

# University Students' Perception on the Influence of family type on vulnerability to Radicalization in Kenya: Implications for Counselling

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## Abstract

The threat and likelihood of radicalisation and recruitment into violent extremist groups has increased in Kenya and internationally. Those at risk of being radicalised need to be identified and positive alternatives to extremism promoted. In Kenya, the government has promoted security oriented interventions to fight radicalisation and terrorism over the softer approach called Countering Violent Extremism (CVE). The concern is the provision of long term prevention oriented interventions that would involve counselling individuals who are vulnerable to induce resilience. The students in public universities are vulnerable to radicalisation because there is maximum exchange of ideas in the universities contrary to the rigid ideologies of extremist groups. The family as the first socialization agent of an individual can contribute to vulnerability to radicalisation. This study focused on investigating university students' perception on the influence of family type on vulnerability to Radicalization in Kenya and implications for counselling. The mixed methods research design was used. Quantitative and qualitative data were collected concurrently. The target population comprised of all the 443,783 students enrolled in 31 accredited universities, 120 student counsellors and 960 student peer counsellors. Purposive sampling technique was used to select two public universities in Kenya. Determination of sample sizes were done using Yamane's formula and then proportional sampling employed. The study sample size comprised of 644 respondents as follows: 216 students from University A; 184 students from University B; 26 student counsellors and 218 peer counsellors from the two public universities. Questionnaires, interview schedules and focus group discussions were used to collect data from the university students, student counsellors and peer counsellors, respectively. A pilot study was carried out at Egerton University, Njoro Campus and 65 respondents participated to establish the reliability of the instrument. In the study a reliability coefficient of 0.79 was established using Cronbach alpha. Both descriptive and inferential statistics (chi square) were used to analyze data. Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 23.0 and QSR NVivo 12 for Windows aided in data analysis. The study found that family type had insignificant influence on vulnerability to radicalisation. The results of Chi-square test of independence on the basis of the interpretation of likelihood ratio test ( $\chi^2(20) = 27.849, p = 0.113$ ) showed that the family type in which the students were raised had insignificant influence on level of agreement or disagreement to reasons to justify extremist ideologies. The study recommended that other factors may contribute to make students more at risk to radicalization therefore more research needs to be done. Therapy related to students' identity, belonging and family relations can improve the student's life skills and broaden their knowledge on radicalization. The development of effective counselling intervention programs and sensitization programs to parents should also be enhanced for the prevention of radicalisation.

**Keywords:** Student's perception, influence of family type, vulnerability to radicalization, implications for counselling

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## 1.1 Background Information

Radicalisation refers to a process of adopting or promoting an extremist ideology or belief that breeds the intention of facilitating political, religious or social violence. Extremist ideology becomes a way of life and a frame work for individual action when one is radicalised (Hamed El-Said, 2015). Radicalisation also refers to the often violent or coercive actions resulting from radical ideas to justify a cause (Youth Counselling against

Radicalisation Guidelines for Frontline Workers Organisation [YCARE], 2015). Radicalisation can be considered as socialisation to extremism, which may lead to terrorism. Kimari and Wakesho (2017) report that the United States of America and other countries have adopted a 'softer' approach to terrorism and violent extremism, termed as countering violent extremism (CVE). The Danish Government has also recommended that the 'softer' approach that emphasizes the need to address the drivers (push and pull factors) that lead young people to be radicalized, addresses the root of the problem more effectively than security-oriented/military approaches. Kimari and Wakesho further point out that within the United Nations (UN) there has also been a push for CVE to address terrorism and violent extremism. Regionally, the Inter-Governmental Authority for Development (IGAD) developed a CVE strategy and established the IGAD Center of Excellence for Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism (ICEPCVE) program on strengthening resilience to violent extremism in Africa.

It follows that preventing radicalisation is important in countering violent extremism. Kenya's National Strategy to Counter Violent Extremism (NSCVE), launched by the President in September 2016, also articulates a clear vision of minimizing and/or eliminating violent extremism by mobilizing individuals and groups at the national and community levels to reject violent extremist ideologies, in order to minimize individuals whom terrorist groups can radicalize and recruit. This vision is consistent with global policy on Countering Violent Extremism (CVE), in particular, the UN Security Council's Resolution 2178 (2014), whose focus is preventing radicalization, recruitment and mobilization of individuals into terrorist groups and is anchored on United Nations Plan of Action to prevent and counter violent extremism launched in 2016 (Ogada, 2017).

