

BEING A FATHER AT YOUNG AGE:

Assessment of Challenges Faced by Young Fathers Living in Kigali City, Rwanda

Patrick Ufashingabo

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Patrick Ufashingabo

Registration Number: 216360595

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CERTIFICATION

The undersigned certifies that he has read and hereby recommends for the acceptance by the University of Rwanda, the dissertation entitled: Being a Father at Young Age: Assessment of Challenges Faced by Young Fathers Living in Kigali City, Rwanda, in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Masters of Social Sciences in Gender and Development from the Centre for Gender Studies, College of Arts and Social Sciences.

Signature:

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Date: _____

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I, Patrick Ufashingabo, hereby declare that this dissertation is my own original work. To the best of my knowledge, it contains no material previously published or written by another person, no material which to a substantial extent has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma at the University of Rwanda or any other institution, except where due acknowledgement is made in the dissertation. Any contribution made to the research by others, with whom I have worked at the Centre of Gender Studies, or elsewhere is explicitly acknowledged in the dissertation.

I also declare that the intellectual content of this dissertation is the product of my own work, except to the extent that assistance from others in the dissertation's design, and conceptions or in style, presentation and linguistic expressions is acknowledged.

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DEDICATION

This master's dissertation is dedicated to my God the Father, the Almighty, and His Son Jesus Christ, my rock, my comfort of all the time.

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ABSTRACT

This study is an assessment of the challenges faced by young fathers living in Kigali City, Rwanda. The birth of a child in the Rwandan culture is significance of joy, happiness and prosperity. However, these feelings are almost inexistent toward a child born to young unmarried parents due to the overwhelming responsibilities and social perceptions. This situation is made arduous if the child's father is still going through adolescence. His inability to be "a good" father will not only affect his child and the mother of his child but also their parents and the surrounding community. He is also affected negatively in different ways on the personal level.

It is for this reason that this study sought to identify the challenges faced by young fathers living in Kigali City, to assess the consequences of fatherhood on young father's present and future lives as well on their surrounding community, and to identify the causes of young fatherhood and suggest strategies to address it. The current study used a qualitative approach and explored the lived experiences of young fathers. The sample was selected using purposive sampling and it was composed of twenty research participants and five key informants. Data were collected through in depth interviews, focus group and documents reading.

The findings revealed that the experience of fatherhood is more likely to happen to adolescents who have dropped out of school or with a difficult background. Consequently, it increases their already existing socio-economic burden of building a house, securing an employment and marrying in the formal setting like the majority of young men. These young fathers have to give up their plans for the future and navigate through psychological and socio relational problems with everyone around them. In Addition, they have to deal with the negative perceptions of the community and the lack of support from their parents or guardians. This isolation is aggravated by the general invisibility of young fathers in wellbeing programs, lack of advocacy, risk of imprisonment due to underage sex and negative masculine behaviours of young fathers.

As strategy, this study suggested that the government of Rwanda, parents and others institutions should work together to increase the sexual education of boys and promote positive behaviours among the youth to tackle the problem of young fatherhood. For young fathers, there should be facilities in securing employment, pursuing education, enrolling in technical schools and learning basic parental skills.

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AIDS: Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome

CASS: College of Arts and Social Sciences.

CLADHO : Collectif des Ligues et Associations de Défense des Droits de l'Homme

DCF: Dorcas Consolation Family

EDPRS II: The Second Economic Development and Poverty Reduction Strategy

FDG: Focus Group Discussion

GovR: Government of Rwanda

Happi: Health, Aptitude/Attitude, Patriotism, Productivity, Innovation

HIV: Human Immunodeficiency Virus

ICF: International Coach Federation

ICT: Information Communication and Technology

MIGEPROF: The Ministry of Gender and Family Promotion

MINECOFIN: Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning

MINEDUC: Ministry of Education

MOH: Ministry of Health

MYICT: Ministry of Youth and ICT

NISR: National Institute of Statistics in Rwanda

RWAMREC: Rwanda Men's Resource Centre

SDGs: Sustainable Development Goals

STDs: Sexual Transmissible Diseases

UK: United Kingdom

UN: United Nations

USA: United States of America

VUP: Vision 2020 Umurenge Program

WHO: World Health Organization

CHAPTER ONE: GENERAL INTRODUCTION

1.1 INTRODUCTION TO THE CHAPTER

This study is aimed at exploring the lives of young fathers living in Kigali City in order to assess the challenges they face as related to their experience of fatherhood. In general, the fertility in Rwanda have reduced from 6, 1 children per woman in 2005 to 4, 2 children per woman in 2015 but the issue of adolescent fertility is still important on both health and social grounds (NISR, MOH&ICF International, 2015). Research informs that adolescents' mothers and their children experience diverse negative life outcomes (CLADHO, 2016). However the situations of young fathers and how they experience fatherhood have remained unknown in Rwanda.

According to Applegate (1988), young men who become fathers during their adolescence have to deal with the normative biological, social and psychological changes and challenges of adolescence at the same time with the problems associated with normative father development. Consequently, this may lead young fathers directly into aggression at young age, substance abuse, delinquent behaviour and high-risk sexual behaviour and indirectly exposing their future to countless problems (Anda et al, 2002). In Rwanda, the young people are considered as the future of the country. As such, many programs aim at supporting and involving them. But adolescent fathers, viewed in their immaturity, need more support since they are responsible of their children and the mothers of their children.

This study is conducted at the time when Rwanda is registering its weak decline in fertility of 2, 1 children per woman compared with the previous years along with an increase of 1% of teenage pregnancy (NISR et al, 2015). As a result, numerous programs, policies and researchers have increased their focus on adolescent mothers but according to Lemay et al (2010) young fathers present similar characteristics to those of adolescent mothers. Those characteristics include low socio economic status, lower educational attainment, and fewer employment opportunities than peers who are not fathers (Lemay et al, 2010.). The present study identifies these problems and challenges faced by young fathers in Kigali City.

This introductory chapter shares the background of the study and states the research problem alongside with the research objectives and research questions. It emphasizes also on the significance of the study and its scope and limitations before ending with key terms necessary for further understanding of the research.

1.2. BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

The role of a father in a family is recognized on the international level. In the last decade, social sciences have identified the crucial role of father in a child development and family dynamics (Rosenberg & Bradford, 2006). In the same line, The United Nations have recently published the former traditional roles of a father in many societies including moral teachers, disciplinarians and breadwinners (United Nations [UN], 2017). In Rwandan country, it is a father's duty to raise his child with the mother of the child (Government of Rwanda [GovR], 2003). However, due to the early sexual initiation of men and other factors, there exists a group of fathers who is challenged by the roles of fathers in a family (Barker & Ricardo, 2005). This group of fathers is composed of young men who enter fatherhood earlier than expected. (Barker & Ricardo, 2005).

The following section will provide a brief background on these young men, fatherhood and factors leading to early fatherhood in the context of western societies, Sub Saharan African and Rwanda.

1.2.1 Young men and fatherhood in the Western Societies

Historically, every evolution of a society brought changes in the way people interact and the roles they play in their society. In the United States of America (USA), due to different factors, the role of the father have changed and many men find themselves as step fathers, single fathers and/or non-residents fathers (Bade, 2012). A part of non-residents fathers is composed of young men who enter parenthood early and some of the authors admit that they have similar ideas and standards as other fathers. According to Paschal et al (2011), this group of young men became fathers at young age because of their low socio economic background, careless sexual practice, infrequent use of contraceptives and opposition to abortion.

The USA has the highest rate of childbearing during adolescence compared to other developed nations and have concentrated enormous resources on early parenthood (Bade, 2012).

For example, twenty five percent (25%) among non-Hispanic African American fathered their children before their twenties year old compare to 19% and 11% for Hispanic and non-Hispanic white fathers respectively (Paschal et al, 2011, p.2). In the United Kingdom(UK), country with the highest birth rates among teenagers in Western Europe, young men are official registered as fathers of 78% of babies born to teenage mothers (Fatherhood Institute, 2011; Office of National Statistics, 2010). In 2012, Two point three percent (2, 3%) of the Netherland male youth aged 12 through 25 admitted to have been involved in unplanned pregnancy once and 0, 8% involved in more than one unplanned pregnancy (WHO Regional Office for Europe, 2007). With this literature, it is visible that this group of young men fathering children at young age is important in number and with variant leading factors in the western societies.

1.2.2 Young men and fatherhood in Sub Saharan African

In Sub Sahara African, as in most African countries, a boy is required to have some financial independence, income or employment and a family to be called a man. A young man in Northern Uganda expressed this as follow: To be called a man, you have to be married and have children; No children and you are still a boy (Barker & Ricardo, 2005, p.5). In order to achieve a socially recognized manhood, a boy need to fulfil the role of a provider, protector and procreator in his society and family. Traditionally, a boy is required to start a family after providing a bride-price for his wife in Sub Sahara African as in most common African countries (Barker & Ricardo, 2005). However, all of those requirements to be recognized as a man and a father in the society are challenged by different factors.

The main factors are the high rate of unemployment among young generations, the early sexual initiation and a high premarital sexual activities among adolescents in Sub Saharan Africa (Barker & Ricardo, 2005; Seme & Wirtu, 2008). According to Swartz and Bhana (2009) some factors are determinants for young men to become fathers at young age such as aggressive as children, poor performance at school, born to teenage mothers, early consumption of alcohol and sexual activity at young age. For instance, Sema and Wirtu (2008) conducted a study in a school located in the West of Addis Abeba and among three hundred sixty four boys used as a sample one hundred and two boys have had already premarital sexual intercourse at the time of the survey starting at 16, 2 years old.

Similarly, a study conducted in a school in Kenya among adolescents found boys to be more engaged in sexual intercourse than their girl's peers and starting after 15 years old. Sexual active boys were more likely to have used illicit drugs, consumed alcohol and smoked cigarettes (Rudatsikira, Oghwell, Siziya and Muula, 2007). In South Africa (SA), it is estimated that men start becoming fathers at 15 years old (Posel& Devey, 2006). Overall, the data collected in 82 countries mainly in Africa by the UN (2012) report a high percentage of males aged 15-19 sexually active before 15 surpassing that of females in 55 countries.

In brief, the present early sexual initiation and high sexual activity among boys are the determinants factors increasing the likelihood of young men becoming fathers at young age in Sub Saharan Africa.

1.2.3 Young men and fatherhood in Rwanda

Before colonization in Rwanda, the formation of a family between a girl and a boy was an alliances between families and polygamy in the form of polygyny was largely accepted in the country (Koff, 1997). To start a family, young people relied on the discussion of their parents and exchange of cows from the future husband's family to the future wife's family (Koff, 1997).

The girls' virginity and procreation capacity were the first requirements to be fulfilled in order to be considered fully as a wife and barrenness was only a woman's fault and a sufficient reason to terminate the union by the husband (Muzungu, 2014). Another possibility to start a family was presented by the Rwandan culture for couples whom parents refused the union, it was to use cohabitation creating a facto marriage and getting the approval from the parents followed with the exchange of bride wealth and a ceremony (Koff, 1997). A girl misfortunate to be pregnant outside of those possibilities was severely punished and thrown in the river (Muzungu, 2014). The partner, man or boy, was never mentioned in the literature consulted or in any other oral history related to the matter.

With the introduction of colonialism and Christianity, the existing sexual discussion between children and their family members was labelled as immoral and categorized as wrong at the same time with polygamy at the benefit of monogamy. Sex before marriage took another dimension of sin and morally wrong adding on the existing social misconduct (Koff, 1997; Ndahimana, 2011).

The practice of throwing pregnant girls in the river disappeared with the time and some parents replaced it with chasing girls out of their homes confirming the belief that a child born outside marriage belongs to the woman's family (Koff, 1997). As such, this child didn't have a place in a patriarchal society. Until now, *umwana w'umugore* which means literally a woman's child is commonly used as an insult to point out a child born outside of the wedlock or simply a child without a known father or discipline.

A major shift took place in the post 1994 genocide against Tutsi with the new government working with women to rebuild the country and introducing gender sensitive laws to protect girls and women as any other Rwandans citizens (Newbury & Baldwin, 2000). The lives of pregnant girls and their children became a national priority and young mothers were categorized under vulnerable groups and included in different MIGEPROF's programmes (New Times, 2011). Further, their sexuality was studied alongside with their participation in the course to achieve the Millennium Development Goals (New Times, 2012).

All of those changes show how much the problem of early parenthood have been analysed and addressed from the women's perspective. But other studies on youth sexuality unveil that young men are more likely to become parents at young age than their girl peers.

For instance, Meekers and Vleir (2001) in their research about patterns sexual behaviour and condom use among high school and university students in Butare and Gitarama former provinces found out that males between 15-24 years didn't use much the condoms, were high sexually active and initiated early into sexual intercourse than their girls peers. Babalola et al (2002) presented similar result in their research about safe sex practices among Rwandan youth with an addition that boys in urban areas started early to have sexual intercourse, consumed more alcohol than rural boys and were less likely to practice abstinence than the girls of the same age group. The data collected on the national level about behaviour among the youth confirmed that boys had their first intercourse at 16 years old slighter younger than girls at 17 years old, were highly sexual active in urban areas than rural areas and possessed less knowledge about STDs and HIV than the girls of the same age group (MoH, 2010). Nevertheless, The Rwandan Fourth Housing and Population Census (2012a), found out that girls started getting pregnant between 12-17 years old implying that they were sexually active slighter at 12 years old.

Overall, Rwandan boys possess less information about reproductive health than girls who are most likely to speak with their mothers during their period. Boys relies on the information collected from their males' friends, radio or school which is most of the time incomplete or confusing at their age (Abbott et el, 2014, MoH, 2010).

Without ignoring other factors leading to early motherhood among girls such as relationship with older partners, lack of decision making, rape, sexual violence (MoH, 2010, New times, 2011) Rwandan boys are more likely to father children at young age with the girls of their age considering their early sexual initiation, frequency of sex activity and other negatives masculine behaviour. This assumption is supported by the results of CLADHO (2016) rapid assessment of on teenage pregnancy in 10 districts of Rwanda which found out that 49 % of teenage girls are impregnated by their male colleagues.

Regardless of the information about boy's high sexuality and other factors increasing the likelihood of boys fathering children at young age, the experience of young fathers are unknown, left out in designing programs to reduce fertility among young generations and elaborating laser programs necessary in the education of boys about their sexuality. Addition to this, there is no clear data about the number of boys who fathered a child at young age on the national level or on the small scare partly due to the common denial of paternity and rejection of the child and the mother or simply because of the ignorance of the existence of the child. But in a case a young man accept his paternity or is aware of the presence of the child, the current literature consulted revealed various negatives life outcomes such as drop out from school, substance abuse, early entry into labour , delinquency behaviour and high sexual activity (Swartz & Bhana, 2009).

