How frequently do you feel melancholy, moody, or worried when you are not gaming, and how quickly do you feel better when you resume gaming? | | | | | |

16. Has the Gaming Behaviour of your spouse affected the level of marital

satisfaction                                    in                                    any

way?..........................................................................................................................

......................................................................................................

17. To what extent do you think that video games affect the level of marital satisfaction?

(b) Very Small extent ( ) small extent ( ) mild extent ( ) large extent ( ) very large extent ().

## SECTION D: MOBILE PHONE CALLS

18. Approximately how much do you spend on airtime per month?

a) 500-1,000    ( )

b) 1,000-2,500   ( )

c) 2,500-5,000   ( )

d) Above 5,000 ( )

19. Please indicate your level of agreement or disagreement to each of the following statements in regard to how you communicate to your spouse. Please tick the most appropriate. Where 1=strongly disagree 2= Disagree, 3=neutral, 4=agree, 5= strongly agree.

| Phone call Item | SA | A | N | D | SD |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. I make or receive very many calls between 5 pm-10 pm and early morning between 4-7 am. | | | | | |
| 2. I make more calls than I receive | | | | | |
| 3. I do not hide from my spouse when making or receiving calls from colleagues & friends. | | | | | |

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 4. I am concerned about leaving my phone with my spouse because they can answer my calls. | | | | | |
| 5. I spend more time making and receiving mobile phone calls than I spend with my family. | | | | | |
| 6. I feel neglected and left with no quality time with my spouse due to the time he/she spends on mobile. | | | | | |
| 7. We usually have a conflict with my spouse due to prolonged phone calls. | | | | | |
| 8. My spouse pulls out and examines his/her phone throughout dinner while we are together. | | | | | |
| 9. During our physical chats, my partner writes messages or emails to others. | | | | | |
| 10. Whenever my partner's phone rings, even if we are in the middle of a discussion, he or she pulls it out. | | | | | |

20. To what extent do you think that Mobile phone calls affect Level of marital satisfaction?

    a. Very Small extent [　]

    b. Small extent [　]

    c. Mild extent [　]

    d. Large extent [　]

    e. Very large extent [　]

## SECTION E: LEVEL OF MARITAL SATISFACTION

### Revised Dyadic Adjustment Scale

The majority of people encounter disputes in their relationships. Please indicate

yours and your partner's approximate degree of agreement or disagreement for every

issue on the following list.

| | Always Agree | Almost Always Agree | Occasionally Agree | Frequently Disagree | Almost Always Disagree | Always Disagree |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Religious matters | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
| 2. Demonstrations of affection | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
| 3. Making major decisions | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
| 4. Sex relations | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
| 5. Conventionality (correct or proper behavior) | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
| 6. Career decisions | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 |

7. How frequently do you talk or contemplate divorce, separation, or ending your relationship?

| | Everyday | Almost Everyday | Occasionally | Rarely | Never |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 7. | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 |

11. Do you and your partner share any outside interests?

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 8. How frequently do you and your partner argue? | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 9. Do you ever wish you hadn't married (or lived together)? | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 10. How frequently do you and your partner "get on each other's nerves"? | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

How often would you say the following events occur betwee[n]

n you and your mate?

| | Never | Less than once a month | Once or twice a month | Once or twice a week | Once a day | More often |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 12. Have a stimulating exchange of ideas | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 13. Work together on a project | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 14. Calmly discuss something | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

**PPENDIX IV: FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS GUIDE**

1. Share your thoughts on the influence of social media use on couple communication.

2. Briefly describe the influence of Video gaming level on marital satisfaction.

3. What is your opinion on the influence of mobile phone call abuse on marital conflict among couples?

4. Suggest ways in which the adverse effects of mobile device usage in marital satisfaction can be mitigated.

**APPENDIX V: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR THE CLERGY**

1. Share your thoughts on the influence of social media use on the level of

   marital                satisfaction                among                couples

   …………………………………………………………....................................

   ..................................................................................................................

   ..................................................................................................................

   ...............................................................................................

2. Briefly describe the influence of Video gaming on the level of marital

   satisfaction

   …………………………………………………………....................................

   ..................................................................................................................

   ..................................................................................................................

   ...............................................................................................

3. What is your opinion on the influence of mobile phone call on the level of

   marital                satisfaction                among                couples?

   …………………………………………………………....................................

   ..................................................................................................................

   ..................................................................................................................

   .............................................................................................

4. What do you recommend in order to improve the level of marital satisfaction

   among couples?

# APPENDIX VI: SAMPLING FRAME

MCK Nkubu Synod: Couples Enrolment Data as of August 2019

| Circuit | No. of Couples |
|---|---|
| Katherine | 402 |
| Githongo | 376 |
| Uruk | 301 |
| Katherina | 234 |
| Katheri | 208 |
| Mariene | 205 |
| Auriga | 203 |
| Nkubu | 200 |
| Chaaria | 186 |
| Mikumbune | 180 |
| Galatia | 174 |
| Kiamakoro | 168 |
| Mitunguu | 160 |
| Chuka | 142 |
| Igoji | 138 |
| Maara | 136 |
| Gait | 131 |
| Kirinyaga | 124 |
| Embu - Mbeere | 119 |
| Abogeeta | 114 |
| Kaija | 102 |
| Embu Mission | 98 |
| Total | 4003 |

