# Spiritual Fathering as an Approach to Disciple the Lani Youth of Papua, Indonesia

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# DECLARATION OF ORIGINALITY

I declare that this dissertation is my own account of my research and contains as its main content work which has not previously been submitted for a qualification at any tertiary education institution.

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# ABSTRACT

Many Papuan ministers are concerned about how to disciple the youth who are raised in fatherless homes. However, discipleship that addresses the youth's relationship with paternal figures has received little attention. This ethnographic study addresses the above problem and seeks an answer on how spiritual fathering can be used as an approach to disciple the Lani youth of Papua, Indonesia.

The literature review clarifies the definitions of spiritual fathering from theological and psychological perspectives, highlights the significance of spiritual fathering and emotional processes in discipling fatherless youth, and explains the anthropological concepts of male spiritual leadership in Melanesian culture and the Lani family system. The field research was conducted at Jayawijaya Christian College, Papua using Spradley's *ethnosemantics Developmental Research Sequence* to identify the contributive cultural factors and impact of fatherlessness among the youth. Twelve Lani youth, ages 19-24 years, participated in the ethnographic interviews and in-person validation discussions.

The data from the interviews and discussions were analysed, and the field research reveals that: 1) Fathering in Lani culture evolves around an animistic worldview where fathers have spiritual power to control and influence their children; 2) The practices of gender inequality, polygamy, and maltreatment affect how the Lani youth perceive their identity, trust of others, and their view of God; 3) The presence of a "brotherly father-figure" who provides authentic emotional support and trusted-reliable relationships strengthens the youth's survival motivation to develop security in regulating emotional issues; and 4) showing care through "feasting together" and "self-sacrifice" are effective practices of spiritual fathering that communicate significant meanings of closeness, acceptance, trustworthiness, and attentiveness.

In conclusion, the research outcomes affirm the paternal attachment theory that the presence of a non-parental spiritual father figure who provides fathering and emotional support, is an effective approach to disciple the Lani youth.

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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# NOTES AND ABBREVIATIONS

ART    Activation Relationship Theory

DRS    Developmental Research Sequence

ESA    Earned-Secure Attachment

JCC    Jayawijaya Christian College of Papua

PIM    Parental Investment Model

RS    Risky Situation

SAF    Substitute Attachment Figure

SFF    Substitute Fathering Figure

SSP    Strange Situation Procedure

# CHAPTER 1

## Introduction

The researcher has been serving the Lani tribe of Papua Indonesia as a missionary-teacher since 2013, educating the children while discipling the youth in the local church. The question, "Why is it so challenging to disciple the Lani young people?" is often raised by missionaries, pastors, and educators who have been working for many years amongst the Lani people. Many youth have gained much biblical knowledge, are able to explain what they have learnt fluently, and are actively involved in church activities. However, what they have learnt has not led to life-changing experiences. In practice, many of them live as Christian animists. They often continue to adopt animistic mindsets and practices to protect themselves or solve their daily problems. There is a gap between what they know and how they live.

After three months of living with the Lani, three children asked the researcher a heart-changing question, "*Uge ah kat an Nogoba ariak*?" (i.e., Will you be our father?). Another question came three years later, as eight Lani youth who were studying in the city shared that every couple of months, they had to send home the dead bodies of their fellow Lani friends who had died from drugs, suicides, homicides, accidents, abortions, HIV/AIDS, or the effects of other dangerous lifestyles during their studies. They pleaded, "We long for a shepherd for our scattered souls. We need a father figure who can shepherd us to bring back our self-worth. Will you be our father?" These questions show an immense need of the Lani young people for an authoritative father figure for their confused hearts. A void of father-hunger (Herzog 1981; 2009) should be filled first before discipling them into maturity in Christ. How can the Lani youth, who culturally view God as a male figure (Hayward 1997, 66), relate to God while their earthly father figures are absent from their lives?

This study aims to understand how spiritual fathering can be used as an approach to disciple the Lani youth of Papua, Indonesia. This chapter includes the research background, context, purpose, research questions, methodology, scope and limitations, significant terms, and the chapter outline of this dissertation.

# A. Research Background

The Lani tribe is also known as the Western Dani, and with other sub-ethnic groups (e.g., Wano, Nggem, Hubula, Nduga, Silimo, Yali, Loma, and Walak) they become part of the Dani family in the central highlands of Papua Indonesia. These tribes are classified according to their place of origin and language groups (Hayward 1980, 13). The Dani use "meaningful terms when they address themselves to others because "the focus of their identity is upon their relationships, not on their being" (14). When a Dani man is far from home, he is called a "Grand Valley or Western" Dani, indicating his place of origin. He is known as a "Lani" man indicating his language group. Most of the Lani people live in remote areas of isolated north and west valleys of the central highlands (Ploeg 2020, 284), one of the "underdeveloped and secluded regencies in Indonesia" (Elmslie 2013, 32).

The outside world knew the Lani people through pioneer anthropologists, sociologists, and missiologists. The anthropological studies (Arnay 2014; Barclay 2008; Gardner 1968; Hammarstrom et al. 2017; Heider 1970, 1996; Matthiessen 1962; Monbiot 1989; Park 2014; Zuckoff 2011) have made significant contributions to understanding the traditions, customs, and cultural behaviours of the Lani people. The socio-economic-political research (Apituley 2015; Butt 1998, 2005, 2007; Giyai 2012; Kirksey 2002; Lake 1989; Lundry 2009; Mansoben et al. 2019; McLeod 2002; Munro 2013; Naylor 1974; O'Brien 1969; O'Hare 1991; Rumbewas 2005) has helped the outsiders to understand the social life of the Lani society. Limited literature on the Lani family exists (e.g., Laksono and Wulandari 2019; Mansoben et al. 2019; Ridwan and Susanti 2019; Wahyudi et al. 2016) because of its sensitivity. The significant research on Christianity came from the pioneer missionaries, as they contributed extensively in several areas. These include culture and mission (Dillinger 1973), evangelism and religious changes (Hayward 1980; 1997), contextual evangelism (Mawikere 2018), cargoism (Giay and Godschalk 1993; Lenz 1988), worldview transformation (Ellenberger 1964; 1973; 1996), and modernity challenges (Bensley 1994; Scovill 2007).