It is in the light of this information that the objectives of this study were set to explore the lives of young fathers in Kigali City in order to identify and assess the challenges they face as related to their experience of fatherhood, to assess the consequence of fatherhood on young fathers' present and future life as well on their surrounding community and to identify the causes of young fatherhood and suggest strategies to prevent it. This is the reason of this study.

1.3 PROBLEM STATEMENT

The vision of Rwanda for its young people, girls and boys, is to be the key pillars in achieving different development programs such as EDPRS II, vision 2020, SDGs (MYICT, 2015). In order to achieve the vision, the government of Rwanda has implemented a series of measures in the domain of education, health, employment and economic to protect its youth against poverty, diseases, drug abuses and other rising challenges of the time. It is captured in the vision of Ministry of Youth and ICT which is to achieve a health, aptitude/attitude, patriotism, productivity, and innovation- HAPPi Generation (MYICT, 2015).

Sexuality and related impact and responsibilities are also among the drivers of the development of the youth and the country. For this reason, young men's sexual experience in Africa and worldwide is frequently associated with the initiation into adulthood and achieving a socially recognized manhood (Barker& Ricardo, 2005, p.16). However, some Rwandan young men enter into sexual activities and become fathers at young age without undergoing such initiation to adulthood. Literature shows that in such conditions, young men start their paternal journey at disadvantages considering their developmental stage, socio economic status and other co-occurring difficulties. They are forced by the pregnancy to confront their limited ability to be fathers, and sometimes their lack of willingness to pay the full price of parenthood (Edin& Kefalas, 2005). These young men go through an emotional, social and psychological 'crisis' as they try to live their lives as adolescents and fathers at the same time (Applegate, 1988). This affects negatively their present lives, performance in schools and may lead to drop out and struggle in securing a suitable employment later.

In order to prevent young fatherhood and its consequences, there is a need to explore the lives of young fathers and to understand their experiences related to fatherhood. However, researchers have poorly invested in exploring this phenomenon, which makes it difficult for policy makers to address issues regarding young fathers.

Therefore, the present study covers this gap by assessing the challenges faced by young fathers and suggesting remedial strategies. This situation needs to be acted on because it does not only affect young fathers but also their children, children's mother, community and the country in large.

If not acted on, young fatherhood will continue to increase the fertility of the country which is already a threat to development and decrease the productivity of the Rwanda's youth which is considered as the major pillar asset of the country and key drivers to a sustainable development if empowered and well-motivated (MYICT, 2015).

1.4 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The main objective of this study is to explore the lives of young fathers living in Kigali City in order to assess the challenges they face related to their experience of fatherhood. The specific objectives of this study are the following:

- To identify the challenges young fathers face as related to their experience of fatherhood.
- To assess the consequence of fatherhood on young father's present and future life as well as on his surrounding community.
- To identify the causes of young fatherhood and suggest strategies to address it.

1.5 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- What are the specific challenges of young fathers related to their experience of fatherhood?
- What are the consequences of fatherhood on young father's present and future life as well on his surrounding community?
- What are the causes of young fatherhood and strategies to address it?

1.6 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

This study will contribute in various domain and on different levels. First of all, the literature consulted revealed no previous study of this nature about young fathers in Rwanda, Therefore, it is hoped that this study will avail the literature and it will be used for further researches on this subject. Secondly, it will be used to orient policy makers while elaborating policies regarding the youth. Thirdly, it will be used as tool during projects or programs related to fertility among young generations and for the support of young fathers in general. Lastly, the government of Rwanda will use it in orientating and counselling young fathers in its health and social programs.

1.7 SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

This study is limited to the exploration of fatherhood experience of young fathers living in Kigali City. The sample size is also limited to 20 research participants, 10 young fathers and 10 women who had children with young fathers, plus 5 key informants from different private and government institutions such as RWAMREC, Scout and Guide Youth Organizations, schools and local government institutions.

Data were collected through interviews, focus group discussion and documents reading from March to May 2017.

The absence of literature on young fathers in Sub Saharan African and statistics on young fatherhood in Rwanda has constituted a major limitation for this study. Nevertheless, the researcher has used the literature on young fathers from South Africa and general data on Rwandan young men ‘sexuality’.

1.8. DEFINITIONS OF KEY TERMS

In this study, some major concepts may be anonymous or new to the reader. Therefore it found necessary to clarify the following concepts: Adolescence, child, father, fatherhood and masculinity.

Adolescence: The word adolescent comes from the concept of adolescence, which means the transitional development period from childhood to early adulthood, starting approximately at 10–12 and ending at 18–22 .(NISR, 2012b, p .8).It is the period of transition between childhood and adulthood. It is considered to begin with puberty, a process of physical, psychological and emotional development triggered by a cascade of endocrine changes that lead to sexual maturation and reproductive capability. In girls, a key marker of puberty is menarche — the first menstruation — but there is no such clear marker in boys. In girls, the mean age at menarche is between 12 and 13 years in developed countries and it is likely similar or higher in developing countries. In boys, signs of sexual maturation become evident at around 13 or 14 years of age. Among both girls and boys, the start of puberty can vary by four or five years around the mean. Although puberty generally lasts two to four years, there is no strict definition of when adolescence begins and ends. (UN, 2012, p. 3).

Child: In Rwanda, the definition given in law N°54/2011 of 14/12/2011, related to child rights and protection, states that a child is anyone under 18 and that this should be the starting point for differentiating a „child“ from a „youth“ or „young person“. However, the national youth policy points out that, in Rwanda, young people are made up of persons aged between 14 and 35. According to criteria recognized by the United Nations, young people are those who are between 15 and 19 („adolescents“) and those who are between 20 and 24 („young adults“). (NISR, 2012b, p. 3). The age specified in both definitions was used in this study in differentiating children and young people and in the selection of research participants.

Father: Tanfell and Mott (1997) defined father as a status acquired when one has a child or more. They affirm that such status is irrevocable no matter the change in responsibilities and activities due to divorce, children leaving home or other reasons. Once a father always a father. In the present study, the term father was used to refer to the procreative act itself of fathering a child.

Fatherhood: It is a status attained by having a child and is irrevocable (unless an only child dies). In the contemporary research literature, the term fatherhood is used interchangeably with the term fathering which includes, beyond the procreative act itself, all the childrearing roles, activities, duties, and responsibilities that fathers are expected to perform and fulfil. Furthermore, while these definitions once implied biological fathers only, with the rapid changes in the family structure they came to include non-biological fathers as well (Tanfell&Mott,1997,p.1). For the purpose of this research, fatherhood will include all childrearing responsibilities and fathering activities regardless if they are filled completely or partially by the biological father of the child.

Masculinity: They are characteristics associated with male gender and expressions of maleness in any given society. They are the practices and ways performed by the male, boy or man subject to validate the sense of himself (Witehead, 2003). In the present study, the practices and ways of young men are routed in their masculinity and it serves to explain their behaviour in the majority of situations.

1.9 CONCLUSION

This chapter has briefly introduced this study on the challenges of young fathers in Kigali City. After presenting the background of the study and the statement of the research problem, the objective and the research questions were spelled out. Then the significance of the study was elaborated along with the scope and the limitations of the study. Then, finally, this chapter concluded with the definitions of key terms required in further understanding of this study.

This chapter has provided the preliminary road map of this study. The following two chapters, the second and the third, will present respectively the literature and methodology of the study. The fourth chapter will detail the empirical findings as well the analysis and interpretation. The last chapter, the fifth, is about the conclusions, recommendations and suggestions of the study.

CHAP II. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. INTRODUCTION

This study on the assessment of the challenges faced by Rwandan young fathers living Kigali City was influenced by the general enquiries of male approach in solving gender related issues. This chapter review, critics, analyses the literature published on young fathers in the context of western societies, Sub Saharan Africa and Rwanda. The empirical review, first part of the chapter, was mainly composed of concepts behind the phenomena from which was drawn a sort of scheme to explain the relations between those concepts in the conceptual framework, the second part of the chapter. The theories found in the third part of the chapter, the theoretical review, were related to the concepts exposed and finally the theoretical framework has led to formulate assumptions to be confirmed or not by the findings exposed in the fourth chapter of the study.

2.2 EMPIRICAL REVIEW

The following section of the chapter focuses on the literature review on the phenomena of young fathers in general. It will give specific attention to scholars who have worked on the challenges of young fathers in different settings of western societies, Sub Saharan Africa and Rwanda. Moreover, it indicates the importance of those researches and highlight the gap to be filled by the present study in Rwanda.

2.2.1 Literature on young fathers and their challenges in the western societies

Many scholars have studied the phenomena of early parenthood in the perspective of young mothers and their children ignoring young fathers in the process .But recently a growing body of research have given attention to the experiences of young fathers and can be traced back in the United States of America and United Kingdom (Clayton, 2015). The literature reviewed in this section is extrapolated from those researches.

Lemay et al (2010) conducted a research among the young urban fathers about the challenges they encounter in being “good fathers” in the context of USA. Young fathers in the research

desired to be there for their child, provide financial and emotional support and assuming responsibilities for their children.

They recognized the importance of changing their behaviour, furthering their education, becoming a role model for their child and obtaining an employment. The authors advised that in order to increase the likelihood of young father's participation in their children's lives it was better to involve them as early as possible. Furthermore, the authors stressed the importance that young fathers attach to their capacity or ability to be able to provide economically for their family and advised related programs to help them overcoming the barrier.

Ingram (2013) explored the experiences of young African American fathers and their transition into fatherhood in her doctorate's thesis. Research participants were asked to reflect on their experiences in the matter of childcare, parenting skills, specific needs and emotional encounters when informed that they were going to be fathers. In her findings, the participants shared the importance of having a support network or a role model to help them in the transition and in overcoming the negatives emotions associated with being a father at their age. Other themes emerged in the research but the most shared was the eager to provide economically for the new family.

Paschal et al (2011) found similar results as Ingram (2013) in their study with African American teenage fathers providing or attempting to provide some kind of support to the mothers of their children through their own parent's assistance or even by illegal means. Some of the teenage fathers failed or deliberately abandoned the task. Others exchanged the role of provider with the role of nurture commonly defined as "being there" for their child. The authors explain that in the face of the challenge of becoming fathers, some teenage have chosen to maintain their identities as adolescents instead of adopting a father identity as characterized by the stereotypes of absent, uninvolved teen father.

The three document reviewed above are composed of qualitative research aiming to understand or to explain the lived experiences of young fathers as individuals not as homogenous group which is the aim of this study.

Several studies were conducted about young fathers on a large scale. For example, Sipsma et al (2010) studied the correlations between becoming a father at young age and being born from adolescents parents in USA.

They found that males born from adolescent fathers were more likely to father a child early than males born from old fathers specifically at 19 years old. Also sons born from adolescents mothers were more likely to have a child early than sons of older mothers. This proved right the theory of intergenerational cycle of adolescent fatherhood.

In the context of UK, research have given attention to young fathers as a group evaluating the challenges young fathers face with teenage policy, social services, midwives and health visitors. In the literature review conducted by Lea Clayton (2015) documenting the characteristics of young fathers and their lived experiences across a number of domain in UK, he found that most of the young fathers came from low socio economic background or minorities, were considered as abnormal and labelled 'feckless' in the eyes of policy makers and public. In the same spirit, the fatherhood Institute (2013) summarized the disadvantages associated with being a father at young age from different studies and a part of the unemployment, low education attainment, struggle with negative emotions, and lack of direction already seen in the previous literature associated mostly with their low social background. Young fathers were frequently rejected by their family, refused contact with their child and partner, unable to envision the future, perceived themselves as inadequate parents, aggressive, alcoholic, substance users and delinquency leading to imprisonment. In shorts terms, young fathers faced an uncertain future.

The studies about young fathers in the western societies have focused on males from low socio economic background or minority groups presenting already predisposed factors to achieve poorly in life than their peers from the majority. The birth of a child in a such disadvantaged group could be seen as an achievement, a way to ascend to an elevated social status or to benefit from social welfare (Duncan, 2007) and in such circumstance young fathers will achieve no better than their peers form the same group or they may even achieve better than them if they adapt to the new responsibilities.

With this literature, it is clear that the experience of young fatherhood in western societies has multiple consequences on the lives of young fathers and their community. It affects negatively their education, employment, and psychology, social and personal life.

These researchers have only focused on the negative life outcomes of young fathers from minority group rather than those of majority groups. On top of that, they have compared the life paths of adolescent's fathers with those of adolescents without children hence highlighting only the negative life outcomes of young fatherhood. Then they didn't search for other causes of young fatherhood beyond adolescence, poverty and race. They didn't also include the national culture in the parameters of analysis. The literature on Sub Saharan Africa will cover the gap studying the phenomena of young fathers in majority groups from developing nations and within others parameters.

2.2.2 Literature on young fathers and their challenges in Sub Saharan Africa

According to Swartz and Bhana (2009), the existing studies on young fathers are most exclusively situated in the context of western societies and consequently little is known about the phenomena of young fathers in the developing nations. The authors have studied the phenomena of young fathers in the context of South Africa.

In the introduction of their study, they attempted to compare young fathers from the global north and those from the developing nations and found that due to high level of poverty and unemployment, presence of HIV, low quality of education, young fathers in developing nations were at great risk than their peer from the global north.

The authors focused on how the majority of impoverished young men from South African experience fatherhood with the hope to inform interventions not only in South Africa but also in other part of Sub Saharan Africa. The young men in the study shared about their fear and shame due to the cultural and religious implications of early pregnancy in their society and the urgency of many to stop school in order to get a job and provide economically for their child. Their excitement and joy of becoming fathers were shortened by the burden of supporting their child and some preferred to ease their failure with alcohol and drugs consequently limiting their participation in the lives of their child.

This was largely caused by their age, education level and socio economic background. Most of the support they received came from their parents and it was not the case for everyone in the research.

Despite all the challenges with the negative emotions and unemployment, young fathers were present at some level in the lives of their children even when they were no longer romantically involved with the mothers of their children. Another important challenge shared by young fathers from impoverished backgrounds was the high price imposed by the culture to pay off the damages caused by impregnating a girl before marriage. Nevertheless, the experience of becoming a father at young age was associated with some positive behaviour changes among some young men in the research such as condoms use, low consumption of alcohol and drugs and a radical change of the future perspective.

Through their own voices, young fathers identified their crucial needs which were to communicate about sex, have organized leisure, environmental changes, employment opportunities, support to complete education, psychosocial support and relationship building skills. Their need for education and employment assistance in various forms were found at the top of young fathers 'priorities list.

Enderstein (2013) continued the conversation initiated by Swartz and Bhana (2009) with a group of young fathers challenging the narrow stereotypes of absent, irresponsible, neglectful fathers in South Africa. Using the narrative method, young fathers expressed their struggle to fulfil the role of breadwinner for their child, maintaining relationships with the mother of their child and challenging the traditional norms by being present in their child everyday life at the extent of accomplishing the mother's roles at same point. The author concluded that despite numerous challenges faced by young fathers, they were willing to sacrifice, change, protect and care for their children.