## Number of smartphone users worldwide from 2016 to 2023

*(in billions)*



(Source: Statistica, 2021)

https://www.statista.com/statistics/330695/number-of-smartphone-users-worldwide/3
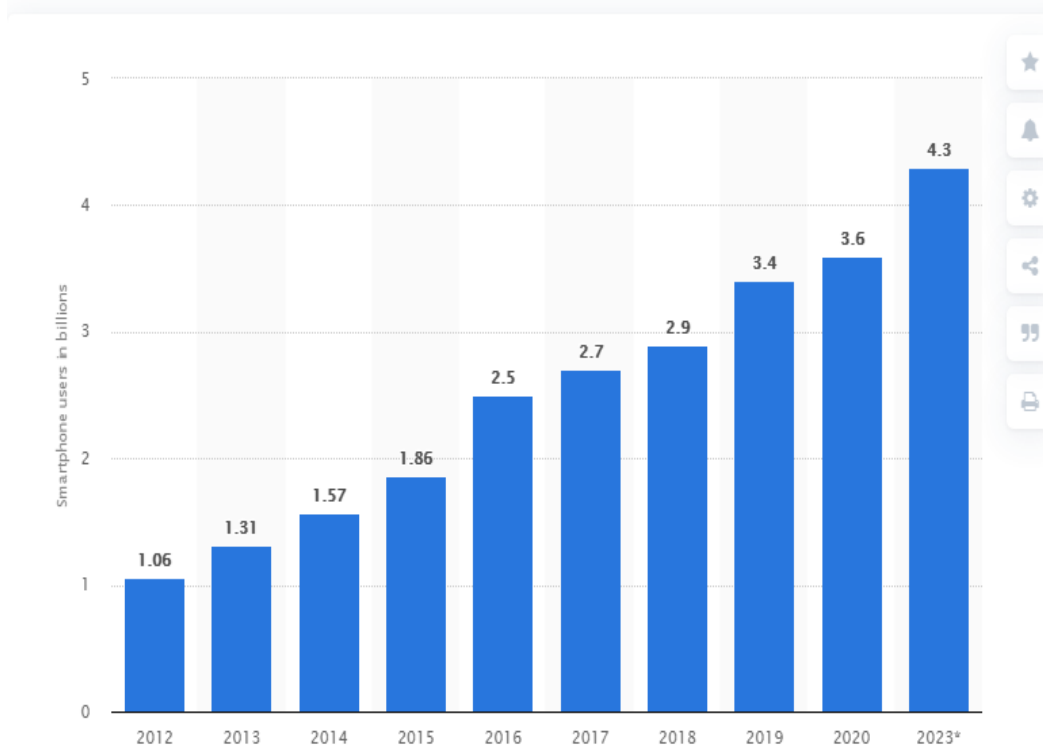
# REVISED DYADIC ADJUSTMENT SCALE

**Description:**

The Revised Dyadic Adjustment Scale (RDAS) is a self-report survey that evaluates seven factors of marital satisfaction within 3 key classifications, including Agreement in decision making, principles, and fondness, Contentment in the relationship with regard to stability and dispute regulation, and Unity seen through the actions and conversations. "[With] time limits on therapists in clinical practice ...the RDAS... provides for an accurate and cost-effective examination of spousal and relationship quality" (Crane, Middleton, & Bean, 2000, p. 54). The RDAS consists of only 14 items, each of which invites participants to evaluate particular elements of their relationship on a 5 or 6 point scale. The RDAS scale has a score range of 0 to 69, with higher scores suggesting better relationship pleasure and lower values showing higher marital unhappiness. The RDAS has a cut-off score of 48, with scores of 48 and above indicating non-distress and scores of 47 and below indicating spousal distress.

**Reliability:**

Cronbach's alpha (reliability) for the RDAS was found to be.90.

**Validity:**

The RDAS's construct validity is reinforced by its strong connection with a comparable measure, the Locke-Wallace Marital Adjustment Test (MAT). The RDAS and MAT had a correlation of .68 (p.01). Moreover, the RDAS and the original Dyadic Adjustment Scale (DAS) had a correlation of .97 (p.01).

In terms of discriminant validity, the RDAS was shown to correctly distinguish between disturbed and non-distressed subjects in 81 percent of instances.

**Evaluation:**

The RDAS is an easy evaluation that may be done fast and effectively. It distinguishes between troubled and non-distressed relationships and provides detailed assessments of three relationship components and seven associated relationship aspects. As a result, the RDAS provides a fast picture of many aspects within a specific relationship as well as an overall assessment of the partnership's stability.

The RDAS scoring procedure is as easy as computing the total of the 14 item scores. This produces an overall score, which may be interpreted using the previously mentioned cut-off score. The following table can be used to understand the subscale scores:

| | Scores range from: | |
|---|---|---|
| *Consensus* | 0 to 30 | Higher scores on any of these subscales indicate more excellent stability and satisfaction in the relationship. |
| Decision Making: Items 3 and 6. | 0 to 10 | |
| Values: Items 1 and 5 | 0 to 10 | |
| Affection: Items 2 and 4 | 0 to 10 | |
| *Satisfaction* | 0 to 20 | |
| Stability: Items 7 and 9 | 0 to 10 | |
| Conflict: Items 8 and 10 | 0 to 10 | |
| *Cohesion* | 0 to 19 | |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Activities: Items 11 and 13 | 0 to 9 | Lower scores |
| Discussion: Items 12 and 14 | 0 to 10 | indicate more |
| | | significant |
| | | distress. |

# APPENDIX VI: NACOSTI



**NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR SCIENCE,TECHNOLOGY & INNOVATION**

Ref No: 650357

Date of Issue: 25/July/2022

## RESEARCH LICENSE

This is to Certify that Ms.. Catherine Kagwiria Mutua of  Kenya Methodist University, has been licensed to conduct research in Meru on the topic: INFLUENCE OF MOBILE DEVICES USE ON THE LEVEL OF MARITAL SATISFACTION AMONG COUPLES IN METHODIST CHURCH IN KENYA NKUBU SYNOD, MERU COUNTY for the period ending : 25/July/2023.

License No: NACOSTI/P/22/19115

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