The first generation of Lani Christians was a significant outcome of the evangelistic ministries of pioneer missionaries, whose primary mission was evangelism, Bible translation, and establishing churches (Bensley 1994, 30, 54). The missionaries'

"instructive approach" in the 1960s resulted in mass conversion among the Lani people (Ploeg 2008, 220). The tribal leaders accepted Christianity as their official religion by burning the fetishes and walking into a new life as Christ's followers (Hayward 1980, 128). The Bible was translated into *Lani wone,* and people were trained through evangelistic sermons, literacy education, and Bible school training to evangelise other regions or tribes. The Lani churches were established well, and more local pastors took significant leadership in the church (Hayward 1980, 208-214).

However, the early instructive approach, which was "content driven" (Hull 2006; Tott 2015) and focused on behaviour modification (Geiger 2012, 18), seemed ineffective with the second and third generation of Lani Christian in the early 90s. The ill-prepared churches were challenged by modernisation and Islamisation, leading to disunity and immorality (Bensley 1994, 86-87). In practice, many church leaders returned to animism and *kargo-kalt*[1], attempting to deal with the confusion between traditional thinking and modernity as they pursued more power, freedom, and wealth (Ibid., 89-95). The modern *kargo-kalt* transformed the church leaders' focus into a materialistic lifestyle (Kogoya 1993, 13; Nasution 2020, n. p.), and the socio-political movement led to fighting for West Papua's independence (Macintyre 2010; Kaima 1991) but omitting the need to disciple the Lani younger generations.

In the family context, statistics show that 36-44 % of the Lani live in extreme poverty, where children's and women's mortality rates are generally high (UNICEF 2015, n. p.). Patriarchal domination in the family has increased violence against women and children (Apituley 2015, 156; Mansoben et al. 2019, 65) and is one of five causes of a high mortality rate in Papua (Giyai 2012, 1; UNDP Report 2016, 82). The Lani men's view of women and children that they are "not more important than men" (Ridwan and Susanti 2019, 159) contributes to the high mortality rates among them and is inconsistent with the Christian idea of marriage and family (Wenda 1993, 21, 27).

The challenges in the family and church have affected the young people as they lack a father's example as a model, and are obligated to submit totally to the authority of male figures (Bensley 1994, 15). Bierman (2005) states that "a father's domestic

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[1] Traditional expectations of a golden, idyllic age on earth, when people are happy and lack for nothing (Bensley 1994, 87).

maltreatment has a significant adverse effect on young people's religiosity" (357). Those who have a damaged image of their father may struggle to relate to God (Dobbs 2013, ii-iii). The youth identify themselves as Christians but live contrary to their beliefs in practice. The Lani church has gone through the "convert" stage and jumped directly into the "sending" stage to evangelise other tribes while omitting the urgency of the "discipleship" stage (cf. Eims 1978, 16). A gap in "making disciples" needs to be bridged, so more young people do not leave the church because it has lost its relevance to their lives. The youth need someone who can guide them into a personal relationship with God, empowers them to restore their broken relationships with others, and prepares them to face the challenges of living as Christ's disciples. The topic of youth discipleship, which explores relationship problems between youth and their paternal figures, seems to have received little attention. Hence, this research seeks to explore how spiritual fathering can be used as an approach to disciple the Lani youth of Papua, Indonesia.

## B. Research Context

Jayawijaya Christian College (JCC) was established by a mission from the Netherlands in 2008 and "aims for profound change in education in Papua" (Karunia 2021, n. p.). JCC is located in Wamena, the socio-political-economic centre of the central highlands of Papua. Most of the JCC students come from the three largest ethnic groups around the central Highlands (Lani, Dani, and Yali tribes), with small numbers from other tribes.

A major obstacle in the JCC student preparation process has been discipling them before sending them to remote areas as teachers. Many relational conflicts and tensions have arisen between JCC students and their authority figures in the school (e.g., principals, teachers, and dorm parents) which escalate violently from time to time. The relational problem in their family has often been mentioned by the JCC president and teachers as the "bitter" root of their aggressive behaviours. Considering the relationships of Lani youth with their paternal figures, the question of, "how to disciple such students at JCC effectively?" has motivated the researcher to investigate this topic further.

## C. Research Questions

The bedrock of fathering is a "male figure's presence in a child's life" (Doherty, Kouneski, and Erickson 1998, 280). Through empirical observations and current practices of being a missionary-teacher among the Lani young people, the researcher found that many of them were raised without the presence of their biological father. It seems the church takes little action to solve the problem. The lack of male spiritual leadership and more dysfunctional fathers need to be addressed. The stories of three children and eight youth above have shown their need for "male bonding figures" (Castelllini et al. 2005, 53) who are recognised as "authoritative voices" (Steward-Withers 2010, 27) to lead them as Christ's disciples. However, discipleship that focuses on the relationship between a father figure and youth has never been studied in the Lani context.

The central question guiding this research is:

"How can spiritual fathering be used as an approach to disciple the Lani youth?"

Five research sub-questions (SQs) are developed to guide the research:

SQ1: "What are the theological, psychological, and anthropological insights that inform the significance of spiritual fathering as an approach to disciple the Lani youth?"

SQ2: "What are the fathering approaches in the Lani culture?"

SQ3: "In what ways do the fathering approaches influence the spiritual life of the Lani youth?"

SQ4: "What is a spiritual fathering approach that is accepted by the Lani youth?"

SQ5: "How to practice the spiritual fathering approach to disciple the Lani youth?"

## D. Research Methodology

This research is a qualitative ethnographic study, suitable for research when an issue needs to be explored from a person's context (Creswell 2007, 39) and relies on the perception of a person's experiences in real-life situations (Denscombe 2010, 81, 85). This field research method strongly accentuates "collecting data in the local practicalities of everyday life in particular social settings" (Hammersley and Atkinson 2007, 189). Ethnography was chosen, because the researcher needed an appropriate method to understand how the Lani culture works: exploring hands-on their beliefs, language, behaviours, and relationships in their daily setting. Literature on family relationships and discipleship of the Lani tribe was limited, and data needed to be gleaned onsite in the field (Creswell 2007, 68-70).

The fieldwork procedures were based on Spradley's (1979) Developmental Research Sequence (DRS) which offered an explicit, systematic, and rigorous approach to collecting and analysing the research data, one which strongly emphasised the insiders' perspective (Parfitt 1996, 341). Twelve Lani youth, six females and six males (ages 19-24), were chosen to participate as informants in this study, as an appropriate number of participants for ethnographic research (Clarke and Braun 2013; Fugard and Potts 2014; Guest, Bunce, and Johnson 2006). The primary technique for collecting data in the field was through ethnographic interviews, a "series of friendly conversations into which the researcher slowly introduces new elements to assist informants to respond" (Spradley 1979, 58). Ethnographic interviews are best used to collect data on complex issues or sensitive subjects (Denscombe 2010, 13). The twenty-four interviews and twelve in-person validation sessions were conducted according to an "interview guide approach"[2].