Both of the author's findings regarding young fathers and their challenges in South Africa are similar with Ward and Bray (2005) findings in their study on the connections of parenting, poverty and young people in South Africa.

The current literature on young fathers in Sub Saharan African have been primarily developed in South Africa and unfortunately not all the findings can be projected to the majority of young fathers in Sub Saharan Africa because of the historical background of South Africa with apartheid which have affected deeply and negatively the majority group of the black people disrupting their gender norms and family formation.

However, the failure of young men in Sub Saharan Africa in becoming responsible fathers and husbands have been associated with stress, feeling of failure, emasculation, drunkenness and high risk sexual behaviour among young men (Barker&Ricardo,2005).

In sum, the experience of young fatherhood is more likely to happen to young people from impoverished background in Sub Saharan Africa. Therefore increasing their already existing problem of low educational level, poverty, unemployment, HIV risky and difficult family relations. Addition to that, young fathers in such conditions are less likely capable of fulfilling the requirements of the culture in order to ascend to a socially recognized manhood.

With this literature on young fathers from Sub Saharan Africa, the gap left by the literature on young fathers from the minority groups or low socio economic group in developed nations is filled. While identifying the general economical, education challenges encountered by the majority of young fathers in Sub Saharan Africa, it brought up the importance of family relations and respect of the culture in developing nations.

2.2.3 Literature on early fatherhood and related challenges in Rwanda

During the present study, I was not able to find documents specifically dedicated to young fathers or their challenges in Rwanda. However there was a book about the Rwanda youth and its struggles to achieve adulthood written by Marc Sommers(2012) and a special report comparing Rwanda and Burundi youth in matter of masculinity and other issues written by the same author and his colleague Peter Uvin (Sommers &Uvin,2011).

This study will use both materials to describe the lives of the majority of Rwandan young men and their race to achieve manhood and the challenges they face along the way to became husbands and fathers in the eyes of the community. Sommers (2012) started his book stressing

the importance of building a house for the majority of Rwandan young men followed by bringing a wife and having children to acquire the status of men in the society. He furthermore explains that as soon as this was done, young men needed to support, protect their wives and children to achieve fully their manhood and all of this needed to happen in formal settings acknowledged by the culture and the state not in an embarrassing and illegal informal arrangement. The author found out that the majority of young men living in rural area were confronted against the government housing policies of building an expensive house in the *Umudugudu* at the point of dropping out from schools to start working in someone else's land to save the money needed in building the house.

In his analysis, the social pressure on young men to build a house and marry in the formal setting addition to poverty, strict government requirements in different domain, land scarcity, low horizons, and school dropout; they were all tangible signs that the majority of rural young men will never achieve the social recognized manhood and will be stuck in the "waithood" forever. The author define "waithood" as a social transition period between childhood and manhood where the majority of rural young men are stacked without being either one of the two.

Within such realities, young men had chosen to have children outside the wedlock, start informal union or migrate to Kigali City to escape the pressure and sense of failure from their villages. Other alternatives consisted on building on their parents land and bringing a wife but still it was considered as a failure to not be able to build on their own land. The author didn't explore the lives of those young men who decide to start their families in rural area despite all the problems but it is clear with this information that they will have to face the issue of land, economic resources, social pressure, low level of education, and a constant feeling of failure due to their incapacity to provide sufficiently to their wives and children considering the level of poverty in rural areas at that time.

According to the author, these findings in rural area were applicable to the majority of Rwandan young men. In addition to the general invisibility of studies on early fatherhood in Rwanda, it is for this reason that I decided to conduct this study in the urban area.

Sommers (2012) continue asserting that the situation of poor, uneducated, migrant's young men in Kigali was worse than their counterparts in rural area. They had to struggle daily to have a meal, were chased by the government officials due to informal business, consumed more alcohol and were exposed to HIV/AIDS. Their chance to achieve manhood were almost non-existent as they couldn't build a house, go back to their villages or marry a girl but still they tried to have children to perpetrate their 'bloodline'. Consequently, in both rural and urban areas, young women were stacked also in the waithood as their male's peers and exposed to early pregnancy and prostitution.

Nevertheless, among the youth in Kigali City, there were some educated young men even though the majority was unemployed, who could build a small house, rent a small space and find a job in the expending areas of the town and in some ways achieve adulthood. The findings from this book were confirmed by many government officials from different levels in Rwanda.

In the special report, Sommers and Uvin (2011) affirmed that the Rwandan youth had more difficulties to achieve adulthood, were less inspired to pursue education or other opportunities to avoid failure, and had less hope and motivation toward the future compared to Burundian youth. Ironically, the legitimacy of the Rwandan governments and its development policies were the source of the problem. All of this information clearly paint a troubling path for the majority of Rwandan young men and future young fathers in rural and urban area.

However, it is important to highlight that Marc Sommers collected his data in 2007-08 and ten years later his findings are outdated with the reforms in education, health care, *gacaca* closure, *girinka* program, VUP program and other government's measures to eradicate poverty and strengthen the community. His sample was composed of young men between 18-35 who had survived or participated in the genocide against Tutsi in one way or another hence affecting their perceptions of the future and he also minimized their agency putting in the centre of the problems the government of Rwanda.

This book was sponsored by the United State Institutes of Peace to evaluate the correlation between the youth in post-war countries and violence and in my opinion it influenced the interpretation of the findings in a more political orientated way than social.

Also, the absence of other studies makes it difficult to compare Marc Sommers findings but his book serves as the starting point for the present study.

To summarize this empirical review, the literature shows that western authors have focused on the challenges facing young fathers from minority groups in developed nations. Literature from Sub Saharan have added the challenges of culture and poverty on the list of young fathers' challenges. In the case of Rwanda, only Summers have worked closely to the topic. Similar to the literature in western and Sub Saharan societies, he has revealed the presence of poverty, low level of education, unemployment among the challenges related to the experience of young fatherhood in Rwanda.

The present study aims to assess the challenges facing young fathers living in Kigali, a city in a developing nation. It therefore fills the gap left by the literature on Sub Saharan Africa's young fathers and on the struggle of Rwandan young men from rural area to achieve manhood.

2.3 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Miles and Huberman (1994) defined the conceptual framework as “ a visual or written product that explains either graphically or in a narrative form the main things to be studied-key factors, concepts, variables-and the presumed relationship among them”(p.18). The main phenomenon to be explored in the current study concerns the challenges of young fathers and the relationship of factors which produce those challenges. The challenges enumerated in this section were drawn from the empirical review. Their list and connections are shown in the figure below.

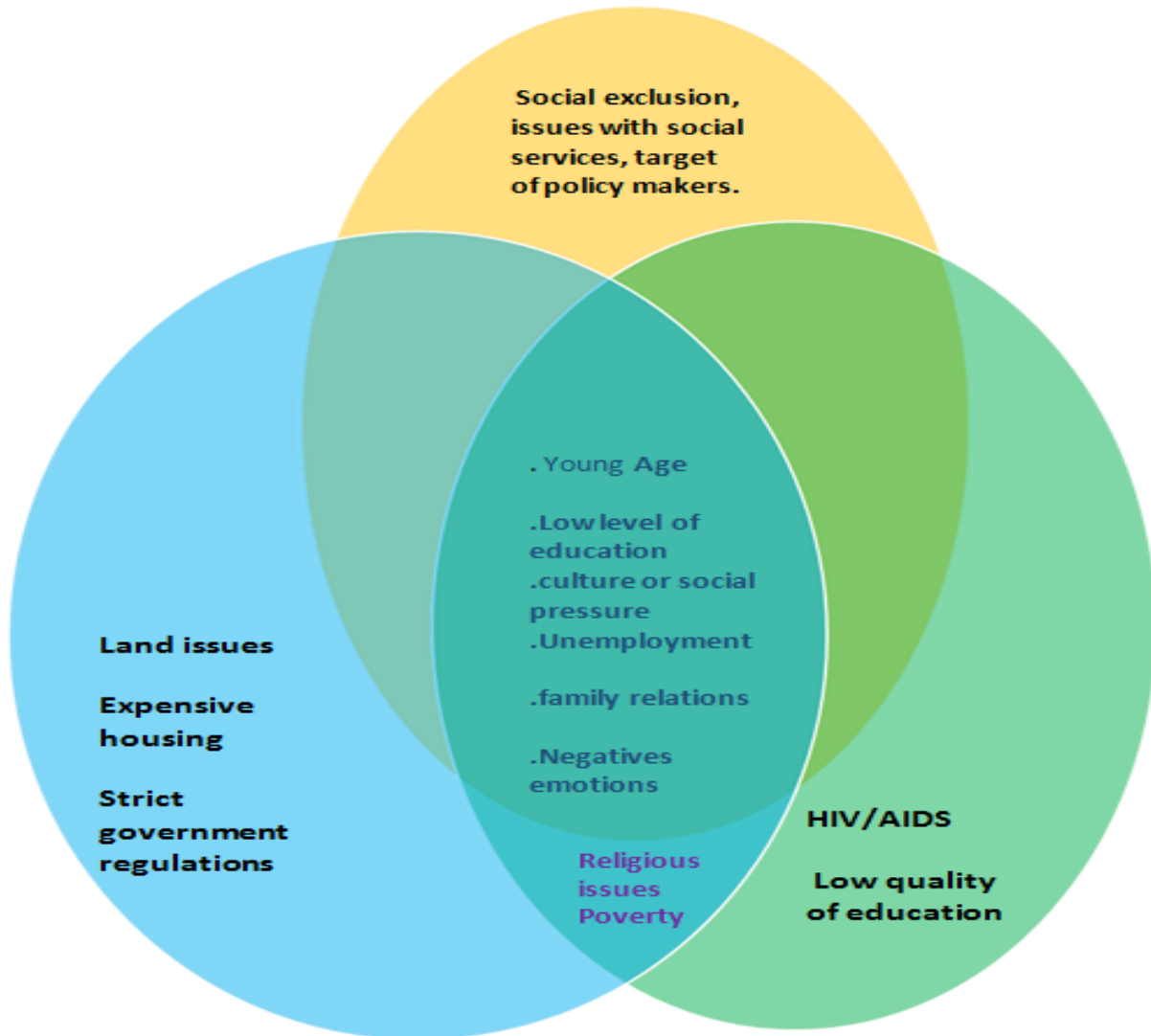


Figure 1: Conceptual factors which influence the challenges of Young Fathers

By the researcher: Related conceptual factors which influence the challenges of young fathers from the empirical review

Explanation of the conceptual framework

The literature on young fathers in the western societies has enumerated different challenges facing young fathers from minority groups or low social economic group in developed nations. Their frequent challenges were related to their low social background, lack of role model, lower level of education, unemployment, risky behaviour, youth, relationship with their child and partner, struggle with negative emotions and social services.

The literature on young fathers in Sub Saharan Africa have added on the list the following challenges for the majority of young fathers in developing nations: contamination risk of HIV/AIDS, poverty, low quality of education, negative culture and religious implications of sex before marriage, high culture expectations to be accepted as fathers and men, rigid traditional norms and lack of social services to support them.

The literature on Rwanda have revealed the factors which influence the challenges related to young fatherhood as being of land issue, high culture expectations, poverty, forced immigration, low level of education, lack of motivation toward the future, employment and a constant feeling of failure. In brief, young fathers in different settings face similar challenges related to their young age, level of education, employment, culture expectations or social pressure, negative emotions and family relations. The intersectionality of the circles show the common challenges of young fathers despite their different locations and influencing factors.

This conceptual framework is elaborated only according to the empirical review and it is necessary to search for theories that will allow showing a causal relation of the concepts in this framework. The following sections will detail the theoretical review and the theoretical framework.

2.4 THEORETICAL REVIEW

According to Maxwell& Mittapalli (2008), the theoretical review is composed of a set of ideas or concepts and a sort of relationship among them, all intending to understand something about the world. This section of the chapter examines theories related to the conceptual framework and their interconnection to explain the challenges of young fathers.

Different conceptual challenges have emerged from the previous section, on one hand, social exclusion, lack of social support, land issues, religious implications of sex before marriage all particular to one group of young fathers than another; one the other hand, the age of young father, their youth, the low level of education, unemployment, struggles with negative emotions, family relations and culture expectations or social pressure were similar challenges to every group of young fathers.

The role of a theory in a qualitative research is to explain the way and the reason something operates as it does (Tavallaei& Abu talib, 2010) in others word why and how young fathers are challenged in their lives. It becomes necessary to connect the conceptual challenges and for that purpose, this research will rely on the following theories.

2.4.1 The theory of development

The theory of development was developed by Erikson in the early 20th century. He believed that a person develop into stages and is impacted by his social experience (Fleming, 2004). He recognized seven psychosocial stages of development and stressed about the importance of overcoming the challenges of each stages, which he called in his own words ‘’crises’’, to accomplish a successful development. According to Erikson, the period of adolescence consists in developing a self-image and to separate yourself from your parents-specially same sex parents (Fleming, 2004).This happen in order to prepare a person to form new bonds with the opposite sex in the following stage.

According to Simatwa (2010), a person learn new skills during this period of adolescence and set high standard for himself. He adopt new behaviours and don’t accept easily failure and when it happen it is mostly followed with feelings of guilt and frustration (Simatwa, 2010).

Ashford et al (as cited in Bade,2012) defined the developmental or life course perspective as a ‘’flexible process through which a person is constantly changing in response to the environmental changes but tends to follow specific patterns whereby most individuals will pass through the same stages at similar age’’(p.18). For example, young children begin developing a sense of autonomy during their toddle years as they are less independent on their parents than they were in the infant years and most of them learn similar skills about the same age (Bade, 2012). Ashford et al furthermore argue that during this process of maturation, people experience role transitions as important event that assist in the process of moving from one developmental stage to another. In the present study, the event is fatherhood which occur when most young men are still in their adolescence which is early than expected. Another important component of the developmental theory is the timing of the event which is important as it can have significant implications for the consequences of the event in relation to the person’s chronological age (Bade, 2012).

In sum, the implications of events occurring earlier than expected are often negative since the individual has not completed the developmental task of their age and it may leave him ill prepared to handle the challenges faced with the transitional event (Fleming, 2004).

Adolescence is commonly described as a stage of freedom, experimentation, personal discovery and fatherhood as a responsible stage with employment and family responsibilities (Smith, 2006; Bade, 2012). They are both expected to happen at different times since developmental stages are influenced by culture expectations (Bade, 2012). Apart from the culture expectations, the intention to have a child on the side of the father will likely determine the involvement or distancing of the father to the pregnancy and difficulties in adjusting to the role (Smith, 2006). All of this is consistent with the conceptual challenges of fear, guilt, difficulties in establishing family relations mostly with the child, negative emotions, lack of direction, necessity of a role model observed among young fathers. Therefore, this theory explains the source of the challenges facing young fathers related to their age or timing of becoming fathers which is one of the objectives of this present study.