According to Ogada (2017) in Kenya, the NSCVE acknowledges that success in CVE is dependent on collaboration between the national government and county governments. It therefore mandates county-level leaders, including governors, senators and county assemblies, to undertake CVE activities aimed at enhancing community cohesion, peace and patriotism while denouncing extremism. NSCVE also mandates the National Counterterrorism Centre (NCTC) to provide capacity building and training to county leaders to enhance their capacities to carry out these activities. The author further posits that the county security intelligence committees are the key sites of implementation of the NSCVE, and are expected to consult and coordinate closely with county government officials in CVE. By mid of 2019, following a presidential directive, all the 47 counties launched their County Action Plans to counter violent extremism and based on structures and principles formulated in the NSCVE.

Figueiras and Ipince (2018) observe that governments and institutions seek to detect radicalised individuals within educational institutions through surveillance strategies, fierce sanctions and harsh punishment. This is a short term intervention whereas a long term intervention would involve counselling individuals who are vulnerable. Blattman and Ralston (2015), point out that CVE preventive soft-skill approach involves social interventions that aim to provide life-skills for vulnerable individuals to induce resilience, self-control and behavioural change, through training, education and psychological assistance. The promotion of family values can also be effectively done in a counselling environment. Tahiri (2013) posits that nuclear family members are often the first to detect worrying signs of radicalisation among their relatives. However, they are often not aware of how to deal with the situation. Families can be key actors in the prevention of radicalisation by acting as important agents of change and providing enormous support structures for the radicalised individuals thus their importance should not be overlooked. Tahiri (2013) further points out that it is also important to recognize that family members can also hinder de-radicalisation, reintegration, and safeguarding of the youths against extremist ideology.

The families that the university students' were raised in are very different from each other. In some families, the situation seemed to be warm and stable. Other families go through turbulent times prior to the radicalization of the child. Divorce, health problems, mental health problems, and financial problems afflicted these families. According to Sikken et al. (2017) in seven out of eleven families, the parents were divorced; three of the respondents grew up without knowing their father. A focusing on the family and its involvement in Violent Extremism (VE), will examine the underlying causes of the family's engagement and support in acts of violent extremism that lead to terrorism. Previous research has shown that parents may directly or indirectly influence the radicalization process of their children (Sikkens et al. 2017. Bhui, et al. (2014) posits that a great deal of effort and significant financial resources are committed to counter-terrorism while less attention is given to research on preventive measures. Hence, there is need to understand the influence of the family type on vulnerability to radicalization.

Counselling too is a strategy that should be extensively used to complement security-focused counterterrorism measures with a framework for CVE measures, which include the provision of counselling parents, employment options, business opportunities and life skills, among other interventions, aimed at reducing youth vulnerability to violent extremism (Ogada, 2017).

## 1.2 Statement of the Problem

As a response to ever growing radicalization, the government has put in place counter-terrorism strategies by the enactment of the Prevention of Terrorism Act, establishment of the National Counter Terrorism Centre (NCTC) and Anti-Terrorism Police Unit. Learning institutions have also improved their security systems and surveillance as they seek to counter terror activities. The National Strategy to Counter Violent Extremism (NSCVE) was also adopted by the 47 counties through customized County Action Plans (CAPs). Both NSCVE and CAPs are dependent on collaboration between the national government, civil society organizations, local communities, development partners and county governments for their success. However, despite these measures, radicalization still continues to escalate. These security oriented interventions such as Counter Terrorism are short term in countering radicalisation, the concern therefore is the provision of long term interventions that would involve counselling individuals who are vulnerable to induce resilience, self-control and behavioural change, through training, education and psychological assistance. Radical groups and terrorists have targeted learning institutions, especially public universities, because they are well positioned for maximum exchange of cultures, politics and ideas contrary to rigid ideologies of extremist groups. Some of the drivers of radicalisation include the family. The family is usually the first socializing agent of an individual and family support of extremist groups, insecure family setups, absent families, lack of parental supervision, family tensions and individual's sense of isolation can make university students vulnerable to radicalisation. Previous studies have indicated the key factors needed in countering terrorism but there is a need to use counselling as a long term preventive solution to extremist views and establish resilience among populations that could be vulnerable. The study investigated university students' perceptions on the influence of the family type on vulnerability to radicalisation in Kenya.

## 1.3 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to determine university students' perception on the influence of family type on vulnerability to radicalisation in Kenya and implications for counselling.