The data analysis began during and after the interviews to "identify concepts that appear to help understand the situation" (Schutt 2018, 325). Four data analysis steps were conducted, namely domain, taxonomic, componential, and theme analysis, to discover cultural themes (Spradley 1979). Finally, the qualitative analysis "transformed the data into findings" (Schutt 2018, 321), as the researcher identified the cultural themes and discusses the findings to answer the research questions.

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[2] A list of questions used in the interview to ensure that the same general areas of information are collected from each informant (Garrido 2017, 44).

## E. Research Limitations

The research topic focused on understanding how spiritual fathering can be used to disciple the Lani youth of Papua, Indonesia. The researcher investigated the fathering approaches in Lani culture, their impact on the spiritual life of youth, the accepted spiritual fathering approach, and the practices of spiritual fathering to disciple the Lani youth. Most of these youth are fatherless.

The informants were limited to Lani youth who know the Lani culture well. They come from four different interior regencies and, because of their similar cultural settings represent the general situations of Lani young people across the central highlands of Papua. The number of informants for the field research was limited to 12 persons (n=12) to appropriately conduct a qualitative type of research (Vasileiou, Barnett, and Thorpe 2018, 1). There was sufficient time for building rapport and asking more personal related questions (e.g., family and personal problems). While a greater number of informants may further enrich the discussions, the 12 informants provided sufficient data to form a saturation point.

Culturally, family problems were not discussed openly, especially with an outsider like the researcher, as the stories might be perceived as embarrassing or degrading to their family or themselves. As a result, the research on Lani families and their relational issues were limited, as collecting data tended to be more difficult. Patience to wait and flexibility to adjust were needed to gain the informants' trust. The researcher needed more extended time for building rapport before they shared their stories for data collection, realising that the informants' openness to share their detailed stories might influence the results of this study.

Most informants had a limited Indonesian language vocabulary to explain their stories and understand the meaning of the terms used in the interviews. The researcher tried to ask probing questions to help them understand the meaning of those terms, realising that vocabulary used by the informants could potentially distort the data collected and the study results. The researcher confirmed the data collected (e.g., transcriptions) by asking the informants to re-read, discuss, and validate the data before analysing them.

**F. Significant Terms**

The significant terms used in this research are defined below.

*Attachment*: a "lasting psychological connectedness between human beings" (Bowlby 1969, 194).

*Culture*: Information capable of affecting individuals' behaviours acquired from other members through various forms of social transmission (Richerson and Boyd 2005, 5).

*Discipleship*: The process of training people incrementally in some discipline or way of life (Fuller et al. 2014). The disciple of Jesus is "one who imitates Jesus by being with Him to learn from Him how to be like Him in our everyday life" (Willard 2006, 276).

*Earned-Secure Attachment*: A process by which individuals overcome malevolent parenting experiences and how individuals with insecure attachment in childhood can develop secure attachment in his/her adulthood (Roisman et al. 2002, 1206).

*Emotional process*: Anxiety reduction and modification of memory structures that underlie emotions by building new secure emotional supports in supportive relationships (Hout and Emmelkamp 2002, 761-68; Mikulincer and Shaver 2004, 174).

*Fathering*: A generative work of a father figure who is responsible for meeting children's needs through a variety of father-work, namely relationship (i.e., creating a healthy relationship), stewardship (i.e., providing a child's needs), mentorship (i.e., helping children learn skills of life), ethical (i.e., teaching children moral values), spiritual (i.e., relating to God and the purpose of life) to prepare them for challenges (Dollahite, Hakwins, and Brotherson 1997, 17-35).

*Fatherlessness*: The absence of a father where children are raised in homes without a residential or biological father because of death, divorce, separation from a cohabiting union, or a non-marital birth (McLanahan et al. 2013, 399; Brazeau 2018, 30).

*Lani youth*: The indigenous males and females of Lani tribe, ages 19-24, who live in the Central highlands of Papua Indonesia.

*Spiritual fathering*: Nurturing someone through a long-term father-like relationship where a mature male spiritual leader helps a disciple to discover and fulfil God's purposes in him/her" (Demares 2003, 38; Nador 2019, 21).

*Youth*: An integral part of young people's identity that expresses *kairos* (i.e., opportunity time), distinct from others, and characterised by a "longing for love and acceptance, searching for meaning, openness, excitement, creativity, hope, pursuing development, and intensive sense for expecting the future" (Stech 2016, 128-9).

## G. Chapters Outline

This dissertation is divided into five chapters.

Chapter 1 describes the research background, context, purpose, research questions, methodology, scope and limitations, the definition of significant terms, and chapter outlines.

Chapter 2 reviews the theological, psychological, and anthropological literature that inform the significance of spiritual fathering as an approach to youth discipleship.

Chapter 3 explores the research methodology and fieldwork procedures using Spradley's ethnosemantics Developmental Research Sequence (DRS). This chapter includes the methodology, fieldwork processes, the site and informants, a pilot test, data collection, data analysis, data trustworthiness, and ethical concerns of the research.

Chapter 4 explains the findings of this ethnographic research. It highlights the data collection process and explores the four steps of Spradley's (1979) ethnosemantics data analysis, namely: domain, taxonomic, componential, and theme analysis. This chapter includes tables and graphics to present detailed cultural symbols, domains, and themes that address the research sub-questions.

Chapter 5 concludes the research. It answers the central research question and presents the significance, implications, and recommendations of a spiritual fathering approach for discipling the Lani youth.

**CHAPTER 2**

**Literature Review**

This chapter explores literature related to the research sub-question one: "What are the theological, psychological, and anthropological insights that inform the significance of spiritual fathering as an approach to disciple the Lani youth?" This chapter is divided into three sections. The first section establishes a theological foundation of spiritual fathering; the second section reviews the literature on psychological insights of a father-youth relationship; and the third section explores the anthropological concept of male spiritual leadership in Melanesia (South Pacific) with particular reference to the Lani tribe. The chapter ends with a summary to address the focus area of this research.

**A. Theological Foundation of Spiritual Fathering**

This section addresses the theological concept of spiritual fathering, fatherlessness, and discipleship[3] through spiritual fathering. It aims to build a theological basis for using spiritual fathering to disciple the fatherless youth.