2.4.2 Ecological system theory

This theory was developed by Bronfenbrenner to explain the child's development within the context of the system of relationships that form his or her environment (Paquette & Ryan, 2001). He defines complex "layers" of environment, each having an effect on a child's development and at the same time on each other (Paquette & Ryan, 2001, p.1). This theory is used in other fields such as ecology, human sociology, biology and in social sciences.

During research related to young fathers, a system represents any set of elements that affect or influence one another (Bade, 2012). The young fathers are mostly likely to be involved in different systems including family systems, school systems, community and neighbourhood system, legal systems and employment system (Bade, 2012).

The system perspective maintains that a person is influenced by the systems and cannot be fully understood without recognizing important ecological interactions. Additionally, this theory maintains that the systems constantly influence one another.

The system function well when they adapt to each other in way that allow the participants to get their needs met, however stress will occur when there is a mismatch between the systems(Bade,2012). The example of a family which value children works over education and finds the demands of the school system to be burdensome (Bade, 2012).In such situations, the good functioning of the system will require that the demands of the system and the resources to meet them are adequate and if they are not, the system will experience stress and may cease to function (Bade, 2012). In other words, if the needs of young fathers in one area or domain are not meet well, it will affect them on the personal level and in their other life domains such as school, employment, society and family. The appropriate support will allow young fathers to cope with the challenges originating from different area and their systems to function properly. The theory of ecological system put forward the interaction of different domain to explain the difficulties of an individual or a system. It is in line with the chain of challenges experienced by young fathers in the domain of education, employment, family relations and culture.

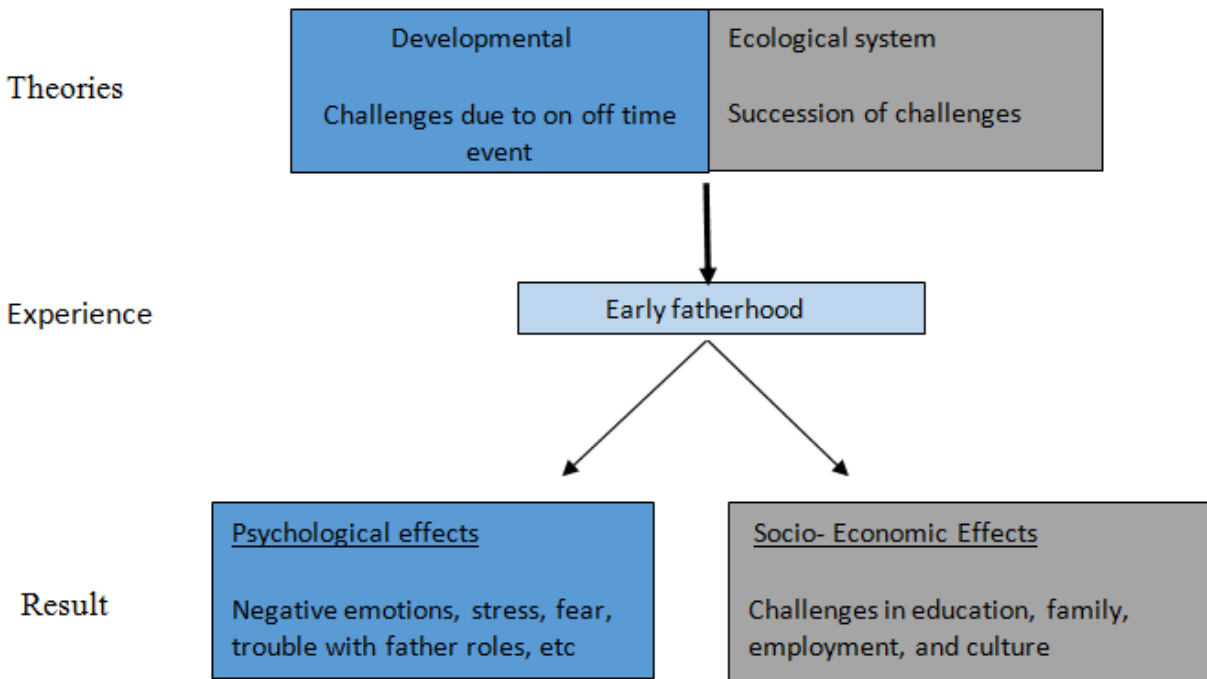
This study focus on assessing the challenges encountered by young fathers due to their age, level of education, employment, culture and family relations and relying on this theories, assumptions about the findings to be accepted or rejected have been formulated and they will be verified in the fourth chapter.

2.5 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

In the views of Grant and Osnaloo (2014), the theoretical framework serves to guide the research relying on a formal theory from the beginning to the end, presuming even the result of the research. The theories presented in the previous section have helped in generating assumptions about the findings to be accepted or rejected according to the data collected on the field.

The review of the developmental theory has led to assume that young fathers experience problems with their transition to the new roles resulting in stress and other negative emotions. At his turn, the ecological system theory reinforced the assumption that a problem in education or in family of young fathers will generate problems with the employment or culture at same time challenging the personality of young fathers as persons. In relationship with the objective of this study which is to assess the challenges facing young fathers in Kigali City, it can be deducted that young fathers experience a set of challenges in different areas of their lives.

Figure 2: Theoretical Framework for the challenges facing Young fathers



By the researcher: the assumptions from the theoretical review.

This theoretical framework details the research assumptions from the theoretical review. A young man who experience fatherhood during his adolescence is likely to be ill prepared to assume the new role of a father and he exposes himself to psychological effects such as stress, fear, lack of direction, troubles maintaining relations with his child and other challenges related to adolescence and fatherhood at the same time. This is in line with the developmental theory.

The stress and other difficulties experienced by the young fathers will negatively influence his social life, education attainment, employment situation, family relations and culture expectations and one challenge will lead to another one or vice versa. For some young fathers, the experience of young fatherhood is the cause of school dropout, low level of education and the struggle to secure an employment. This became a source of frustration and other negatives emotions. On the other side, the incapacity of young fathers to provide economically will affect the relation with the child and mother of the child and increase the pressure on young fathers.

These assumptions are in collaboration with the ecological systems theory nevertheless all need to be verified with the findings in the fourth chapter

2.6. CONCLUSION OF THE CHAPTER

This chapter reviewed the literature related to young fathers and their challenges in the western societies, Sub Saharan Africa and Rwanda. It has identified the common conceptual challenges of young fathers regardless of their position and location of the society. Using theories, assumptions have been formulated and they will be verified in the fourth chapter. The following chapter details the methodology used to collect data necessary in this study

CHAP III. METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter on the literature review closed with assumptions to be verified with the findings of the present study. This chapter explains the methodology used to collect and analyse data. It explains the research design, the setting of the study, the targeted population, the sampling technique and the sample size. This chapter also describes the data collection methods and the approach used to analyse the data. It discusses also the positionality of the researcher, ethical consideration and validity and reliability of the study before closing with a conclusion.

3.2. RESEARCH DESIGN

A research design is the conceptual structure within which research is conducted. It constitutes the blueprint for the collection, measurement and analysis of data (Kothari, 2004, p.1). Decisions regarding what, where, when, how much, by what means concerning an inquiry or a research are at the base of a research design (Kothari, 2004, p.1).

This present study is a qualitative research and uses a phenomenological approach as an inquiry. It aims to explore the lives of a group of individuals and to understand their experiences regarding a shared phenomenon. It is in line with Creswell (2014) definition of a qualitative research which is “an approach to explore and understand the meaning individuals or group ascribe to a social or human problem” (p.32). Qualitative research methods focus on discovering, understanding the experiences, perspectives, and thoughts of participants (Harwell, 2011, p.2).

According to Creswell (2014), a phenomenological research is a design of inquiry in which the researcher describes the lived experiences of individuals in relation to a phenomenon as described by the participants. It produces a description culminating in the essence the experiences of all individuals who have experienced the phenomena and the information is collected through interviews. As a phenomenology research, this study focus on the phenomena of young fathers and data were collected from a sample of individuals who became fathers when they were 18-21 years old and are currently living in Kigali City. Methodologically, the researcher used in depth interviews and focus group discussion to collect these experiences.

3.3 STUDY SETTINGS

This research was conducted in Kigali City, Rwanda. In reference to several studies, Kigali is the ideal site to locate young fathers. In his book, Sommers (2012) found that some young men in Kigali City originated from different places to escape the pressure and feeling of failure from their respective villages because they couldn't build houses and marry in the formal settings and preferred to have children just to perpetrate their "bloodline". Babalola et al (2002) affirmed with their research findings that young men in Kigali City started earlier to have sexual intercourse, practiced less abstinence and consumed more alcohol than their counterparts from rural area. Other factors such the rank of Kicukiro, one of Kigali districts, among the three districts with the highest percentage of teenage pregnancy in the country (CLADHO, 2016) and the presence of 10, 2% of women aged of 15-19 who have begun childbearing in Kigali City (NISR, 2015) increase the like hood of finding a considerable number of young fathers in Kigali City.

Another factor which makes Kigali an ideal site for the research is the researcher's entry point. The researcher used Dorcas Consolation Family (DCF) as an entry point, a local NGO with the vision to holistically equip vulnerable women in order to enhance their livelihood for sustainable development in communities and to demonstrate God's love by giving hope to the hopeless. DCF support 78 female headed household located in Gahanga and Gatenga sectors, both located in Kicukiro district in Kigali City and the researcher worked for six months as a social worker intern for the organization. It is through DCF's members, beneficiaries, and staff and partners that young fathers were recruited to participate in the research. This method was chosen due to the hard time researchers have identifying, locating young fathers and convincing them to participate in research as explained in the previous chapters. It allow also to the researcher to establish trust with the research participants and maintaining space to ensure the quality and credibility of the research.

3.4 POPULATION

The study population was composed of 10 young fathers aged of 18-21 years old who had or have one child or two, living in Kigali City, acknowledging the paternity of their child,

attempting or assuming the responsibilities partially or completely. The sample was also composed of 10 young women who had children with young fathers.

This age group is composed of young people at the end of their childhood and at the beginning of their adulthood and by definition a person above 18 years old is not a child anymore. S/he is part of the youth and is considered responsible of his/her actions in the eyes of the law (NISR, 2012b). Their identification was done through the collaboration with members, staff, partners and beneficiaries of DCF as well as friends.

3.5. SAMPLING STRATEGIES AND SAMPLE SIZE

According to Kothari (2004), a sample is composed of selected respondents to represent as much as possible the total population and the process to select it may be referred to as the sampling strategies. Regarding the size of the sample and the technique to select it in a qualitative research, Patton (1990) argue that qualitative inquiry typically focus on small samples even singles cases selected purposefully. In other words, the sample size is a matter of number of participants and the appropriate technique to select the sample is the purposive sampling technique.

The logic and power of this technique is to select participants in possession of enough information about the research problem that under questioning, they will enrich the study (Patton, 1990). Based on the nature of this study, the researcher selected 10 male participants given the time frame of six months of research and the limited resources at his disposal. The criteria of selection were the following: male, is or was 18-21 years old at the birth of their first child, living in Kigali City, occupation (students, workers or jobless), marital status (married or single). Those criteria served also to group the research participants in one focus group discussion composed of 5 person to ensure the participation of young fathers in a group discussion hence providing more data. Another techniques used to select participants was snow balling method which allow the researcher to find the next respondents using the information given by the previous one.

The researcher also selected 10 women who had one or more children with young fathers to provide information on the challenges of the fathers of their children.

Addition to the sample, 5 key informants participated in the research. They included one member of Rwanda's Men Resource Centre (RWAMREC), two persons from the youth organization, a social officer from the sector and a school teacher. They all possessed information about young fathers in one domain or another.

3.6 RESEARCH INSTRUMENTS

According to Zohrabi (2013), research instruments are the main instruments used to collect data in a research. In the present study, they were an interview guide, a FGD guide and documents. The research instruments were designed depending on the type of data to be collected in the field.

The primary data were collected during interviews (with a recorder and an interview guide) and FGD (with a focus group guide). The rest of the data was collected using desk review.

The interview guide and FGD guide used to collect information from the participants was semi structured to allow the participants and the researcher to explore deeply the subject at the same time staying in the line with the research. At the opposite, the interview guide for the key informants was structured and organized from general to specific questions. The documents consulted include articles, books, reports, policies, laws and other documents related to young men, young fathers and challenges of early fatherhood.

3.7 DATA COLLECTION TECHNIQUES

Patton (2002) states that “qualitative findings grow out three kinds of data collection: (1) in-depth, open ended interviews, (2) direct observation and (3) written documents” (p.4). Therefore the technics used to collect such kind of data are interviews, focus group discussion and documents analysis (Patton, 2002). This study, as a qualitative research using a phenomenology approach as an inquiry, employed interviews with participants and key informants, focus group discussion and documents analysis.

3.7.1 In depth –Interview

Kothari (2004) define in depth interview as a type of interview conducted to explore the needs, desires and feelings of respondents. Boyce and Neale (2006) point out that in depth interview offer a more relaxed atmosphere for data collection as it allows the researcher to collect information from people during a form of conversation. In this study, the researcher used in depth interviews to collect data from young fathers and the mothers of their children. The interviews were conducted in the environment chosen by the research participants or in the premises of DCF.

It was hoped that choosing an environment where the interview will be conducted will facilitate the research participants to be comfortable hence more open and trustworthy.

Addition to that, the premises of DCF would likely constitute a common ground for the researcher and the research participants therefore a good environment for data collection.

3.7.2 Interview with Key Informants

According to Kumar (1989), key informants interviewing consist in interviewing a selected group of individuals who are likely to provide needed information, ideas, and insights on a particular subject (p.1). The five interviews with key informants were conducted in the similar settings at the difference on the interview guide used and its structure as they were requested to share their thoughts and points of views about other people.

3.7.3 Focus Group Discussion

The researcher also used the focus group discussion to collect data from the participants. According to Ownegbuzie et al (2009) it is a method which consist in collecting qualitative data from a small group of people during an informal discussion focused around a particular topic or set of issues. (p.2)

The researcher collected data from one FGD, composed of 5 young fathers chosen on the basis of their age and geographical location. The participants were not familiar with one another but presented similar characteristics relevant to the present study. The researcher acted as a moderator during the discussion facilitating the conversation, asking questions, taking notes and

encouraging all the members to participate in the discussion (Ownegbuzie et al 2009). One FGD was conducted in order to collect different information and identify similarities in the lives of young fathers.

3.8. DATA ANALYSIS PROCEDURES

Patton (2002) argue that there is no clear procedures to analyses data from qualitative research, only guidance and the researcher's skills and creativity serves as the only tools. The process in such consist of going through the raw data to organize, classify, code, label in order to come up with a good presentation of the data to be used in the analysis (Patton, 2002).

In this study, the following procedure was inspired by Patton (2002) and Ndazivunye (2014). It started after all the raw data from the data collection was compiled, sorted and arranged according to the research objectives and questions. The following step consisted in identifying repetitive concepts in the collected data and classify them into different categories.