## 1.4 Research Hypotheses

**Ho1:** There is no statistically significant association between university students' perception on the influence of family type and vulnerability to radicalisation

## 2.0. LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1 Influence of family type and vulnerability to radicalization

Understanding family structure and relationships in the family where students are raised in can better help to figure out the dynamics of vulnerability to radicalization. The structures included in the study include nuclear families with both parents living together, Single-parent families due to death, separation, divorce or single parent not married. Families raised by a guardian also considered.

Sieckelinck, Kaulingfreks and De Winter (2015) in a study conducted in the United Kingdom, Denmark and the Netherlands, found that family members play a major role in the processes of radicalisation and de-radicalisation of adolescents and young adults. The study findings indicated that radicalisation is influenced by the environment within the family and family members' responses during the process of radicalisation. The study further pointed out that affiliation with radical organizations is often driven by the need of instant answers to the identity crisis questions of adolescents and young adults that parents respond to. At the same time, the youths also seek a sense of kinship as a substitute for troubled family ties when divorce or separation occurs. Thus it is imperative for this study to investigate influence of families in the process of student radicalisation in University. According to Sikkens et al., (2017) parents' reaction to extreme ideology often change as their children become radical. When they notice child's fanaticism, they would reject or ignore his or her beliefs. Also parent's response to radicalization is sometimes difficult because of parenting style. Thus, it seems that there is a degree of parental uncertainty about how to handle radicalization of a child (Sikkens et al., 2017). Since the risks and challenges associated with violent extremism and terrorism continue to grow and transform, families should be in the front-line in challenging violent extremism. Grossman (2015) posit that families play a key role in influencing and shaping attitudes and responses of the young people to other people and the world. Families are important in shaping the independence and autonomy of the young people. Grossman further explains that families build essential blocks that foster community resilience to violent extremism. Individual and community resilience to violent extremism is strongly linked to the prevention and resistance to radicalisation and extremist ideology among the young people. Families are important in detecting early signs and behaviour of radicals

among its members. Therefore, it is important to identify early signs and behaviour of radicals for preventative measure for radicalisation. The above assertion, however, does not show the effects of educating families on how to identify early signs and behaviour of radicals which can be done through counselling and is an important preventative measure for radicalisation.

The presence of close family members, friends, and relatives who are members of extremist groups is also an important driver of radicalization. A study conducted in South East Asia by Atran (2008) found that around twenty per cent of members of the terrorist networks were directly related to each other while seventy per cent were friends. Furthermore, the findings of the study indicated that nearly two-thirds of the members joined the extremist groups after being influenced by either friends or family members. Atran (2008) concluded by noting that the influence of close relationship is powerful in ensuring a higher degree of loyalty and trust among extremists and also plays an important role in assisting the network to remain connected. Families may impart harmful influence to the young people by also exposing them to online and offline violent extremist rhetoric and propaganda. King, Noor and Taylor (2011) posit that normative support provided by families plays a significant role in sustaining violence.

Parental resistance can both strengthen and weaken the motivation to become an active member of an extreme group (Van der Valk & Wagenaar, 2010). Emotional reactions by parents can trigger further radicalisation especially when violence is involved. The authors further posit that intervention by parents can also evoke awareness in their children of the undesirable consequences of their behavior. Thus parents can motivate their children to exit the radical group.

Individual issues can cause students to be drawn to radical groups. According to Maclean (2013), people who are drawn to radical groups wish to be decisive as well as do something momentous. On the other hand, some people get involved in radical groups so as to project the perceived harm or injustice perpetrated against them on the society. Radicalisation has to do with the challenges of the transition between youth and adulthood. Many of the youths search for meaning in life and ask questions about their role and where they belong and what matters to them most. According to Sieckelinck et al. (2015) radical groups provide the youths with what the family or society fails to provide. Such needs include youth's sense of identity and belonging, security, and clear purpose. Most of the vulnerable individuals appear to be those who struggle in some way to find an identity, meaningful or significant feeling or want to merge the secular and religious needs.

The radicalisation process differs for every individual and can take place over an extended period or within a very short time frame. Thus, Mowat (2016) observes that individuals from different backgrounds can be drawn to radicalisation at any age. Individuals can be exposed to extremist messages through different means. These can include the influence of family members, friends, direct contact with extremist groups or the internet and the media. Mowat (2016) and Grossman (2013) further highlights that individual vulnerability can also expose individuals to radicalisation. An individual can be experiencing a sense of isolation, low self-esteem or may be dissociated from the existing friendship groups. These may make the individual to be involved in a new or different group of friends in search for answers about individual identity, faith, and belonging. Other personal issues that can push an individual to a radical group is the desire for adventure and excitement to achieve the unmet aspirations. It could also be driven by the perception of injustice, feeling of failure and a feeling of civil rejection. The experience of poverty and the disadvantage of social exclusion is also a driver of radicalisation.