1. The Concept of Spiritual Fathering

In the Bible, God introduces Himself as a Father who initiates love and care for His children (Toth 2015, 16). In Hebrew, the word *ab* (father)[4] is used metaphorically for various social roles that carry authority and exercise a protective or caring function (e.g., prophet, priest, king, and God) (Wright 1997, 221). In Greek, the term *pater* expresses the idea of a father who initiates and imparts life, a progenitor who brings his child into maturity and passes on the potential for likeness (Bruce 1921, 655). The term "father" evokes "the creative reality of a seed planted and begetting a new life" (Colyn 2016, n. p.; Deut. 32:18; Ex. 4:22) through his sacrificial love (Eph.5:25, 29; Ware 2011, 6-8).

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[3] The term discipleship and spiritual formation are interchangeable as both are related to "process of transformation of the inmost dimension of the human life" (Willard 2020a, n. p.) with "the same intention of following Jesus and pursuit of Christlikeness" (Douglas 2018, 1).

[4] Gen. 22:7; Lev. 22:13; 2 Kings 13:14; 2 Sam 7:12-14; 1 Chronicles 2:24; Job 29:6; Jeremiah 35:16

The concept of spiritual fathering is rooted in the concept of God as the Father (Barbu 2013, 255). God becomes the source of life for all creation (Ratzinger 2018, 12-13) through His three roles: 1) "nourisher", one who initiates, originates, produces, or generates life, 2) "protector", one who meets His children's needs, and 3) "upholder", one who cares and walks personally with His children into a growing and functioning life (Kelly 2011, 1). Understanding God as Father has a personal-relational meaning in Christian theology, a strong symbolism capable of renewing our understanding of God, from an "elusive-mysterious" God to a "relational-redeeming" Father (Barbu 2013, 256).

**a) God as a Relational Father**

In a trinitarian concept, the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are each "fully and equally God with different roles and respectful relationships with the others" (Ware 2011, 6). While the word "Father" distinguishes the first person of the Trinity from the others, the same fatherly qualities are embodied in the Son and the Holy Spirit (Wilterdink 1976, 11; Grudem 1994, 249). The Father is supreme in authority and is responsible for planning the grand purposes (Eph. 1:3); the Son is under the Father's authority and seeks always to do the Father's will and to glorify Him (John 8:28-29); the Holy Spirit seeks to glorify the Son to the Father's ultimate praise (John 16:14). The three eternal persons know and love each other, and within the eternal commitment to each other, accomplish God's plans together (Miller and Guthrie 2007, 30).

The concept of God's fatherhood expresses His passion for building an attachment relationship with human beings, as a loving and caring Father (Allen 2013, 325). God created man in His image (Gen 1:26-27) and put a spirit within man who gives "sacredness and value for human life" (Zacharias 2004, 17-18). The biblical design for attachment is a "reciprocal and accepting relationship between God, man, and creation" (Green 2019, 3). This relationship enables us to experience a reciprocal love relationship with God (Lee 1984, 2) and manage other creations with rational, moral, and character capability (Hoekema 1994, 6-8). God builds an "intrinsic need" for attachment bonds in the human heart and initiates an intimate relationship with His people (Green 2019, 3-4).

**b) God as a Redeeming Father**

Before the human fall, God lavished all good things, like a responsible father would, toward human life (Calvin 1559, 2). God designed a "circle of security", an "internal warning or sense of danger" (Marvin et al. 2002, 109) and a secure basis for His relationship with Adam and Eve, until they stepped out of it through the fall (Gen. 3) and rejected God as the head of life (Knapp and Emerson 2013, 829). Fear, shame, and loneliness came into human life as they separated themselves from God (Gen. 3; Rom. 3 and 6). The resulting human brokenness has had far-reaching generational consequences and destroys human relationships with God, self, and others (Whelchel 2012, 2-4). There is a "God-shaped-hole" (Pascal 1670, 425) within human hearts that only God can fill. God provides relational healing through "divine adoption" (Isato 2016, 18) and provides generational blessings (Burk 2008; Alley 2008) to restore the whole person (Willard 2020b) as a human being.

Firstly, God the Father continues to work together with the Son and the Holy Spirit to "embrace sinful human persons through the redemptive work of Christ" (Miller and Guthrie 2007, 18-22). Calvin (1559) said, "The Holy Spirit, known as the "Spirit of adoption", witnesses to us of the benevolence of God; God the Father has embraced us in His beloved Son to become a Father to us" (395-6). God becomes their Spiritual Father by accepting sinners into His family through the process of "divine adoption" (Isato 2016, 18), rebirthing the image of God in man (Durwell 1960, 311-9), and sanctifying people to a new meaningful relationship with God, self, and others (Steven 2009, 70; Smail 1981, 79-80).

Secondly, God provides a generational blessing to His people, continuing from fathers to their children. The word "blessing" is mentioned 600 times in the Bible. A blessing is an act of words (Numbers 6:24-26) that imparts spiritual power, opening the way to live, giving approval, confidence, and the power to succeed according to God's gracious plan (Alley 2008, 4-8). It includes authority and protection, provision and encouragement, forgiveness and reconciliation, a legacy to release the God-given potential of the next generation (Alley 2008, 33; Wieja 2014, 21-22). The Scriptures show the importance of a father's blessing, where God blessed Abraham, who passed it to Isaac, then to Jacob, to his twelve sons, and every believer through Christ. Generational blessing comes from a father to his children as a "reminder that doing things the way Christ did them is the only way to life" (Alley 2008, 33).

Hence, God's spiritual fatherhood models human fatherhood and encourages fathers to follow His divine pattern and treasure their earthly fatherhood as spiritual leaders (Camisasca 2019, 1; Tasker 2001, 305). God invests a special responsibility in all fathers for "spiritual leadership, discipleship, and development of their children" (Ware 2011, 8). A man calls himself a father not by a mere biological fact but by caring for, providing for, teaching, and forming the children entrusted to him "with greater regard for their spiritual and eternal well-being" (Scalia 2018, 66).

## 2. Spiritual Father for the Fatherless

In the Bible, God is a "Father to the fatherless" who places them in families (Ps. 68:5-6). God sees the trouble of the afflicted and considers their grief seriously (Ps. 10:14). He challenges His people to prove their pure religion by visiting the fatherless in their affliction (James 1:27), assisting their growth (Job 31:18), supporting their needs (Ps. 146:9), and defending them from dangers (Ps 10:18). The Hebrew term "defend" shows God's clear insistence on justice for the fatherless (Kampen 1997, 121). A curse is for those who pervert justice (Deut. 27:19) and afflict the fatherless (Exod. 22:22). God desires to protect their rights and provide for their needs (Chauncy 1838, 175).