Then all those categories were given numbers and attached to themes. It is the main themes which were presented, analysed and interpreted in the fourth chapter based on personal views and the reviewed related materials.

3.9. POSITION OF THE RESEARCHER

In qualitative inquiry, the researcher's skills, training, intellect, discipline, creativity represents a potential weakness as the inquiry heavily dependent on them (Patton, 2002). It is for this reason that the researcher needs to share his connection with the topic of the research to allow the reader to understand completely the research and any possible present bias.

In the present study, it is important to mention that the researcher is a trained secondary school teacher with a background in non-profit organizations. After a year in teaching, the researcher worked with non-profit organizations supporting and working closely with children, young people and vulnerable families. It is necessary to mention also that the researcher is a male of 27 years old, new to the gender field and passionate about social justice and community development.

It is while working with young people that the researcher came across various challenges faced by the Rwandan youth and only after acquiring gender lens that the researcher noticed that the origin of some problems among young generations were not only related to their sex but also to their gender. Throughout reading and observation, the problem of early parenthood emerged as a tenacious problem and unfortunately it was only studied and handled from women's perspectives. It is from there that the researcher decided to undertake a research on young fathers to understand their lives and learn about the challenges they face to inform himself, the community, future researchers, policy makers and the government. All in hope to raise awareness, orient support and help a part of the youth forgotten and challenged by an unusual experience.

With such background of an educator and social worker, the researcher could have portrayed in his findings the young fathers as victims of their age, adolescence and with a minimum of agency but the researcher reinforced himself to search for the complete story of every participant regarding his experience of fatherhood, to point out his failures and success and to double check the collected information with the story of a mother of his child, all was done to ensure a more balance narrative.

The age and sex of the researcher were putted under great consideration and didn't cause any particular bias in the data analysis and it was used as an advantage for the researcher on the field to approach and collect information from the male research participants.

3.10 VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY.

Validity and reliability are ideals toward each researcher strive to achieve as they refer to related, desirable aspects of measurements of the findings (Neuman, 2014). Depending on the nature of the research, both terms are defined and measured differently. According to Neuman (2014), reliability refer to the replicability of the findings under the same or very similar conditions and validity refer to the truthfulness of the same findings. Such level of accuracy and replicability is only possible in a quantitative research studying numerical variables but not in a study searching for meanings, experiences and opinions of people in a natural, moving, social settings otherwise in a qualitative research (Neuman, 2014). Therefore, this study as a qualitative research has ensured validity and reliability from a qualitative research perspective.

Validity in a qualitative research means authenticity in the findings which is equal in offering a fair, honest and balanced account of a social life from the view point of the people who live it every day (Neuman, 2014, p.218). To achieve such level of accuracy in the findings, Creswell (2014) recommended several following strategies: triangulation of source of data, use of a member checking, bias clarification, peer debriefing and presentation of negative or discrepancy information that runs against the themes and other strategies.

For this study, a number of strategies were used to ensure the accuracy of the findings. The first strategy was to triangulate (use of more than one) sources of data, instruments, data collection techniques and recording tools. Regarding the source of information, participants interviewed were from different location, age and experience. Then different techniques were used to collect information such as participant interviews, FGD, key informant interviews and desk review. In relation with the technics to collect data, different instruments were used to collect every form of data on the field such as the interview guide, focus group discussion guide, audio record and notes. Secondly, the researcher clarified of any possible bias in the research and finally divergent themes, ideas, experience were considered to ensure the appropriate representations of the lives of young fathers living in Kigali City.

According to Noble and Smith (2014), reliability in a qualitative research refer to the capacity of the researcher to be clear and transparent about the methods used to reach the findings. For Cohen et al (2005), the researcher has to present accurate and comprehensive findings from the data collected under natural settings.

In the framework of this study, the researcher has described in details the methods used to collect and analyse data in this chapter. Also after the collection of data within the limitation of the study, the researcher through presentation, analysis and interpretation presented accurate and compressive findings of the phenomena under study. All of those strategies were followed to ensure the validity and reliability of the present qualitative research.

3.11 ETHICAL ISSUES

According to Patton (2002), it is important to anticipate to deal with ethical dimensions in a qualitative inquiry because “qualitative methods are highly personal and interpersonal and

because naturalistic inquiry takes the researcher into the real world where people live and work, and because in depth interviewing opens up what is inside people.” (Patton, 2002, p. 407)

The researcher anticipated ethical issues at every stage and precautions were taken for this study. The first and important precaution used by the researcher is the letter from the University of Rwanda-CASS introducing the researcher and requesting a permission to conduct a research in Rwanda. The letter served to introduce the researcher officially to DCF, RWAMREC, youth organizations and other institutions where the researcher needed information or interviews.

The second precaution was taken during the research participants. On every occasion, the researcher made contact with a respondents for the first time, he took care to introduce himself, to explain the objective of the study and to request if they wanted to participate. Then, a consent form was presented to be signed or a verbal agreement before starting with the interviews. Then, after the agreement, the respondents were promised the anonymity of their information, presented their rights to withdraw from the study at any time before the submission of the research. During the interviews the researcher followed the advice of Patton (2002) and listened carefully, without judging or providing advice to the respondents.

Finally, the researcher used his skills of a teacher to encourage respondents to share their histories with words of encouragements and it was helpful during the FGD. The interaction with respondents took place in quiet and comfortable places.

3.12 CONCLUSION

This chapter has provided details on the methodology used to conduct this current research. It started with the research design serving as the blueprint to the collection and analysis of data, followed with precisions about where the study was conducted, the identity and number of the participants and the methods used to select them. Under this chapter, the instruments and techniques used to collect data were explained and the process to analyse data was spelled out. It closed with the researcher presenting his position toward the research, strategies used to have a valid and reliable qualitative study and all the ethical precautions undertaken in order to have a successful qualitative research with less possible bias. The following chapter will present the analysis and interpretation of the findings.

CHAP IV: PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF THE FINDINGS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter presented the methodology used to collect data for this study. It also detailed the procedures to transform the raw data into understandable and presentable findings. The present chapter continues by giving details of the findings. It starts by sharing the profile of the respondents, followed by the presentation, analysis and interpretation of the findings. They are presented using themes as per research objectives and they are discussed in relationship with the developmental and ecological theories presented in the second chapter of the study and also in relationship with the work of other scholars.

4.2 PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF THE FINDINGS

4.2.1 Profile of respondents

The selection of all respondents relied on different characters such as current residence, gender, job title, number of children, age of the father at the birth of his first born, marital status and occupation. All of those criteria served a purpose of selecting a sample composed of different individuals with a background connected in one way or another to the lives of young fathers. The intention was to enrich the study with the necessary information regarding the challenges of young fathers.

Table 1: Profile of the research participants

No	Young fathers			Women who had children with Young fathers		
	Names	Current Age	Age at the birth of the first child	Names	Current age	Age of the Young Father at Child's birth
1	Fred	35	18	Dada	18	20
2	Bob	21	20	Ariane	21	21
3	John Paul	20	19	Umutesi	36	18
4	John	20	19	Lydia	22	17
5	Albert	18	17	Alice	17	20

No	Young fathers			Women who had children with Young fathers		
	Names	Current Age	Age at the birth of the first child	Names	Current age	Age of the Young Father at Child's birth
6	Christian	22	19	Josephine	21	20
7	Kevin	21	21	Claire	22	17
8	Alain	23	21	Karo	19	20
9	Christopher	20	19	Janet	19	17
10	Isaac	22	21	Diana	22	18

Source: Adapted from data collected by the researcher, March-May 2017.

The names of the respondent's presented above have been changed to protect their identities and respect their privacy. All the 20 respondents currently live in Kigali City. Each of them has one child or more, became parents before they were 21 years old and their partners were in the same age range. Four of ten young fathers still live with the mothers of their children. One has divorced the mother of his first three children and five lives alone or with their families. In matter of education, two young fathers have completed secondary school, one completed primary school, two dropped out in secondary school and four in primary school. Among ten young fathers, six were born in Kigali City and four immigrated from other provinces. Regarding employment, one young father is self-employed, one works for a monthly salary, one is still a student and remaining seven works as part time workers in different domains (agriculture, construction, small business,..).The following table contains detailed information about the key informants interviewed in this study.

Table 2: Profile of Key Informants

No	Title	Education	Gender	Age	Marital Status
1	Project Coordinator at RWAMREC	Masters	M	42	Married
2	Coordinator at AGR Friendly Centre	Bachelor	M	54	Married
3	Coordinator at Scout Organization	Bachelor	M	41	Single
4	School Teacher at G.S Gahanga	Bachelor	M	30	Single
5	Social affair at Gatenga Sector	Bachelor	F	35	Married

Source: Adapted from data collected by the researcher, March-May2017

All of these research participants and key informants participated in the research and provided information on the experience of young fathers. Depending on their personal, professional experience, each one shared his/her own opinion when asked questions during interview. The data collected is detailed in the following subsections.

4.2.2 Identification of the challenges faced by young fathers living in Kigali City

The main objective of this study was to identify the challenges faced by young fathers related to their experience of fatherhood. Respondents were asked in person about the challenges they were facing and the same questions were asked to women who had children with young fathers. The key informants also provided addition information on the challenges of young fathers. The information collected originated from in depth interviews and one focus group discussion with 5 young fathers. Numerous challenges were enumerated by each group of respondents but the main one were socio-economic, psychological, socio relational, legal and cultural challenges.

4.2.2.1. Socio-economic challenges

A. Lack of economic resources

The first and foremost problem facing young fathers is the small or non-existing capacity to provide economically for their children and mothers of their children.

The search of resources start with the first month of pregnancy and goes on until the young father is capable to assume completely the role of breadwinner. Unfortunately, it is demanding role and among the participants interviewed, they were all still struggling to fulfil it. One of them said:

After knowing that I was going to become a parent, my first question was how I was going to become a man and take care of a woman without a house? How will I survive renting a house with a woman and a child? ... What will I feed them and where will they live?

This self-questioning continues as the pregnancy grows and becomes intense at the birth of the baby. It is described as the most difficult question to answer by young fathers. It becomes worse for a young father already living in a difficult life without capable parents or relatives to turn to for financial support or advice. This was the situation of John, Albert, Christian, Bob and Fred.

These findings are consistent with the findings of other authors reported in the second chapter of this study where the majority of young fathers originate from low socio economic background with less support to expect from their families or surrounding when faced with early parenthood (Paschal et al, 2011; Duncan, 2007). Such situation was explained by Bronfenbrenner in his theory of ecological systems where a person facing a problem in one area of his life end up experiencing others problems in other areas of his life because the first problem was not resolved in the first place (Bade, 2012). In other words, the incapacity to provide and the challenging low socio economic background of young fathers affect in the first place the lives of young fathers and their new families.

B. Difficulties in securing employment

In the absence of family support, relatives or guardians, the remaining way for a young father to overcome the problem of resources is to look for a job. In this study, the respondents reported high difficulties in securing small jobs and even part time jobs. It was in part due to their low level of education, lack of experience and the high level of unemployment among young generations in Rwanda. This is how it was paraphrased by John Paul when asked about the source of his problems and the way he dealt with them.

After I became a parent, I faced the issue of poverty. It became harder to take care of my wife and child... I couldn't find a job...the part time job (in construction) were harder to find. The only way to deal with my problem was to wait... I could go hunt for a job and if I get it, I would bring home some food (potatoes).

The situation of John Paul indicates that young fathers in Kigali City facing unemployment are more likely to experience some days without food along with their children and the mothers of their children. These findings were reported also by Sommers (2014) who found out that young men who immigrated in Kigali, looking for ways to achieve their manhood were faced with a serious issue of unemployment and end up struggling to have what to eat every day. Addition to that, Swartz and Bhana (2009) advised programs or researchers working with young fathers in Sub Saharan Africa to be ready to encounter a problem of a high level of poverty among young fathers. It is no doubt a tenacious problem for unemployed young fathers in Rwanda to provide a meal every day to their families and to survive in such life of poverty.

C. Lack of a social network of support

In terms of support, key informants were interviewed about the kind of support provided to young fathers by their organizations. They are all admitted not to have specific programs providing support to young fathers. The social affair officer at the sector level pointed out that they only deal with pregnant adolescent girls with no reference to the age of the father. These answers could be explained by the fact that the case of young fathers are dealt between families.

Even when the police intervene, the families' reconcile themselves and the situation goes back in the hands of the young fathers. Such attitude or way of solving the problem is a challenge itself to young fathers. It leaves the overwhelming responsibilities of taking care of a new family to one person who is immature and economically incapable. It makes also invisible the problem of young fathers in the eyes of the government and public institutions which normally support vulnerable families.

The coordinator of AGR Youth Friendly Centre admitted that in order to help young fathers, there was an urgent need to locate them in first place, so they can be supported. It is therefore

visible that none cares about the socioeconomic struggles of young fathers. In brief, the findings presented in this section indicated the socio-economic problems faced by young fathers affect deeply their personal lives, their children and mothers of their children. They affect also their families in some settings. These findings indicate also how young fathers are not supported by their families, guardians and different institutions. They are left alone to deal with the problems of imprisonment, unemployment and families' problems. As a result, they have to experience hunger, poverty, unemployment and isolation.

4.2.2.2 Psychological challenges

A. Emotions struggle

In this study, all the respondents talked about an emotional attachment related to the experience of young fatherhood. It was either negative or positives. The feelings revealed were most of the time fear, anger, joy, anxiety, joy, denial and culpability. Bosco, one of the respondents, expressed his views as follow when asked if it is easy to admit that you are a father at young age:

Aaahh.... That is not something easy to admit. Even me sometimes I don't admit it. But you take it as it is and you admit it in your heart. To accept that you impregnated a girl at young age is hard because sometime the person did it while having fun and in short time...and when it happen... you start denying it, complaining that you are too younger to be a father. Even hearing about it is hard...you accept it step by step.

Bosco's story is similar with the stories of most of the respondents. They talked about fear and a mix of strange feelings felt prior to the birth of their child. The feelings felt had an impact on young fathers and influenced their future decisions. Here is a comment of one key informant with a bachelor degree in clinical psychology:

The first problems of a young father are psychological. When they tell him that he has impregnated a girl, he can even flee the country because he thinks he is going to be imprisoned for it. Another thing is the panic... The panic is in his head wondering how he is going to handle responsibilities.

He was not even capable to handle a woman and now he is going to deal with a woman and a child. He is afraid of responsibilities... he has never had a family on his own.

He didn't prepare a place. He doesn't feel like someone who can have a family on his own. It is like an accident... just bad news for him.

These feelings of denial, fear and panic stress the majority of young fathers and affect largely their personalities. They influence their capacity to take decisions and most of the time it is at the origin of bad decisions taken by young fathers to abandon their child and mothers of their child. It is only in few situations that it can lead to better decisions taking. Similar findings were reported by Ingram (2014) who showed that young fathers experience different sort of feelings prior to their child birth. Most of those feelings were found to be negatives and disturbing for the lives of young fathers (Ingram, 2014).