Sieckelinck et al., (2015) further explains that the youth experience three journeys in their search for identity. Firstly, the youth can be pushed away by family or neighborhood problems or lack an experience of emotional support. Therefore, an individual may be pushed towards a surrogate family or authority with ideals that seem to provide solutions to the tension and insecurity. Eventually, de-radicalisation of these youths begins because the person has been exposed to hatred, the negativism, and common violence in such movements. Secondly, the youth can also be pulled towards the magnetic force of extremist movements. Growing up in a warm and stable, intelligent and ambitious family context may make individuals react with a strong emotional response to injustice. The youth desire depth, meaning and a clear goal in life. Since the family cannot meet the specific needs, these persons break away and find a new destination in the radical movement. Ultimately, de-radicalisation of these youth is often triggered by boredom or sudden insight into the hypocrisy of the extremist organisation. Thirdly, youth with passionate personalities can be drawn to the special and extreme challenge of different nature. When family and society fail to fulfil their desires, they may seek help from extremist groups. Such individuals are known to memorize religious or ideological books word by word. In the end, de-radicalisation of these youths starts with dissatisfaction with the simplified content of the extremist ideals.

Venhaus (2010) researched on the motivation of foreign fighters to join Qaida-related movements and its affiliates and found that such individuals wanted to understand who they are and why it matters to them as well as what their role should be in the world. The individuals felt that their unfulfilled desire to define and discover themselves would be the fulfilled by the extremist groups. Venhaus identified different individuals who joined the extremist groups. Revenge seekers were frustrated and angry and sought to join the group so as to discharge their anger and frustration on some person, group, or entity that they considered being at fault. The

status seekers, on the other hand, sought recognition and esteem from others. Thirdly, the identity seekers were primarily driven by a need to belong to or be part of something meaningful. They sought to define their identities or sense of self-being through their group affiliations. Lastly, thrill seekers were attracted to the group because of the prospects for excitement, adventure, and glory.

Koehler (2013) in a study of 242 European extremists noted that, the close social environment of family is the most likely place to recognize the on-set of violent radicalization. For early prevention and intervention work, there is need to focus on the role of the family in radicalization processes and counter-terrorism work. The author further posit that there is need to rely on strengthening the family as a counterforce against radicalization, and not on just using the family as a source of information and intelligence for the authorities. Family counselling programs as further noted by the author are seen as highly effective, in reaching a large proportion of the relevant target vulnerable groups and approaching the problem of radicalization from a new and innovative perspective. This is a gap the research seeks to address in the Kenyan situation to prevent radicalisation.

## 2.2 Theoretical Framework

This study is anchored on two theories the theory of psychosocial development and the cognitive dissonance theory. The fifth stage of Erik Erikson's theory of psychosocial development (1968) posits that it is a stage of identity versus role confusion and is a stormy and crucial period in an individual's life. During this stage, individuals search for a sense of self and personal identity, through an intense exploration of personal values, beliefs, and goals. Identity is attained at the fifth stage of psychosocial development as there is transition from childhood to adulthood. Independence can be acquired and exploration into the future in terms of career paths and social relationships can be attained by individuals. Erikson (1968) placed a particular emphasis on the development of ego identity. Ego identity is the conscious sense of self that we develop through social interaction and becomes a central focus during the identity versus confusion stage of psychosocial development. According to Erikson, our ego identity constantly changes due to new experiences and information we acquire in our daily interactions with others. As we have new experiences, we also take on challenges that can help or hinder the development of identity.

University students are still in this stage and want to belong and fit in the society. Failure to achieve this leads to role confusion where individuals get confused and helpless hence their hopes are crushed creating feeling of resentment and disillusionment. This may further results to maladaptive antisocial behaviour thus making them vulnerable to radicalisation. Healthy development is composed of points where an individual's intellectual, emotional, and social development forces him or her to make an essential, usually unconscious, choice about how his or her personality will develop. The main conflict in this stage is the contest between the formation of a strong identity or role confusion, the family during this stage plays a key role in the healthy psychological development of the individual. Erikson (1968) further suggests that young people reach a stage where ideologies assist in identity formation. If a young adult lacks self-esteem, for example due to excessively controlling parents, joining a terrorist group might function as a strong "identity stabilizer," providing the young adult with a sense of belonging, worth, and purpose.