The term "fatherless" occurs forty-two times in the Old Testament (OT) and twice in the New Testament (NT). In the OT, *yathom*[5] is the only term used for fatherless (Kampen 1997, 121) and is commonly grouped with widow and foreigner as people who are lonely, bereft, destitute, unprotected, oppressed, or in danger needing protection (122). In the NT, "fatherless" is described in two terms: firstly, *apatór* (i.e., without/unknown father (Heb. 7:3), and secondly, *orphanos* (i.e., bereft of a father, teacher, guide, guardian (James 1:27; John 14:18). Fatherless children need protection, provision, and direction from a mature male figure, to guide their life towards maturity.

All Christians are called to care for the fatherless (James 1:27) through three actions. Firstly, to "visit" (examine with eyes), to see the condition of the fatherless (Acts 7:23; 15:36); of those who are poor and afflicted (James 1:27) or sick (Matt. 25:36). Secondly, to "look" (help with actions), to look after/care, provide, and speak/advocate

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[5] Exod. 22:22; 22:24; Deut. 10:18; 14:29; 16:11; 16:14; 24:17; 24:19; 24:20; 24:21; 26:12; 26:13; 27:19; Job 6:27; 22:9; 24:3; 24:9; 29:12; 31:17; 31:21; Ps. 10:14; 10:18; 68:5; 82:3; 94:6; 109:9; 109:12; 146:9; Prov. 23:10; Isa. 1:17; 1:23; 9:17; 10:2; Jer. 5:28; 7:6; 22:3; 49:11; Lam. 5:3; Ezek. 22:7; Hosea 14:3; Zech. 7:10; Mal. 3:5.

for the fatherless (Acts 15:14; Exod. 4:31; Gen. 21:1; Hebrews 2:6; Luke 7:16; Ps. 8:5). Thirdly, to "furnish" (prepare) the fatherless with things and blessings necessary for the journey (Acts 6:3, 21:15; Jer. 9:25; Luke 1:68). The "visit-help-prepare" actions provide a map of how Christians should respond to "plead the cause of the fatherless" (Wieja 2014, 4). A mature Christian's presence and a life investment are essential to support and encourage fatherless youth to grow and thrive as disciples of Christ.

<div align="center">3. Spiritual Fathering and Discipleship</div>

This section explores the Old and New Testament's theological concept of God as the Father who disciples His children.

**a) Spiritual Fathering and Discipleship in the Old Testament**

Eleven times[6] God is designated as Father in the Old Testament (OT) (Hamerton-Kelly 1979, 20). God was primarily mentioned in a metaphor of a father-child relationship, as the initiator and begetter of Israelites (Strong 2003, 57). The God-Israelites relationship was based on a "covenant" rather than a formulated fatherhood theology, as Israelites had no clear sense of the Fatherhood of God before it was disclosed through Jesus in the New Testament (Henry 1999, 309-10). Thompson (2000) identifies four concepts of God as the Father in the OT. First, God was the begetter of Israel. Second, God was the Father who gave an inheritance to His first-born Israel and hope for His people in their situation, present, and future. Third, God was the loving, compassionate, and faithful Father who disciplines His children when they walk in disobedience. Fourth, God made a father's promises to individuals (40-48) and called them to be His people (Ex 6:7).

Toth (2015) states that God's divine relationship is the prototype of the disciple-making relationship and the spiritual formation foundation in the OT, both individually and collectively (16). The pattern of biblical discipleship was expressed in God's initiative to father the Israelites and their response to receive the invitation by living as God's people (Wilkins 1992, 805) and teaching their children to love God (Deut. 6:4-9). God also called individuals to enter the discipleship process. He called Moses (Exod. 3), discipled him through a one-on-one relationship, and sent him to disciple Joshua and Israel. God also called other individuals (e.g., Abraham, Noah, Daniel, David) into

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[6] I Chron. 29:10; Deut. 32:6; Isa 63:16; 64:8; Jer. 3:4; 31:9; Prov. 3:12; Ps. 68:6, 103:13; Mal 1:6; 2:10.

discipleship through a personal relationship with Him, sending them as spiritual leaders to disciple others (Kiekhaefer 2013, 48-49).

Though the word "spiritual father" and "discipleship" were not mentioned in the OT, the concept of investing in another for spiritual formation is demonstrated" (Toth 2015, 29). God called mature individuals to be spiritual fathers for others. The stories of Jethro-Moses (Ex.18), Moses-Joshua (Ex. 17), Eli-Samuel (1 Sam. 2:12-3:21), Samuel-David (1Sam. 16:1-13, Elijah-Elisha (1Kings 19), David-Jehoshaphat (2 Chr.) all introduce a concept of spiritual fathering as an approach to the discipleship of God's chosen people. Three spiritual fathering components were introduced in the OT: 1) the *calling* component: God called and invited individuals to be His people; 2) the *personal* component: God initiated a personal relationship with individuals, willing to father them through His love, care, compassion, and faithfulness; and 3) the *reproduction* component: God wanted His people to disciple other individuals and Israel's next generations (Toth 2015, 17; Wilkins 1992, 804-5). God's relationship with Israel and individuals is a "disciple-making relationship" in the OT. God initiates to father them, and they respond by receiving His invitation to live as His people and teach others to love God.

**b) Spiritual Fathering and Discipleship in the New Testament**
The church's ultimate mission is to make disciples (Matt. 28:18-20). The term "disciple" means "to set one's eyes on the master" (Danker et al. 2000, 609) or "one who engages in learning under the tutelage of a master, as pupil and apprentice" (Barna 2001, 17). In ancient Greek, disciples learned not only by remembering the teacher's spoken words but also by imitating his entire way of life (Bauer 2010, 122), a "living voice" through an intimate relationship (Gummere 2017, 27-28).) The disciples of Jesus are "people who do not just profess Jesus' teachings as their own but who apply their growing understanding of life in the Kingdom of God to every aspect of their life" (Willard 2006, x). One imitates Jesus by "being with Him to learn from Him how to be like Him in our everyday life" (Ibid., 276).

Jesus focused on what it means to be His disciple by introducing God as "Abba" (Matt 6:9) and exemplified living in a close relationship with Him. Abba refers to an intimate inclusive family circle where obedient reverence is the heart of the relationship (Smail 1981, 39). Abba is a familial title of God who is in intimate connection with His

beloved child and worthy of the highest respect (Szymick 2020, 40-41). While knowing God's superiority in His sovereignty, Christians can experience piety by knowing God as their close Father and becoming His family members (Tasker 2001, 240).