This problem of negatives feelings following a disruptive event of the period of adolescence was explained by Simatwa (2010) and Fleming (2004) in their explanations of the theory of development. It implies that young men who experience an early event such as fatherhood while still adolescents, will surely display negative feelings in their lives.

Another major finding of this study, in terms of feelings, is the love of young fathers toward their children and the plans for their future. Many referred to them as my child, my elder, my blessing with emotion in their voices. This shift of emotion from negative to positive was observed by Ingram (2014) among few young fathers who shifted from negative emotions to positive emotions after the birth of their child. However, in the present study, all the respondents had already been father for sometimes and the transition from negative to positive emotions due to the child birth was not observed by the researcher.

B. Recurring denial of father and husband identity

In some situations, the struggle of emotions continued even after the birth of the child. Some respondents denied periodically their status of father depending on the relation or gender of the

person around them at the moment. One of the respondents justified himself in the following way:

It is hard to admit when am going to pick up on other girls... I hide it... But when I am in a bar with my friends, I admit it. Some people tell me it is not so bad to have a child at young age for a man.

This situation was explained by the coordinator of Scout, one of the key informants, as a sign of a negative form of masculinity promoted by the culture. It is encouraged through proverb or popular sayings. The most used among the youth is *Iyo upfuye utabyaye baguhambana ikara*. It means literally that when you die without a child, you are extinguished. This sub consciously encourages young men to have children to perpetrate their "bloodline" but constitutes a risk for them since they are not capable to take care of those children.

Christian, another respondent, explained the reason he periodical denial of his status from married to single even after a while living with the mother of his child.

I used to live in a rural area (Gatsibo). During my time there, I had never behaved like other boys chasing after girls. I didn't know how to do it. When I came to Kigali, I was welcomed by my brother in law and I saw a girl where he lived. The girl was older. When I saw her, I asked my brother in law: "how can I get to her". I was joking and didn't know he could say it to her. After I left back to the village, he told her and arranged a meeting on my return. It was my first time talking with a girl and after five months of relationship, she starts asking me about marriage. She was older than me. I decided to tell my brother in law and he asked me if I had already asked her to sleep with me. So, I decided to ask her to sleep with me to prove her that I was a man and not stupid. That is how I impregnated her and after a while, we started living together. My family became worried and people back home didn't believe it. Some of them came to see it for themselves...marrying without the parent consent is a problem. For those who didn't come, I tell them that it is not the truth and that I will invite them when it happens (the wedding).

According to this story, Christian is still ashamed and afraid of the perceptions of his formal neighbours and prefer to deny occasionally his status of father and husband. It reminds him periodically of his “error” and causes him to feel ashamed, angry and frustrated of his present life.

These findings are similar with the result of Swartz and Bhana (2009) in their research on young fathers in South Africa. The young fathers in their research were ashamed to be fathers at their age due to the culture implications of sex before marriage and accusations of destroying the ties of the society (Swartz& Bhana, 2009). The same problem was anticipated in Rwanda since marriage is considered as an union of two families for the good of the large society and any interruptions is severely condemned (Koff, 1997). This expectation explain why the experience of young fatherhood in Kigali City is associated with conflict feelings and constant renegotiation of personal identity, all affecting negatively the daily lives of young fathers.

C. Change of behaviour and attitudes

As seen above, the feelings felt prior and after the birth of the child influence largely the personality and decisions of young fathers. In some situations, the combination of all these feelings give rise to new behaviours in the lives of young fathers and it affects the nature of relationship they entertains with the mothers of their children, families and surrounding.

Janet, living with Albert, a young father of 18 years old, expressed her concern as follows: *“He changed since he became a father. You find him sitting, quiet, lonely...because of family problems”*.

Her observation rhymes with the comment of the coordinator of AGR Friendly Centre about the way young fathers deal with their challenges. He said:

Some choose to accept the burden and others can’t handle it. You find some of them becoming drunker. They find refuge into alcoholism. Others act like they don’t have a brain so no one will ask them many things. They change their status to be like children so they can be supported like other children.

Such situations explain the depth of psychological effects on the lives of young fathers as related to their experience of fatherhood.

Paschal et al (2011) presented similar findings among the reason why young fathers don't behave like normal fathers and are more likely to face many problems compare to older fathers.

They have a difficult time accepting their paternity and they suffer terribly when they fail to accomplish their responsibilities (Paschal et al, 2011).Alcohol was also enumerated by young fathers among the strategies to cope with their reality (Swartz &Bhana, 2009).

Indeed, it is important to highlight that the psychological challenges encountered by young fathers don't only lead to negative behaviours. It can also lead to new decisions like hard working, use of condoms, stopping alcohol and drugs use and other positive decisions (Lemay et al, 2010).This unusual life change was confirmed by Duncan (2007) according to whom, having a child may be a source of inspiration or a life turning point for young men from minority groups or low socio economic background. In this study, such change of behaviour was noticed within the stories of Fred and Christian who respectively reduced their consumption of alcohol and became more responsible of their future.

4.2.2. 3. Socio-relational challenges

A. Risk of divorce and frequent separations

The interaction with the respondents on the ground revealed the existence of many relationship problems within young father's families and with their extended families as well with their surrounding community. All were due to different reasons and had different impact on the lives of young fathers and on their close relatives. In this section, the challenge of young fathers to foster positive and long lasting relationship with their partners will be discussed in relationship with their age, maturity and partner's age. Fred, one of the respondents said:

I used to live with the mother of my child (Umutesi). After sometimes, she got pregnant again and decided to leave the first child with me and to go away. I lived with my child alone at 19 years old, only one year after his birth....

I did my best to handle the hard life but it was very difficult...I didn't have another option but to resist until the child is grown. After a while, the mother (of my children) came back and gave birth to another child (a third child) and for a short time we raised our children together but it was very difficult for two young people to understand each other for a long time

The situation of Fred and Umutesi ended up with a divorce later. Currently, Fred is living with another woman and Umutesi lives with her three children alone. During the interview with Umutesi, she accused Fred to be responsible of their divorce because he was too young to marry and immature.

The view of Umutesi was mirrored by Janet and Karo. They are both cohabitating with the fathers of their children. They point out the young age of their partner to be the reasons of their frequent separations and quarrels. I argue here that the problem of maintaining a long lasting relationship is not only the young father's fault but also the fault of young mothers, so I suggest that Fred is not the only responsible of these separations. According to Fleming (2004), the reasons why marriage between two young people ends in divorce is because both partners have not completed the developmental stages of adolescence and are not completely detached to their biological parents.

As we are looking into relationship challenges of young fathers, similar finding were made by different scholars in their research on adolescent fathers (Smith, 2006; Paschal et al, 2011). All of these findings suggests that young men who became fathers at young age are exposed to a high risk of divorce and frequent separations with the mothers of their children.

B. Instability in family relations

The results of this study also shows that young fathers who are incapable to provide for their family or secure a job experience troubled relationship with the mother of their child and sometimes with both families too. This is the story of the father of Lydia's child. These partners went through a separation at 14 years old for Lydia and 17 years old for the young man after a short time of living together. Lydia explained:

I was 14 years old when I got pregnant. His family came to take me to go live with them because people were saying that if they catch the person who impregnated me, they will put him in jail. So, his family said: "Let the child come and live with us to prove that we don't have any problem with her... for sure we don't hate her". I went and lived with them until I gave birth. After giving birth, He (the father of the child) came to pick me up at the hospital and his family said that it was time for us to leave, start our own family and grow up. We left together and he rented a house somewhere. When we got there, he couldn't handle the matters of the family... provide for the family. Then my family came to take me back because I was losing weight...I was not getting anything...no porridge... no food to eat... even when I had something to eat it was not on time.

The story of Lydia actually illustrates well instability in family relationship. After the separation, the father of Lydia's child formed a new relationship with his child, which consisted of relating to the child (son) without paying school fees for him or supporting in anything else. This situation was also observed in the case Josephine but this time the nurturing role was played by the family of the father's child.

It is a sort of relationship commonly observed among young African Americans who decide to have a nurturing relationship with their child rather than providing for them. It happens when a young father is incapable to provide economically for his child and decide to shift to the emotional support (Paschal et al, 2011).

With this result, it is clear that young fathers in Rwanda are more likely to experience troubling relationship with the mothers of their child and their child because the high rate of unemployment or their negatives behaviours.

C. Rejection of father's ties

Traditionally, a father has to accomplish different tasks for his family and mostly for his children. It is his duty to provide and protect his family for any harm (Barker& Ricardo, 2005). However, in this study, unmarried young fathers develop a new form of relationship with their

children which can be defined as distant or non-existing. They only perceive their role of father as a role of provider and nothing else. The single young mothers confirmed this nature of relationship and said that the father of their children didn't show any signs of affection towards their children or themselves. Dada, one of the single young mothers, paraphrased her view on this as follow:

He doesn't come to see the child. Sometimes, I can write to him on WhatsApp asking him why he doesn't come to see the child and he doesn't respond. He has never called me to ask about the child... the last time he came here, it was when I was pregnant, now the child is one year and few months old.

This situation can be partly explained by the fact that the father of Dada's child was putted in prison by Dada's father, thus making his visits at her house difficult. Another explanation is rejection of the father's identity on the profit of his adolescent identity. This causes the father of Dada's child to perceive his own child as an obstacle to his goals and dreams. This situation is similar to the case of Alain who prefer to send money over the mobile phone to the mother of his child and rarely visit his child.

This group of young fathers is classified by Paschal et al (2011) among autonomous fathers who reject the physical contact with their children and provide less support. Again, these findings corroborate Smith (2006) findings on young fathers from South Africa who had less contact with their child or mothers of their child. The author explained that it was because they were going through adolescence therefore incapable to form lasting bonds with new people (Smith, 2006). Nevertheless, some young fathers were still involved in the lives of their children despite their inability to form long lasting relationship with new people in their lives

D. Conflict with the surrounding community

This study came across another problem experiencing by young fathers which is related to their experience of fatherhood. The majority of young fathers had consistent problems with their families and families in law prior to the birth of their children. The respondents explained that the families of their partners were less tolerant of their actions compared to their own families.

This situation can be explained by the negative conception of sex before marriage and adolescent pregnancy in the Rwandan culture. The relationship of young fathers with their families in laws took time to ameliorate and some parents accepted finally their grandchildren. Unfortunately, some were still experiencing problems with their own families and families' in-laws.

The relationship problems of young fathers were not limited to their extended families. This was also another finding of this study. One of the young fathers paraphrased it as follow:

Many people talks about you [when they hear that you impregnated a girl]. Some saying that you are incorrigible, others saying that it was what you used to do all the time (having sex with girls)...No one sees good in you... some people look down on you... without knowing how you live.

The above result proves the negative relationship of young fathers with their neighbours or surrounding community. This view was alluded to by the social affair officer at the sector level. She expresses her view as thus:

One of the challenges of young father is complex in the society. When his fellow peer hear about what he did, they start seeing him differently...negatively... accusing him to be an adultery, immoral. Parents start protecting their girls from him and advise their boys to be cautious about his behaviour.

This result explain the difficult relationship between young fathers and their neighbours and the community in large. They are accused to be a source of problems in the community and to represent a risk for their generations. Similar findings were found in UK by Duncan (2007) among the problems of young fathers and the society in large. Duncan (2007) advised on how such perception of young fathers can negatively affect their lives and lead to common labels such as feckless, immoral and social threat.

This problem was also explained by Bade (2012) with the developmental theory where young fathers are seen as a problem in the society because they didn't respect the usual timing of the society of becoming fathers.

All of these findings indicates that young fathers experience new relationship problems and have trouble maintaining pre-existing relationship with people around them, all having negative consequences on their lives.

4.2.2.4 Legal and Culture Challenges

According to the findings of this study, the experience of young fatherhood has culture and legal implications in Rwanda. It is for this reasons that some young fathers choose other alternatives to handle their situations. Some deny their paternity, others refuse to accept the reality until the birth of the child or simply run away.

Key informants referred to the runaway as the quick way to solve the problem of young fathers and single mothers see it as a betrayal, selfishness or sign of fear. Looked closely, young fathers who run away disrupt their life path and often deal with new challenging circumstances. Such was the case of the father of Alice's child who run away and married quickly another woman to avoid imprisonment or the father of Diana's child enrolled in the army after running away from his family. This situation was well explained by Claire who had a child at 16 years old with a schoolmate of 19 years old. Claire uttered:

The problem I had with him is that when I told him that I was pregnant, he told me: "What do you want us to do? As you see, we are still children and I cannot in any way tell this to my family." He became afraid because we were both in the same school...He dropped out of school and later left his family because his family was tough and he couldn't find a way to explain the situation.

The reaction of Claire's missing partner is understandable in Rwanda. It is culturally prohibited to have sexual relationship before marriage (21 years old) and the GovR has putted in place preventive measures which include putting in prison everyone who have sex with a person under 18 years old (GovR, 2013). The role of maintaining all of those regulations is assumed by the parents on the family level. This finding is important as it proves the importance of the culture in the Rwandan society and the roles of the parents in the education of their children.

These findings are in line with the findings of Lau Clayton (2015) who explain that among the reasons it is hard to locate young fathers, there are this risk they face to be imprisoned for having sexual relationship with adolescent's girls. Also, these findings confirmed the results of a research conducted by Swartz and Bhana (2009) in South Africa where young fathers testified about the negative culture implications of impregnating a girl before marriage and their fear of punishment from their parents. Such problems are not of concern to young fathers from the western societies with less strict culture and tolerant parents in matter of sexual relationship.

The issues raised here pose significant challenges to young fathers and affect negatively their experience of fatherhood. However, they were not the only issues found in this study but they were the main ones. In the following section, on the consequences of young fatherhood, other issues will be presented and discussed in details.

4.2.3 The consequences of fatherhood on young father and his surrounding community

The previous section describes the difficulties and struggles of the young fathers after having a child. In this section, the focus will be on how what they went through impact their life and that of their surrounding community. In this perspective, respondents were asked about the consequences of fatherhood on young father's present and future as well on his surrounding community. The following subsections narrate their answers.

4.2.3.1 Change of vision for life

The experience of fatherhood affects differently the lives of young fathers depending on their background and capacity to deal with the cited problems. The majority of the respondents admitted that the experience of fatherhood drastically altered the life path of young fathers and led them to new horizons:

I used to think that I will keep studying, finish secondary school and go to the University. It was the easy path to reach my development. But the first thing which changed (since I became a father) is school. Now it is over...I don't have any way to reverse the situation...It is no longer in my mind.

Now am striving to develop myself, build my home with my wife. I am planning to secure an investment and do business... work for myself (sell in the market).

The story of Kevin who lost interest in education, planned to marry quickly and earn an income is the reality of the majority of young fathers. They all had to forget school, marry quickly and look for ways to earn money to support their families.