This theory does not focus much on the cognitive processes like perceptions, inferences and feelings that goes on in an individual therefore it was complimented by the cognitive dissonance theory. The cognitive dissonance theory which was proposed by Festinger (1957) posits that cognitive dissonance is a psychological phenomenon that emerges when people's behaviour is in conflict with their attitudes or beliefs. One of the typical responses to such discomfort is that people increasingly start believing what they say. For instance, the more often people express statements that are more radical than their actual opinions, the more they will start believing the accurateness of those statements. Maskaliunaitė (2015) holds that people can respond to cognitive dissonance by over-justification. The more radicals have invested in the radicalisation process, for instance because they broke relationships with family members to gain membership of a radical group, the more they will believe that membership was indeed worth sacrificing family ties for. The author further notes that due to cognitive dissonance, radicalised people will become even more committed to their radical views or network. This theory is important as it plays a role in the emergence of radicalisation and explains the cognitive processes in an individual when radicalized.

### 2.3 Conceptual Framework

This conceptual framework exhibits a diagrammatic representation of relationship between the variables.

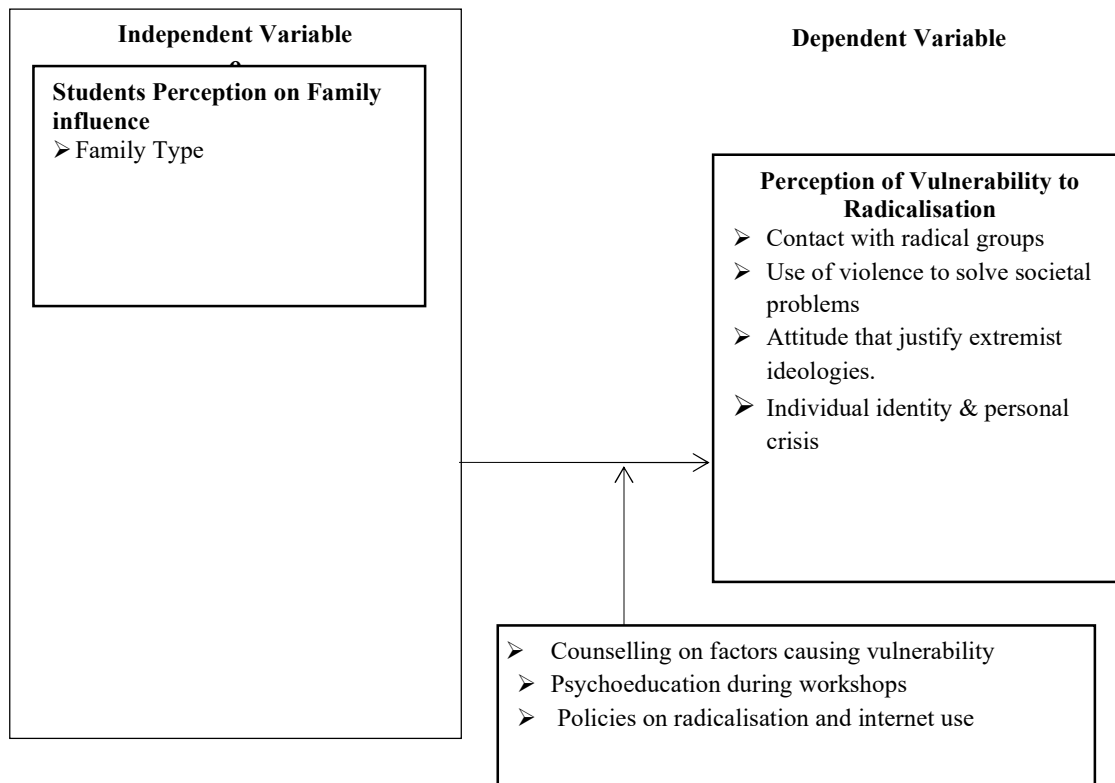


Figure 1: Relationship between independent, dependent and intervening variables of the study