Demarest (2003) defines six steps that Jesus used for spiritual fathering as His discipleship approach: 1) Jesus *called* twelve ordinary people to follow Him as disciples. 2) Jesus *invested* His life through a personal relationship, a father-like concern from the older mature believer toward one younger in the faith, and long-term training with an individual. 3) Jesus *taught and showed* His disciples the essential truth about God and trained them to practice the teachings in daily matters. 4) Jesus *mentored and trained* His disciples with strategies and skills to live. He helped them find their talents and purpose in life. 5) Jesus *guided* His disciples, leading them into God's most holy presence through a daily intimate relationship with Him. Jesus' primary purpose of discipleship is to form Christlikeness in His disciples' lives. 6) Jesus *blessed and sent* His disciples to make disciples of others (35-38). Spiritual fathering was at the centre of Jesus' discipleship approach in the New Testament. He devoted Himself primarily to a few men to engage personally with them in an extended apprenticeship that resulted in their spiritual formation (Kiekhaefer 2013, 56). Jesus invested His life to introduce God the Father among His disciples through His daily relationship with them and teaching, mentoring, training, guiding, modelling, and sending that inspired them to live like Him.

### 4. Summary of Theological Foundation

This section provides a theological foundation for spiritual fathering as an approach to disciple the fatherless youth. Firstly, God is the "relational Father" who initiates love and care for His children and the "redeeming Father" through divine adoption, providing generational blessings for His children. God calls all fathers to embrace the responsibility as spiritual leaders who teach, train, and bless their children to live as God's people. Secondly, God is a father to the fatherless, and all Christian males must take courageous responsibility to "visit-help-prepare" the fatherless to thrive as Christ's followers. Lastly, God initiates a personal relationship with His people and leads them into a "discipleship process". God's fathering relationship with the Israelites and individuals is the prototype of a disciple-making relationship in the Old Testament. In the New Testament, spiritual fathering is at the centre of Jesus' approach to

discipleship. Jesus invested His life to introduce "Abba" God through His relationship with the disciples and inspire them to live like Him.

## B. Psychological Insights of Spiritual Fathering

This section considers the theorists who have taken Bowlby's attachment theory and developed it to understand the father-child relationship. The section reviews the literature on the concept of fathering, the effects of fatherlessness on youth, and the discipleship approach. It aims to understand the psychological dynamics of the father-youth relationship and the importance of a discipleship approach that includes spiritual fathering, leading the fatherless youth into maturity in Christ.

### 1. The Concept of Fathering

Attachment theory (Bowlby 1969; 1973; 1982) is used as a framework in this research because of its comprehensive explanation of the significance of parent-child interactions and close emotional relationships throughout life (Riggs 2010, 6), "from the cradle to the grave" (Bowlby 1969, 208). However, most research on attachment theory has been related to "mothers" and is slow to investigate father-child attachment (Ahnert and Schoppe-Sullivan 2020, 1). Studies on paternal attachment can only be characterised as "fits and starts" (Bretherton 2010, 11) and more demand in many societies to give attention to the meaning, development, and consequences of father-child attachment, especially in cultural context (Ahnert and Schoppe-Sullivan 2020, 1). The dual attachment model, activation-relationship theory, and parental investment model, which have been theorised from an attachment theoretical perspective, are used to provide a clear perspective on the importance of a father's role in child development.

**a) Parent-Child Emotional Bonding**

Attachment theory proposes that emotional bonds with close others, especially mothers, are essential to human survival (Bowlby 1971, 201; Okozi 2010, 2) to *protect* (i.e., keeping safe in times of danger), to *instruct* (i.e., providing a secure base to explore) and to *develop* well (Ainsworth 1970, 78; Paquette et al. 2004, 193). Awareness of the importance of "interpersonal bonds" increased in the mid-twentieth century through the work of John Bowlby (1951) and Harry Barlow (1958). Their research demonstrated that physical touch, sensitive care, and consistent primary relationships are fundamental

to healthy development (Beckes and Coan 2015, 11). Everyone seeks intimate and continuous proximity to his/her attachment figure for security (Bowlby 1951, 13) and to promote autonomy for exploration (Keizer, Helmerhorst, and Gelderen 2019, 1203). Early repeated interactions with caregivers create a structure for self-regulation, called an "Internal Working Model" (IWM), that reflects the degree of security experienced in the parent-child bond (West and Keller 1994, 54). IWM affects a person's image of self, of others, and of self-with-others (Counted 2016b, 148) and becomes the template for future relationships (Zaccagnino et al. 2014, 277). Secure childcare promotes the development of secure attachment relationships, while insecure experiences may result in an individual attempting to cope through various "survival strategies" (Courtois and Ford 2009, 32), with adverse behavioural and socio-emotional outcomes (Pilarza and Hill 2014, 471). One learns what to expect by adjusting his/her "attachment behaviours" and creating "attachment patterns" for later relationships (Hazan and Shaver 1994, 5).

i) Attachment behaviours

Bowlby (1988) posits that a person maintains proximity to his/her close figures by showing attachment behaviours (4), a "cognitive, script-like structures that develop out of attachment experiences and parents' responses in childhood" (Guttman-Steinmetz and Crowell 2006, 448). Attachment behaviour works as an "emotional protection strategy" to internal signs (e.g., illness, fatigue, hunger, pain) and external signs (e.g., frightening, stressful events), which create a "desire for secure physical or emotional proximity with significant figures" (George 2014, 100). A caregiver's presence and a child's reaction to his/her absence influence the child's attachment behaviours (Moriarty et al. 2006, 44). The caregivers' positive feedback creates a sense of being known and belonging, which is critical for developing a healthy sense of self and provides a secure emotional anchor for exploration (Bowlby 1988, 4). Early experiences with the parental reactions to one's behaviours affect the functioning of other behavioural systems (e.g., exploration and affiliation) and later emotionality (Mikulincer and Shaver 2004, 159).

ii) Attachment patterns

Ainsworth (1970) and Main and Salomon (1986) used a "separation-reunion" method of Strange Situation Procedures (SSP)[7] to identify four categories of children's attachment

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[7] SSP (Ainsworth 1969) involves series of eight episodes whereby a mother, child (ages 9-18 months) and stranger are introduced, separated, and reunited to measure mother-child attachment. (Rosmalen, Veer and Horst 2015, 261).

patterns, based on how well a child maintains a sense of security through proximity to a caregiver while exploring the world. One pattern referred to a "secure attachment", which developed from a caregiver's ability to be responsive and sensitive to a child's needs, resulting in the child's development of trust, confidence, and resilience in later life (Beck 2006, 98-99; Flaherty and Sadler 2011, 114). Three other patterns referred to a child's "insecure attachment" that resulted in a deficit in emotional regulation[8], distrust, and low self-confidence. They are: 1) *anxious-avoidant* (i.e., a caregiver tended to be cold, rigid, despite proximity, and rarely offered the child physical or emotional contact (Moriarty, Hoffman, and Grimes 2006, 46), 2) *anxious-ambivalent/resistant* (i.e., a caregiver was physically present but emotionally withdrawn and unresponsive to the child's attachment behaviour (Ibid., 46), and 3) *disorganised-disoriented* (i.e., the child-caregiver traumatic relationship; leading to a child's confusion regarding which type of attachment would result in safe interactions with a caregiver (Maltby and Hall 2012, 305).