This happened to young men who were in school or pursuing a training and were capable to deal better with the psychological challenges related to young fatherhood. On the other side, young fathers who failed to deal with their psychological challenges, experienced other problems in their present. One lady mentioned:

When I told him (that I was pregnant) I felt that something changed in him. He told me that I was lying... After giving birth, he came to see the child at the hospital but after he disappeared. I don't know what happened to him. His family doesn't want to tell me where he is. I think he left because he didn't have anything (money). He used to study in a technical school and I don't think he finished it.

This situation of disappearing after the birth of the child is common among absent young fathers. According to the literature, young fathers who run away or do not take care of their children are anguished by the fact that they perceive themselves as inadequate parents (Fatherhood Institute Research Summary, 2013). Therefore, they are more likely to struggle with more psychological challenges and experience many problems.

The experience of young fatherhood also affects future plans on another level. In this study, the young fathers interviewed renounced to leaving their homes due to different reasons such as the love of the mother's child, fear of regret, friendly advice, family negotiations or material possession. The acceptance of the paternity of the child came along with the responsibilities to provide for the child and his mother. Also, the story of John who immigrated from Bugesera to Kicukiro after undergoing street childhood without parents or guardians is eloquent at this point.

John decided to have a child with a girl with from the same background. When asked about his former and current priorities as well his future plan. He answered:

Me, I don't plan anything for the future. What I plan is to look out for my child only. I don't plan anything else I can do business... sell if I have what to sell. I cannot go back to school because no one will look out for my family and I love my family... should I say that I will build a house? With what? Should I say that I will do something? With what?

Now what I fight for in my house is to see my child smiling, only that... When his belly is not full (of food), I feel concerned and it happens most of the time.

This story testified the daily challenge of young fathers to be "good" fathers and regular husbands. They have to give up everything in their future and focus on accomplishing the daily tasks of a father. In this study, eight out of ten young fathers confessed to be the only responsible in charge of their families without any support from their extended families or guardians. It was only in the situation of Kevin and Christopher where the parents became involved and supported them but after Kevin started working as a man power in a local industry, he was left in charge of his new family. For the remaining eight young fathers, they were not only supported by their present families or guardians but also they were rejected or left on their own.

According to some authors, it is one of the consequences of African rigid tradition which expects every father despite his age or background to provide food, shelter and protection to his family (Barker & Ricardo, 2005; Swartz & Bhana, 2009). These challenges were also pointed out by Summers (2014) among the problems facing young men in Rwanda in their pursuit of manhood.

These findings proves that apart from the Rwandan culture pressuring young fathers to live up to its standards of men, the participation of their own family may either hinder or motivate the young fathers in accomplishing their responsibilities, and thus the vision for the future of the young father is completely changed.

Furthermore, all the respondents were asked about the consequences of fatherhood on young father's future in three different domain: Education, employment and marital life.

It is important to highlight that only three of the young fathers have been parents for over two years and the rest were parents for one year and half or even less.

Based on the results obtained from older young fathers, the experience of fatherhood had negatively affected young father's marital life and education but not their employment. One of the respondents, Alain, explained his marital problem and the reasons he doesn't marry the mother of his child after two years of fatherhood:

Yes, my plans for the future changed since I became a father at young age. When you are young... You have this confidence in yourself that you will search for money and marry an educated girl, rich and have children... but for me the mother of my child didn't study (she dropped out of school because she was pregnant) and she is not rich... Having a child with someone doesn't mean necessary marrying her.

Another respondent, among older young father, remarried after a divorce with the mother of his first three children. With this results, it is therefore clear that the experience of fatherhood is less likely to effect the employment of young fathers but more likely to affect their marital life and educations plans. This is because the majority of young fathers had already dropped out of school prior of becoming fathers and chosen a certain career for their future and the birth of their child didn't change their previous choice of career.

4.2.3.2. The consequences of fatherhood on young father's community

Starting with families, the experience of fatherhood affected more the girl's family than the young father's family. It is due to the cultural negative perception of sex before marriage and the increasing responsibilities to take of the child. Addition to that, in a patriarchal society, a child born outside the wedlock is not welcomed in the father's family and the mother is condemned for her behaviour (Koff, 1997). In spite of that, the family of the young father is also affected in one way or another. This situation is explained by one of the respondent as thus:

Becoming a father at young age angered my parents. It impoverished them and caused troubles with the girl's family.

They are always ashamed when they are with other parents. They are referred to as bad examples in the neighbourhood.

Another respondent, Alain, expressed differently the consequences of his experience of fatherhood on his family.

Yes, it affected my family (becoming a father early). I used to send money to my family and now it has reduced. If for example, I used to send 10,000 Rwf before... now it is 3,000 Rwf. My parents are unhappy because of that.

This result indicates how the families of young fathers can be affected differently by the experience of fatherhood. They are most of the time shamed in the society by the behaviour of their sons who are perceived as adulterous, immoral and uneducated. According to Bade (2012), the experience of fatherhood is regulated by the society and becoming a father before the time cause problems in the society. Such problems affect families, the community and future generations as it has been proven by the research conducted among African American communities (Paschal et al, 2011).

However, the majority of the young fathers in this study didn't understand how their experience have affected their surrounding community apart of their families. As, they only measure consequences on the material level and since they never asked for support to their neighbours, they concluded that it didn't affect them. On the national level, key informants enumerated various consequences of young fatherhood. The following quotation attest this:

Children born from such unions have problems. They may be related but with different parents (fathers). The family of the girl is the one to take care of those children since their fathers are irresponsible. Those children grow without knowing their fathers and suffer from the lack of the father affection. The society label them with bad names and they are more likely to have bad behaviours... go through prostitution and perpetrate HIV.

Other key informants expressed their concerns on the consequences of fatherhood on the country. In their opinions, a society will face problems of family structure, circle of poverty, prostitution, robbery and it will be costly for the government to support such vulnerable families.

The example of the USA government which has invested enormous resources in the prevention of young fatherhood among African American communities, in social programs dealing with early parenthood and its consequences is the proof of the consequences of young fatherhood on the surrounding community (Paschal et al, 2011). These findings suggest that the cost of young fatherhood on the surrounding community and on the country is high in human capital and economic resources.

4.2.4 The causes and strategies to prevent young fatherhood and its consequences

A. The causes of young fatherhood

The third objective of this study is to identify the causes of young fatherhood and propose strategies to address it. It is for the following reasons that every respondent was asked to identify the causes of young fatherhood and to suggest strategies to deal with fatherhood and its consequences.

The principal cause of young fatherhood identified by the respondents is the period of adolescence. It was defined as a time of exploration, curiosity, fun and love. The respondents also identified other major causes of young fatherhood such as the use of drugs, unemployment, lack of sexual education, culture, difficult background and the absence of parents. One of the respondents eloquently summarized the causes of early fatherhood as thus:

The first thing I see which causes early fatherhood is the period of adolescence, a period of curiosity where a boy wants to know how it is and the way it is done (sex). For a boy to know that he is fully grown, he has to pick up on a girl and when she accept... it ends in pregnancy.... The second cause is the use of drugs which limits his control and prevent him to think about the consequences of his action. Another cause is related to the education of the child, if he was born in family without morals, it will be hard for him not to follow the

example. Another reason it is the lack of vision and peer pressure. Another reason is the education in schools, when they teach about reproduction, they don't go deep and satisfy children's curiosity.

The causes enumerated by the project coordinator of RWAMREC were common to the majority of young fathers in this study apart from one young father, John, who became a father at young age willingly. He explained that he was tired of being alone without anyone to help him while sick or struggling with matters of life. Therefore, he decided to approach a girl from the same background and start a family with her. Without ignoring other factors which lead to the experience of young fatherhood, it is evident that a considerable number of young men experience fatherhood as a result of premature unprotected sex with their girls during the period of adolescence.

B. Strategies to prevent young fatherhood and its consequences

According to the respondents, many strategies to prevent young fatherhood and its consequences are possible on the ground. They were proposed following personal experience and knowledge of the problem. In this section, strategies and advices to address it will be shared. Here is the advice of Umutesi, who divorced the father of his three children.

I would advise boys to avoid fathering children at young age. If they want to have children, they should first prepare their future and see what they have before having a child with someone else...You should not go fathering children without money, without a job, without something to rely on... that is what cause people to suffer.

The rest of the respondents suggested the use of condoms, abstinence, trainings, radio programs and other strategies to prevent early fatherhood. The project coordinator of RWAMREC proposed a multidimensional strategy to prevent young fatherhood.

We should start by the parents. They should be close to their children and depending on their chronological age have a discussion with them. When they reach puberty, parents should talk with their children about the good and bad of

sexual relationship... they should not be afraid to have a discussion on sexuality. In class, they should teach it deeply to satisfy the curiosity of boys and girls. The community can also participate... When they see a child misbehaving, they should correct him and redirect him in the right path without beating him. The community should be involved because if they are not whatever the parents do cannot be enough. The children themselves should learn to have positive attitudes and avoid masculine behaviours (drinking, having sex with girls).

The findings of this study indicates that Rwandan young men don't receive enough sexual education either in schools or in families, are prone to consume alcohol and have unprotected sex with girls during adolescence. In addition, they are more likely to be exposed to peer pressure to validate themselves as men in the society. These results are confirmed by the findings of the research conducted on urban young men in Rwanda. The MoH (2010) and Babalola et al (2002) found out that urban young men possess less knowledge about HIV/STDs, are highly sexually active and less likely to practice abstinence compare to their girls peer.

In the present study, the respondents proposed also strategies to help young fathers. Based on their own experience, they suggested different ways to help young men who are already fathers. It basically started from the beginning by accepting the reality, acknowledge the paternity, approaching the mother of the child and participating actively in raising the child and satisfying his/her needs.

Bosco, one of the respondents formulated his advice to young fathers as thus:

My advice for young fathers is that if you know that you were in love with a girl and knew it for really... and she tells you that you have impregnated her and you know that you are young and have reached nowhere... think and wait to see her how her family treat her and if they say that they will help her in such way and you in other ways...that is good, support her in your means and take care of her...talk with her, approach her and don't reject her. But if you see that they have rejected her, tell her to come and live with you... put

together your strengths and work for your development and take care of that child.... Don't leave her alone... it is not heroic.

The respondents come back many time on the role of parents and the government in supporting young fathers. They suggested that both actors should participate in helping young fathers with the problems of poverty, housing, employment, food, education and other necessity needed to raise a child. Fred, one the respondent, suggested his opinions as following:

His father (of the young father) should help him because he knows he is also a man like him. If he is capable, he can give him a house or money to invest so he can take care of his child. I think the responsibilities should be shared by both parents but the father of the child (the young father) is the one with the biggest part.

The role of non-government organizations in helping young fathers was also expressed by the respondents. The majority of the respondents proposed NGOs to partner with the government, educate young fathers in matters of sexual education and reproductive health, proposed general trainings for the youth and open dialogues on the consequences of young fatherhood. They also proposed counselling, jobs facilities, support in paying schools fees of their children and advocacy on the country level. The coordinator of AGR youth friendly proposed a holistic strategy to help young fathers in different domains:

It is necessary to locate first of all that person who fathered a child at young age, then group him with others (young fathers) and give them a sort of training to bring them back to life so they can leave their feelings of regret, disorientation, loneliness and guilty...teach them how to be responsible and encourage them to stay in their line.. .help them with the burden they are carrying at young age (financial problems) by helping them with jobs so we can protect their children...teach them how to space children and avoid conflict of generations.

This finding indicates that young fathers have a crucial need of support, training, advocacy, counselling and jobs. According to the respondents, the consequences of young fatherhood are unknown to the public and it should be redressed through radio message, researches and forum of discussion. In brief, the results presented above have close similarities with the research conducted by Swartz and Bhana (2009) on young fathers in South Africa.

Among other things, it found out that the situation of young fathers in Africa countries was unknown from the social services and such invisibility resulted in their absence in wellbeing programmers (Swartz and Bhana, 2009). In general, the result of this study shows that young fathers in Kigali City experience multidimensional problems related to their experience of fatherhood. These problems are caused by young father's age, immaturity, negative behaviours but also a difficult background, culture and high level of unemployment among the youth. Consequently, it affects negatively their present, future as well their surrounding community. It was for such reasons that multiple solutions were suggested in preventing fatherhood and its consequences. Overall, the assumptions made in the second chapter of this study, were confirmed with the findings of this study

4.3 CONCLUSION

This chapter has presented and analysed data collected from the field to confirm or reject the assumptions from the second chapter. The results presented as per research objectives have confirmed the existence of problems in the lives of young fathers. The foremost problem encountered by young fathers was their incapacity to provide a shelter, food and entertain good relationship with their new families.

Addition to that, they had to deal with the consequences of their actions in the present and future without the support of their families or any other institution. In brief, the experience of young fatherhood is the source of multiple problems with socio-economic and psychological ramifications. It is in the following chapter that will be presented the conclusion and recommendations of the study.

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1. INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter presented the major findings of this study under different themes per research objectives. This present chapter will summarize the general conclusions of the study and suggest recommendations to various institutions and personalities who may contribute in addressing the issue of young fatherhood in Rwanda. Furthermore, it will also suggest directions to future research and close with the strength and limitations of the present study.

5.2. SUMMARY

The general summary of this study is presented in different parts following the specific objectives of the research. These are:

- (1) Identify the challenges faced by young fathers as related to their experience of fatherhood;
- (2) Assess the consequences of fatherhood on young father's present and future life as well on their surrounding community; and
- (3) Identify the causes of young fatherhood and suggest strategies to address it.

5.2.1 Challenges faced by young fathers related to their experience of fatherhood

It is through data analysis and interpretation that it became evident that young fathers encounter multiple challenges related to their experience of fatherhood. The most challenging and common problem of young fathers is the socio-economic challenge. This study documented situation of young fathers living in extreme poverty, hunger, unemployment and despair. This happened because they became parents at young age and were originating from a low socio economic background. The majority of young fathers had a low educational level and were already struggling to secure an employment. Addition to that, the experience of young fatherhood had legal and culture implications in Rwanda.

This study found out also that young fathers are exposed to psychological challenges due to their continuous struggle with negative emotions. The experience of fatherhood is normally

accompanied with a mix of feelings and when it happen before the individual is ready and prepared, those feelings can affect the personal's behaviours (Smith, 2006).

In this study, a range of emotions was recorded starting with fear, shame, guilty and depression. These emotions affected negatively the behaviours and attitudes of young fathers. Another major problem of young fathers found in this study is their incapacity to foster positive and long lasting relationship with the mothers of their child and with their child. The same socio relational problem was also noticed with their families, families in laws and surrounding community. Yet, the findings indicated that despite all the problems of young fathers, they loved their child and attempted to provide in one way or another some kind of support or assistance.