### 3.0. Research Methodology

The mixed methods research design was adopted in the study. This design includes both quantitative and qualitative data collection strategies within the same study. Quantitative and qualitative data was collected concurrently. The main purpose of mixed methods research is to use the advantages of both quantitative and qualitative research designs and data collection strategies to understand a phenomenon more fully than is possible using either quantitative or qualitative designs alone (Gay, Mills & Airasian, 2015). The authors further posit that this design would provide a broad understanding of the study from the focus group discussions, interview data results and a deep understanding of the study from the data from the questionnaires. This study was conducted in two public universities in Kenya among third year students. Most students start their undergraduate studies at the age of 18 in Kenyan universities and complete at age 21 or 22 for most of the degree programs, the mean age of this cohort of students is age 20. The university students are in this fifth stage of psychosocial development during this time (Erikson, 1968). In this stage a sense of self and personal identity is obtained or role confusion develops where individuals get confused and helpless and may develop feeling of resentment and disillusionment. This may also result to maladaptive antisocial behaviour thus making them vulnerable to radicalisation. The student counsellors and peer counsellors also gave information on their experiences and perceptions on vulnerability to radicalisation. The study sample was selected using purposive sampling technique to get the two public universities in Kenya. The determination of the sample size for the students, student counsellors and peer counsellors was computed using Yamane's 1967 formula. Proportionate stratified sampling was then used to allocate the selected samples among the students, student counsellors' and peer counsellors' strata.

The instruments for data collection were the university students' questionnaire, peer counsellors focus group discussion and student counsellors' questionnaire. The questionnaire was reviewed by the researcher's supervisors from the Department of Psychology, Counselling and Educational Foundations the Faculty of

Education and Community Studies and the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences in assessing and verifying the content, construct and face validity of instruments. Both descriptive and inferential statistics were used to analyze data. Chi square was used to determine whether there was a significant influence between the variables and vulnerability to radicalization. Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 23.0 and QSR NVivo 12 for Windows aided in data analysis

#### 4.0. Results and Findings

The study examined the hypothesis that there is no statistically significant association between university students' perception on the influence of family type and vulnerability to radicalization and implication for counselling. Data on this was elicited using the students' questionnaire, interview schedules and focus group discussions. In order to achieve this objective chi square test of independence was done to get the association between the two variables. Cramers V Symmetric measures were also done to measure the strength of association between the variables. The hypothesis was tested to establish if there is a statistically significant association between university students' perception on the influence of family type and vulnerability to radicalisation.

Table 1. Cross Tabulation for Family Type and the Reasons to Justify Extremist Ideologies.

|               |                                 | Composite scores of students on the reasons to justify extremist ideologies |          |             |       |                | Total |       |
|---------------|---------------------------------|---|----------|-------------|-------|----------------|-------|-------|
|               |                                 | Disagree strongly   | Disagree | Indifferent | Agree | Strongly agree |       |       |
|               |                                 | DS  | D        | I           | A     | SA             |       |       |
| Family type   | Both parents living together    | Count   | 4        | 41          | 31    | 88             | 71    | 235   |
|               |                                 | Expected Count  | 5.0      | 32.1        | 32.1  | 91.4           | 74.3  | 235.0 |
|               |                                 | % of Total  | 1.2%     | 12.5%       | 9.4%  | 26.7%          | 21.6% | 71.4% |
|               | Single parent due to death      | Count   | 1        | 2           | 5     | 19             | 16    | 43    |
|               |                                 | Expected Count  | .9       | 5.9         | 5.9   | 16.7           | 13.6  | 43.0  |
|               |                                 | % of Total  | 0.3%     | 0.6%        | 1.5%  | 5.8%           | 4.9%  | 13.1% |
|               | Single parent due to divorce    | Count   | 0        | 0           | 1     | 2              | 6     | 9     |
|               |                                 | Expected Count  | .2       | 1.2         | 1.2   | 3.5            | 2.8   | 9.0   |
|               |                                 | % of Total  | 0.0%     | 0.0%        | 0.3%  | 0.6%           | 1.8%  | 2.7%  |
|               | Single parent due to separation | Count   | 2        | 2           | 5     | 9              | 5     | 23    |
|               |                                 | Expected Count  | .5       | 3.1         | 3.1   | 8.9            | 7.3   | 23.0  |
|               |                                 | % of Total  | 0.6%     | 0.6%        | 1.5%  | 2.7%           | 1.5%  | 7.0%  |
| Single parent | Count                           | 0   | 0        | 1           | 5     | 5              | 11    |       |

|                    |                |      |       |       |       |       |        |
|--------------------|----------------|------|-------|-------|-------|-------|--------|
| not married        | Expected Count | .2   | 1.5   | 1.5   | 4.3   | 3.5   | 11.0   |
|                    | % of Total     | 0.0% | 0.0%  | 0.3%  | 1.5%  | 1.5%  | 3.3%   |
| Raised by guardian | Count          | 0    | 0     | 2     | 5     | 1     | 8      |
|                    | Expected Count | .2   | 1.1   | 1.1   | 3.1   | 2.5   | 8.0    |
|                    | % of Total     | 0.0% | 0.0%  | 0.6%  | 1.5%  | 0.3%  | 2.4%   |
| Total              | Count          | 7    | 45    | 45    | 128   | 104   | 329    |
|                    | Expected Count | 7.0  | 45.0  | 45.0  | 128.0 | 104.0 | 329.0  |
|                    | % of Total     | 2.1% | 13.7% | 13.7% | 38.9% | 31.6% | 100.0% |