Securely attached individuals have the ability for "emotional regulation" to build relational intimacy, interdependence, acceptance, empathy, and freedom to explore the world (Bartholomew and Griffin 1994, 431). Insecure individuals tend to develop an internal adjustment of "emotional isolation" through adapting or repressing his/her emotional expression to maintain proximity to survive, or they develop a habit of avoiding painful emotions and rejecting the need for human relationships (Knabb, Welsh and Alexander 2012, 174-5). Emotional isolation creates a "primal panic", a "severity of extreme emotional responses when one's emotional pain is internalised when the outward emotion expression is not permissible" (Becker-Phelps 2014, 38). Primal panic contributes to developing higher externalising behaviours (e.g., aggression, defiance, angry outbursts, hyperactivity, and inattention) and an insecure view of oneself and others (Paquette et al. 2021, 59).

iii) Continuity and discontinuity of attachment patterns
Kobak and Scerry (1988) used the "Adult Attachment Interview" (AAI)[9] method to examine the coherence of attachment organisation during late adolescence of 53 college

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[8] The ability to handle the range of emotions develops within a relational context (Knabb et al. 2012, 173).

[9] AAI (George, Kaplan, and Main 1984) is a quasi-clinical semi-structured interview to understand adults' IWM by assessing the recollections of his/her childhood (8).

students. They found that childhood attachment patterns continually affect young adults' emotional regulation and view of themselves and others. *Secure* youth viewed themselves as un-distressed and others as supportive*; avoidant* youth viewed themselves as un-distressed and others as unsupportive; *anxious-resistant* youth viewed themselves as distressed and others as supportive (135-45).

Continuing Kobak and Scerry's (1988) study, Bartholomew and Horowitz (1991) proposed a new 4-group model of young adult attachment patterns by combining a person's self-image (positive or negative) and image of others (positive or negative) and measuring the degree of "dependency and avoidance" in close relationships (Bartholomew and Griffin 1994, 226). *Fearful* individuals are highly dependent on others but highly avoidant of intimacy due to fear of rejection. *Dismissive* individuals are lower dependent but are highly avoidant in connecting with others. *Preoccupied* individuals are highly dependent and seek and merge proximity excessively with others. Lastly, *secure* individuals are comfortable with intimacy and view close relationships positively (Ibid., 431-2).

Some studies on continuity of attachment patterns (Bowlby 1973; Fraley and Spieker 2003; Main and Goldwyn 1988) have shown that young adults (ages 18-25) have socio-emotional "adaptations representative" of their childhood attachment relations. The development of "self" results from early bonding experiences that predict an adult's relationship patterns with others (Ellison et al. 2012, 495). However, other studies (Hamilton 2000; Pearson et al. 1994; Siegel 1999; Counted 2016a; Chopik, Edelstein, and Grimm 2017) supported the possibility of discontinuing past attachment patterns.

Pace et al. (2011) used a combination of Attachment Story Task (AST)[10], SSP, and AAI methods to study 28 late-adopted children and their mothers. They found that children placed with secure adoptive parents showed a significant change in their attachment patterns, from insecure to secure, and discontinue past attachment patterns. One is not only influenced by early memories or history since the brain has the capacity to develop throughout life (Siegel 1999, 304). The discontinuity of insecure attachment patterns occurs through the presence of "positive relational experiences" later in life that deflects

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[10] AST (Green et al. 2000) evaluates the mental representations of children's attachment relationship with a specific primary caregiver.

a developmental trajectory (Belsky and Pensky 1988, 209). Childhood insecure attachment may have a different outcome in adulthood when one has "sufficient motivation" to work toward newly secure attached relationships and to develop new "earned-security" (Pearson et al. 1994, 359) with a new attachment figure (Counted 2016b, 149).

iv) Attachment and culture

Attachment theory is claimed to be universal (Keller 2013, 175), cross-culturally valid (Ijzendoorn and Sagi 1999, 731), and less often to be accused of ethnocentrism than other Western theories of relatedness (Miyake et al. 2000, 1093). However, attachment theorists recognise limited research that includes cultural influences, especially in non-Western and rural eco-social environments (Keller 2013, 173-80). The use of SSP in cultural-environmental research, namely in Nigeria (Iwanaga 1977), Kenya (Kermoian and Leiderman 1986), and other non-Western middle-class contexts (Ijzendoorn and Schwartz 2008), were done without significant cultural adaptation (Keller 2013, 180). The theorists believed that cultures might only influence specific behaviours, and a "substantial core of attachment is immune from cultural influence" (Main 1990, 48). Cultural variation occurs only in particular conditions, but an attachment system remains similar across cultures (Ainsworth and Marvin 1995, 8).

However, research (Gamble et al. 2008; Hall, Le-Roux, and Zaidman-Mograbi 2020; Keller 2013, 2018; Miyake 2000; Ricaurte 2011) has shown that parents' cultural beliefs, values, and practices can influence how parent-child interaction and child development is assessed (Keller 2018, 11414). Miyake et al. (2000) questioned the universality of attachment theory as it was embedded in Western middle-class realities (1095). They found that the dissimilarities between Western and non-Western (e.g., Japanese) cultures have influenced attachment theory's substantial core concepts: security, emotional bond, self-enhancement, competence, and independence (Ibid., 1098). They acknowledged that one profound Eastern cultural influence was that "people are expected to respectfully preserve harmony by avoiding any expression of discord and adherence to values of filial piety which makes negative comments about parents inappropriate" (Ibid., 1098), which influences the attachment-related patterns. A cross-cultural understanding helps researchers to anticipate that "what is normative in one cultural environment can be regarded as a pathological condition in another" (Keller 2013, 182).