5.2.2 Assessment of the consequences of fatherhood on young father's present and future life as well on his surrounding community

As seen in the findings, the experience of fatherhood forced young fathers who were pursuing a training or attending a school to drop out in order to look for a job and plan marriage quickly. For those who had already dropped out of school, it increased their economic responsibilities and social pressure to become socially recognized as men. On the other hand, some had to run way and alter drastically their life path. As result, the majority of young fathers interviewed in this study had a low level of education, were struggling to secure employment and unhappy of their lives. This change in life narrowed their future plans, limited their employment possibilities and condemned them to stay with a low educational level. Nevertheless, some young fathers expressed their interest in learning technical skills at the same time working to support their families.

The respondents in this study revealed that the experience of young fatherhood had negatively affected their close relatives. It started with their families by bringing shame and poverty on their own families and dishonour on the girls' family. On the national level, it increased the fertility rate, poverty level and the number of vulnerable families in the country. It further reduced the productivity of country by depriving it with the hands of its young people.

5.1.3 Causes of young fatherhood and strategies to address it

The remedial strategies suggested in this study were related to respondents' identified cause of young fatherhood. In this study, the principal cause of young fatherhood identified is the chronological age or the period of adolescence of young men. It is during this period of time that the majority of young men were more likely to have unprotected sexual relationship, use drugs and consume alcohol. All of that increasing the risk fathering a child at young age.

Other causes identified were related to the background of young fathers therefore specific to one group of young fathers than another. It was for such reasons that the respondents advised in general young men to use condoms, abstain from sex, slowdown with the dating and wait for the right time to have children. The respondents also suggested parents and schools to have open dialogue with their adolescent's children about sexual reproduction and help them satisfy their intellectual curiosity. The Rwandan community was also advised to participate in redressing children showing signs of misbehaviours.

To help young men who are already parents overcoming their challenges, all the respondents suggested job opportunities in the first place. In the second place, they suggested counselling and guidance from professional and family members. All of this had to be done by the government through its different institutions, parents, NGOs and young father's themselves.

5.3. CONCLUSION

This study had pursued three main objectives: Identify the challenges of young fathers as related to their experience of fatherhood, assess the consequences of fatherhood on young father's present and future as well on his surrounding community; and identify the causes of young fatherhood and suggest strategies to address it. At the end of this study, these objectives were meet and the following conclusion were drawn.

First, the challenges of young fathers were foremost socio-economic, psychological, socio-relational, legal and culture challenges. They were found to be closely associated with the low socio economic background of the majority of young fathers.

Second, the experience of young fatherhood was in some situation at the origin of school dropout, early entry into labour and marital life. In other situations, it increased the already existing socio economic problem of young men who had dropped out of school. Consequently, it narrowed the future perspective of young fathers, reduced their employment possibilities and education level. It also affected their surrounding community and the country in large on multiple levels and it was risky for future generations.

Third, this study has noted that the major cause of young fatherhood is the period of adolescence and other factors associated with a life in a low socio economic environment. It is for this reason that the strategies suggested to prevent it were to increase the sexual education of the youth, promote positive masculine behaviours and involve the parents and the community in every level.

Finally, for young men who were already fathers, there was an urgent need to be supported with employment possibilities, counselling and learning technical skills.

With these findings, it is therefore clear that the experience of young fatherhood has many consequences on the lives of young fathers and their families as well on their surrounding community and country. In order to prevent it and its consequences, the following recommendations and suggestions are formulated.

5.4. RECOMMENDATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

Based on the findings of this study, here are the suggestions and recommendations:

To the Rwandan government and public institutions

-As indicated by the result of this study, the first and foremost problem of young fathers is the socio-economic problem. Therefore, The Ministry of Youth and ICT in partnership with MIGEPROF as well their partners should provide employment facilities to young fathers and a social network support to this group of parents. They should provide different form of support to young fathers mostly in their first years of fatherhood to avoid more problems in the future.

- The results of this study indicated that young fathers suffer from psychological problems and struggle with negative emotions. It is for this reason that the Ministry of Health should partner with other institutions in healthy in providing counsellors to young fathers and trainings on reproductive health to teach them how to space children and avoid having many children in the future.

- As noticed in this study, the majority of young fathers had dropped out of school or unwilling to further their education after they became fathers. However, some young fathers expressed their interest in learning technical skills. It is for this reason that the Ministry of education should put in place specific measures to fight against boys drop out, increase their attendance and facilities to learn technical skills for young fathers. Still in the domain of education, there was a gap to cover with the courses on reproductive health and a crucial need to update the curricula to young generations. This would require an intervention from the Ministry of education.

-As expressed by the women who had children with young fathers, their partners have difficulties in establishing good and positive relationship. It would be very important for social workers on the ground to locate and approach young fathers in order to teach them the basic skills of a father and a husband.

-This study found out that the reality young fathers was unknown to the public and relevant institutions. This sort of invisibility fuelled the general misconception and caused young fathers to perceive themselves as inadequate parents thus increasing their isolation. In terms of advocacy, the media should work with MIGEPROF in fighting labels given to young fathers and encourage them in being responsible, role models and outstanding citizen.

To nongovernmental institutions

- Considering the intensity of the problem of young fathers, there should be specific programs targeting the wellbeing of young fathers. They should focus in providing jobs possibilities and options of furthering young father's education. This intervention would protect future generations against the cycle of young fatherhood and its related consequences.

-According to the results of this study, the problems of young fathers can also be addressed by programs working with adolescents mothers. Through providing possibilities and options to enrol willing young fathers in their programs to achieve long lasting results in term of family stability and wellbeing of the child.

-As previously seen, the majority of young fathers originated from low socio economic background. It would be beneficial for NGOs programs working in the eradication of poverty to add a preventive course on sexual reproduction and jobs creations to reduce the risk of young fatherhood.

To future research

The present study was delimited to Kigali City and therefore it didn't explore the experiences of young fathers in rural area. It would be very interesting to explore the situations of young fathers in rural area and to have another perspective of the phenomena. Also, there is a need is an urgent need to have statistics and numbers of young fathers in the country and on a large scale. During this study, the researcher located three couples composed of young fathers and their partners and it didn't provide enough data to evaluate the nature of their relationship. This could be a good subject of research if explored further.

To parents and the community in large

I would suggest the community to support the children through fatherhood. If a child have misbehaved and impregnated a girl and is courageous enough to admit it, it is the right time to approach him and set him straight by teaching him parental skills and other necessary fatherhood behaviours. In doing so, the community helps children in their critical time and their new family at the same time. The intervention of the community will protect the child from more problems in the future and help him build a better family.

In relation with the culture, the community should promote a more open understanding of premarital sex. This should be done in consideration with the reality of the present generations and also to reduce the stigmatization of young fathers.

To young fathers and the youth in general

Having a child at young age is shocking and frightening. The decision to abandon your child and his/her mother to their own fate may surely seem like a good decision at the moment but it will have multiple consequences later in life. As indicated by the literature, it causes psychological and other related problems. I would suggest young fathers to be responsible of their actions, take care of their child and work hard to protect their family.

To the youth, the consequences of early parenthood are numerous and tenacious to everyone. I would recommend caution in dating, abstinence, use of condoms and better plans for the future.

5.4. STRENGTHS AND LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The present study is a qualitative research using a phenomenological approach as an inquiry. With such approach and nature, it encountered following limitations. It collected primary data on ten young fathers and ten women who had children with young fathers, all located in Kigali City. The rest of the data was collected from key informants and documents review. With this size of sample, the findings of this study cannot be generalized to a large scale. Another limitation of this study is the absence of literature on young fathers from Sub Saharan Africa and Rwanda and a tendency of western scholars to focus on young fathers from minority groups. Finally, it is possible that some data were lost during the translation from Kinyarwanda to English even though the researcher used the best of his ability to reproduce the original content of interviews.

In terms of strengths, this study has been able to avail a literature on a social problem previously understudied in Rwanda. The researcher has forced himself to approach the problem of early parenthood from another perspective and to apply gender lens to a problem generally seen as a women problem. This study has explored the lives of responsible young fathers and the reasons behind the absence of young fathers in the lives of their children and mothers of their children. It has used multiple sources of data and applied theories in the analysis to ensure the clarity of the findings. The researcher has followed all the necessary ethical procedures and exercised rigor on himself to avoid possible biases. It is for all those following reasons that the findings of this study reflect the reality of the respondents in their natural setting.

5.5. CONCLUSION OF THE CHAPTER

This chapter has presented the major conclusion of this study according the predefined objectives. In the same spirit, it has provided suggestions and recommendations to relevant stakeholders and individuals concerned with the problem of early fatherhood. Furthermore, it has provided directions to future research in this area. Lastly, it has detailed the limitations and strengths of this study.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX I: The Map of Rwanda



Source: <http://www.nationsonline.org/oneworld/map/rwanda-admin-map.htm>

APPENDIX II: The City of Kigali and its District



Source: <https://www.google.rw/search?q=Map+of+kigali+with+its+districts&tbm=isch&imgil=ZCcobekHdkzSAM%25A%25BJzAfqQa5aVxWfM%25Bhttp%25253A%25252F>

APPENDIX III: Introduction Letter

Introduction

My name is Patrick Ufashingabo; I am a student in University of Rwanda – College of Arts and Social Sciences. I am currently conducting a study on the challenges facing young fathers living in Kigali City and I would like to learn directly from your ideas, opinions, and experiences. The aim of the study is to understand, identify and assess the challenges related to young fatherhood and to suggest remedial strategies and recommendation to prevent fatherhood at young age.

I assure you that everything you tell me in this interview will be kept completely private and confidential. Your name will be kept confidential as well. Your participation is entirely voluntary and it's your rights to withdraw from the interview at any time without any consequence to you. Please note that all the data collected will be kept in a secure place.

You can ask questions or additional information regarding this study before, after or during the interview.

Thank you!

APPENDIX IV: INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR PARTICIPANTS - YOUNG FATHERS

PART I: Demographic Information

1. Residence
2. Names
3. Age
4. Province of origin
5. Education
6. Occupation
7. Marital Status
8. Number of Children
9. Number of Children's mothers

PART II: Open Questions

1. At what age did you become a father?
 2. How many children do you have?
 3. What was the opportunity? (Please share your story)
 4. Who played a great role in you being a father while you are still young?
 5. Is it easy to admit that you are a father at a younger age? Can you explain why?
 6. What challenges did you face after you became a father?
 7. According to you, what are the causes of those challenges?
 8. * How did you deal with those challenges?
- *Were you helped or supported through those challenges? Please explain
9. Have you had any issue with the mother of the child? Please explain
 10. What is your current relationship with the mother of the child?
 11. Did you like the child? Please explain

12. Were you comfortable with having a child? Please explain
13. What is your current relationship with the child? Please describe
14. What contribution have you made for the care of the child?
15. What is your plan for the child?
16. What was the reaction of your family/guardian regarding your status of young father?
17. What was the reaction of the woman's family/guardian regarding the birth of the child?
18. What was the reaction (behaviour and attitudes) of your neighbours and the community in large concerning you as father?
19. What was the plan for your future? (Concerning education, profession, and marital life)
20. Has the plan for your future changed since you became a father? If yes, How?
21. Can you please compare your current and former priorities?
22. Do you think your situation as young father has affected your neighbour and/or your community (including other family members and the family members of the woman)? Please explain.
23. What advice can you give to other young fathers in dealing with their situation?
24. What advice can you give to other young men to prevent young fatherhood and its consequences?
25. According to you, who should support young fathers and how? Please explain.

APPENDIX V: INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR PARTICIPANTS – MOTHERS OF YOUNG FATHERS’S CHILDREN.

PART I: Demographic Information

1. Residence
2. Names
3. Age
4. Province of origin
5. Education
6. Occupation
7. Marital Status
8. Number of Children with the young father
9. Number of fathers to your children

PART II: Open Questions

1. Has the child’s father experienced any challenges related to this act of bearing a child at young age? Please explain
2. What were the cause of those challenges?
3. Did anyone him (them) to address those challenges? If yes, please explain.
4. Have you ever had any issue with the father of your child? Please explain
5. What is your current relationship with the father of your child?
6. Does he like the child? Please explain
7. Was he comfortable at having a child at young age?
8. Does he contribute to the care of the child?
9. What his current relationship with the child?

10. What was the reaction of your family/guardian regarding the birth of a child with a young man?

11. What was the reaction of his family/guardian regarding the birth of a child with you?

12. Do you think being a father at young age changed something on the plan of your child father? (In the domain of education, profession, marital life) If yes, explain.

13. What is his current plan and priorities?

14. What advice can you give to young fathers in dealing with their situation?

15. What advice can you give to young men to prevent young fatherhood and its consequences?

16. What do you think should be done by the community, the Government of Rwanda and organizations in order to address the issue of young fatherhood?

APPENDIX VI: INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR KEY INFORMANTS

PART I: Demographic Information

1. Names
2. Gender
3. Age
4. Residence
5. Marital Status
6. Education
7. Job Title

PART II: Open Questions

1. Have you heard about or dealt with adolescents fathers?
2. What are the factors/causes that lead them to this status?
3. What challenges do they face?
4. Do you know how young fathers deal with those challenges?
5. In your opinions, how do you think the experience of fatherhood at young age affect young men's present and future?
6. How do you think the fatherhood at young age affects the community?
7. What are the specific strategies that can be used to prevent young fatherhood?
8. What are the specific strategies that can be used to help young fathers in their struggles?
9. Do you have program that deals with young fatherhood in your institution? Please explain

APPENDIX VII: QUESTIONS FOR THE FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION OF YOUNG FATHERS

PART I: Demographic Information

1. Place
2. Number of participants

PART II: Open Questions

1. What are the challenges related to your experience of fatherhood?
2. How do you deal with those challenges? Are you helped or supported through those challenges? Please explain.
3. What kind of relationship do you have with your child and the mother of your child?
4. To what extent being a father at young age affected your present life in the domain of education, marital life and employment?
5. To what extent being a father at young age affected your plan for the future in the domain of education, marital life and employment?
6. To what extent your status of young father affected your surrounding community?
7. What advices can you give to others young fathers to deal with their situations?
8. What would you recommend to the following institutions to prevent fatherhood at young age and its consequences among young men:
 - The Government of Rwanda
 - The community
 - Other Organizations.

APPENDICE VIII: Consent form

Study topic: Being a father at young age in Rwanda: Assessment of the Challenges Faced by Young Fathers Living in Kigali

Study location: Kigali City, Rwanda

Student/Researcher: Patrick Ufashingabo

University of Rwanda, College of Arts and Social Sciences

Phone number: (+250) 788281255, Email:pufashingabo@gmail.com

Participant:

- Iparticipate in this study on a voluntary basis and can withdraw from the study at any time without giving reasons and without any negative consequences. I have also agree to be recorded using an audio recorder.
- I have been informed orally and in writing about the aims and the procedures of the study, the advantages and disadvantages as well as potential risks.
- My questions related to study participation have been answered voluntary and satisfactorily.
- I was given sufficient time to make a decision about participating in the study.
- I agree that the researcher and the supervisor have accessed the original data under strict confident.

Date Signature of participant

Date.....Name & signature of the researcher