Table 1 shows the Cross tabulation for family type student raised in and the reasons to justify extremist ideologies. The results show that out of the total 329 respondents, the majority (71.4%) were raised by both parents living together. The highest percentage of respondents who agreed or strongly agreed with reasons justifying extremist ideologies were those raised by both parents living together (48.3%). Further, students raised by a single parent due to death (10.7%), single parents due to separation (4.2%), single parents not married (3.0%), single parents due to divorce (2.4%) and raised by guardian (1.8%) either agreed or strongly agreed with reasons justifying extremist ideologies.

On the other hand, 13.7% students raised by both parents living together disagreed or strongly disagreed with reasons justifying extremist ideologies. Additionally, students raised by single parent due to death 0.9%, single parent due to divorce 0.0%, and single parent due to separation 1.2%. Students raised by single parents not married, single parents due to divorce and guardian had no student disagreeing with the reasons. The results indicate that being raised by both parents living together may have a higher tendency to justify extremist ideologies while being raised by a single parent due to separation may have a lower tendency to do so.

These findings vary with studies done by Borum (2004) who posit that it is how children are raised and not the type of family that makes children vulnerable to radicalisation. The author points out that individuals who are vulnerable to radicalisation are raised in severely dysfunctional families where they likely suffered severe abuse, leading them to have hostile feelings toward their parents. Their extremist ideology becomes a displacement of their rebellion and hostility to authority. Borum (2004) further observes that unstable family situations and not family type may fortify the radicalisation process. The lack of good relationships with parents or the loss of a family member may also push a child into the arms of a radical group, which takes the role of a substitute family.

Table 2. Results of Chi-Square Tests on Cross tabulation for Family Type and Reasons to Justify Extremist Ideologies

| Chi-Square Tests             |                     |    |                                   |
|------------------------------|---------------------|----|-----------------------------------|
|                              | Value               | Df | Asymptotic Significance (2-sided) |
| Pearson Chi-Square           | 25.662 <sup>a</sup> | 20 | .177                              |
| Likelihood Ratio             | 27.849              | 20 | .113                              |
| Linear-by-Linear Association | 1.358               | 1  | .244                              |
| N of Valid Cases             | 329                 |    |                                   |



The results of chi-square test of independence Table 2 on the basis of the interpretation of likelihood ratio test ( $\chi^2(20) = 27.849, p = 0.113$ ) showed that the family type in which the students were raised had insignificant influence on level of agreement or disagreement to reasons to justify extremist ideologies. Therefore, there was no enough evidence to conclude that the two variables are related due to lack of statistical significance. It was noted that 19 cells (63.3%) had an expected count less than 5, with the minimum expected count being 0.17. Therefore, we fail to reject hypothesis Ho1.

Table 3. Measure of effects on Cross Tabulation for Family Type and Reasons to Justify Extremist Ideologies  
 Symmetric Measures

|                    |            | Value | Approximate Significance |
|--------------------|------------|-------|--------------------------|
| Nominal by Nominal | Phi        | .279  | .177                     |
|                    | Cramer's V | .140  | .177                     |
| N of Valid Cases   |            | .329  |                          |

Symmetric measures in Table 3, Cramer's V effect size measure= 0.14 and it is at an approximate significance of .177 indicates that family type had moderate and insignificant effect (influence) on the vulnerability to radicalisation in regard to the reasons to justify extremist ideologies among university students in Kenya.

It can be concluded that being raised by both parents living together may have higher chances to justify extremist ideologies. On the other hand, being raised by a single parent due to separation may have a lower tendency to do so. However, the Chi-square test of independence results revealed that there was no enough evidence to conclude that family type significantly influences the level of agreement or disagreement with reasons justifying extremist ideologies. Further, symmetric measures indicate that family type had a moderate and insignificant effect on vulnerability to radicalization. Therefore, it is important to look at other factors that may contribute to radicalization.

The finding of Table 2 and 3 varies with a study done by King, Noor and Taylor (2011) on the jihadist phenomenon in Australia. Family stable relationships, in particular, have been a significant factor in sustaining radicalisation in Australia. The family network facilitates passing of ideology from, for example, from father to son and mother to daughter. Further surveys by King, Noor and Taylor (2011) were administered to 20 immediate relatives of 16 Jema'ah Islamiyah members in Indonesia. Family members were found to agree with their members' involvement in the violent activities and perceived their family community as being supportive. Findings also disagrees with that of a study by Ran Research Paper (2018) who found out that having a difficult life when parents' divorce make children vulnerable to radicalisation. The influence of familial relationships has also been used to mediate extreme thinking and behaviour. Regarding the family environment, one of the key informants said that;

*"The radical nature of an individual depends on how the person has been brought up and the traumatic events surrounding their upbringing like divorce that greatly affects children. Being raised by a single parent can increase truancy, radicalisation and children running away from home especially when the mother is neglectful and uncaring."*

Finding in this study vary with other studies by Sikkens et al. (2017) that posit that transition of extremists' ideas of parents to their children is common. However, they distinguish different perspectives on the influence parents may exert on their child with regards to the radicalisation process: the first perspective is the parent's direct parental influence on radicalisation. This refers to a fundamental intergenerational transmission of ideology. where radicals often share the same extreme views as their parents, who serve as their role models. Thus parents' prejudices and extremist ideals have a direct influence on their children. This is in line with feedback of the key informants in the Focus Group Discussions of the study in which one of them said that;

*"Family aspects that can contribute to students' vulnerability to radicalisation include being raised by radical parents who indoctrinate and expose the children to an extremist social environment"*

Finding however agree with Sikkens, San , Sieckelinc & Winter ( 2018) in a study consisting of 21 in-depth interviews with Dutch former radicals and their family members who found out that former radicals and their families do not recognize a direct influence of parents on radicalization and de-radicalization. It is an assumption based on the findings of several studies showing little evidence of family influence. Some studies simply confirmed Islamic jihadi extremists and terrorists come from a wide-range of family backgrounds. There are also studies showing Muslim extremist who distanced themselves from their parents' Westernised ideology and lifestyle.

In this analysis, the study sought to test the hypothesis that stated that there is no statistically significant association between university students' perception on the influence of family type and vulnerability to radicalization. The current study fails to reject the null hypothesis and concludes that there was no enough evidence to conclude that the two variables are related due to lack of statistical significance between university students' perception on the influence of family type and vulnerability to radicalization.

## 5.0. Summary of the Study Findings

The main objective of the study was to determine university students' perception on the influence of family type on vulnerability to radicalization in Kenya. The study established that respondents raised by both parents living together, who agreed or strongly agreed with reasons justifying extremist ideologies were (48.3%). On the other hand, 13.7% disagreed or strongly disagreed with reasons justifying extremist ideologies. The results indicate that being raised by both parents living together may have a higher tendency to justify extremist ideologies while being raised by a single parent due to separation may have a lower tendency to do so.

The results of Chi-square test of independence on the basis of the interpretation of likelihood ratio test ( $\chi^2 (20) = 27.849, p = 0.113$ ) showed that the family type in which the students were raised had insignificant influence on level of agreement or disagreement to reasons to justify extremist ideologies. Therefore, there was no enough evidence to conclude that the two variables are related due to lack of statistical significance. Cramer's V effect size measure = 0.14 at an approximate significance of 0.177 indicates that family type had insignificant influence on the vulnerability to radicalization among university students in Kenya.

## 5.1 Conclusion of findings

It was concluded that family type had moderate and insignificant influence on the vulnerability to radicalization among university students in Kenya. This implies that other factors may contribute to and make students more at risk to radicalization. Counsellors, psychologists and medical personnel work to address various issues related to radicalisation through counselling and therapy sessions. It was therefore recommended that more time needs to be invested in training counsellors, psychologists and medical professionals to address issues related to extremism. Counsellors also need to identify vulnerable students so as to counsel and have therapy sessions. There is also need to continue to develop effective intervention programs and sensitization programs to enhance the level of awareness of students on factors that influence vulnerability to radicalisation. Effectiveness of counselling services need to be enhanced and full utilization of these services in the prevention of radicalisation in our Kenyan universities.

## 5.2 Recommendations for Further Research

Research on the subject of students' vulnerability to radicalization and implications for counselling can be extended to private universities and other universities in East Africa and Africa. Multiple studies can help in identifying similarities and difference in the region. Study can also be carried out on other factors that influence vulnerability to radicalization.

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