The multi-cultural attachment theory research on Japanese mothers (Takahashi 1986), Mexican American parents (Caldera and Tacón 2001), African, Latino and Caucasian American fathers (Toth and Xu 1999), South African mothers (Hall, Le-Roux, and Zaidman-Mograbi 2020) emphasises the importance of considering the cultural values and beliefs of the local contexts to understand parent-child attachment behaviours. Cultural values affect social interactions and influence how individuals recognise, evaluate, and react to attachment behaviour within a culture (Gamble et al. 2008, 170). Cultural beliefs are translated into child-rearing patterns that influence parental responsiveness to children's attachment behaviours (Hall, Le-Roux, and Zaidman-Mograbi 2020, 30).

Although culture is expected to influence attachment behaviour, literature on cultural differences in attachment is scarce and inconsistent (Ricaurte 2011, 14). Nine ethnographic studies (1971-2017) were conducted on attachment in non-Western rural contexts, namely: "Sanlei Ts'Un" tribe of Taiwan (Barnertt 1971), "Hausa" of Nigeria (Marvin et al. 1977), "Kung San" of Botswana (Konner 1977/2005), "Efe" of Zambia (Morelli and Tronick 1991), "Sundanese" of Indonesia (Zevalkink (1997), "Hadza" of Tanzania (Marlowe 2005), "Tauwema" of Papua New Guinea (Grossmann, Grossmann, and Keppler 2005), "Aka" of Central Africa (Meehan and Hawks 2013), and "Jewish and Arabian" (Zreik et al. 2017) which were mostly focused on *mother-child* attachment. The cross-cultural attachment research suggests a "balance between universal trends and contextual determinants" (Mesman, Ijzendoorn, and Sagi-Schwartz 2016, 808).

Keller (2013) proposes that attachment theory should be a culture-sensitive framework to understand the unique attachment behaviour and effectively promote best practices in parent-child relationships in different cultures (175). Miyake et al. (2000) suggest that future research must address differences within cultures by "limiting the assumptions of universality and opening the door to human diversity to enrich the understanding of human relationships and undergo repair in social contexts" (1102). Although the attachment relationship is universal, the way parents, families, and children express it varies in different cultures (Harwood et al. 1995, 4). Culture reinforces the similar notion of the children's need for secure attachment with their parents but recognises that different cultural values and beliefs influence the parental attachment practices and perceptions of normative child development (Mawani 2001, 5). The recognition of the

diversity of human culture is an "obligation for better research and improving people's lives" (Keller 2018, 11414).

In summary, attachment theory explains the significance of parent-child emotional relationships throughout life. One learns to adjust his/her behaviours that create secure or insecure attachment patterns and become a template for later relationships. Sufficient motivation to work towards a secure attachment relationship with a new attachment figure can develop "earned security" for one's future relationships. However, attachment study should also be a culture-sensitive framework to understand the unique attachment behaviour in different cultures, primarily focusing on fathers' role as attachment figures.

**b) Father as Attachment and Activation Figure**

Following Bowlby (1951; 1959), who considered the mother as a child's primary attachment figure, earlier research on parent-child attachment has ignored the father's role in child development (Benware 2013; Machin 2019). The "maternal gatekeeping" (Cannon et al. 2008) perceives fathers only as breadwinners and unable to attach to children (389-98). The "cooperative breeding model" (Hrdy 1999; 2009) that suggests a social group of non-parental members to support children who are not their direct biological descendants (Keller 2013, 182) has also given less attention to the father/male's role in child development.

Some researchers questioned the relevance of fathers (Auerbach and Silverstein 1999; Braungart-Rieker et al. 2001; Buss 2007), disagreed with the methodology of research on fathers (Abbott, 2012; Dowd 2010), and proposed a non-gender parenting approach (Biblarz and Stacey 2010; Walsh, 2013) to challenge the discourse on a father's significant role in healthy childhood development. Recent research (Cabrera et al. 2018; Grossmann et al. 2008; Lucassen et al. 2011; Paquette 2004; 2010; 2021) has found that the fathers' role, especially in "play-exploration sensitivity",[11] has become a central marker to activate a secure relationship (Grossmann et al. 2008, 858). Fathers provoke their children and set limits during "physical connection" while the children learn how

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[11]Father-child's "activating interactions" (e.g., warm, praise, play) to stimulate or encourage exploration (DeWolff and Ijzendoorn 1997, 571).

to regulate emotions and build self-confidence (Ricaurte 2011, 6) and develop emotional security (Grossmann and Grossmann 2020, 9).

To underline the importance of a father's role in children's socio-emotional development, the researcher explores the dual primary attachment figure model, paternal activation relationship theory, and parental investment model, as described below.

i) Dual primary attachment figures model

Richard Bowlby (in Newland and Coyl 2010, 25-32) highlighted three concepts of the importance of a father in child development. Firstly, Bowlby proposed the dual primary attachment model where the father and the mother have two separate attachment roles but equally significant functions for children (26). A mother provides an enduring secure base and a positive model for intimate relationships (i.e., love and security), while a father is a trusted play companion to engage in exciting play and interactive challenges to support the children's emotional and social development (Ibid., 26). Secondly, the quality of the parents' marital relationships is a key marker of how parents interact with their children. Fathers are more involved in interaction with their children when they are engaged in interaction with their wives (Ibid., 28). Lastly, Bowlby highlighted the influence of culture on the father's socialisation practices and the children's need for "balance attachment" between security and exploration brought by both parents (Ibid., 29)

Fathers can become primary caregivers who serve as a "trusted secure base in times of distress and danger" (Geiger 1996, 97). The sensitive connection of a father, and responsive interactions during play, provide his children with a physical and emotional presence during father-child attachment and exploratory interactions (Pleck 1997; Davis 2011). A mother-child attachment relationship is calming for the child, while a father-child attachment stimulates the child to solve problems, make decisions, and securely explore the world (Paquette 2013, 201-2).

ii) Activation relationship theory

Initially, attachment research only provided the SSP method to assess the quality of parent-child attachment. However, research results indicated a low validity of the father-child SSP assessment for predicting a child's psychosocial development

(Grossmann et al. 1992; Grossmann and Grossmann 2005; IJzendoorn 1995). The Risky Situation (RS)[12] method is used to focus on father-child interactive quality during play, exploration, and sensitive challenges as better predictors of child psychosocial development (Grossmann et al. 2002, 307-31).

Using the RS method, Paquette and colleagues (2010; 2013; 2016; 2021) propose an activation relationship theory (ART) which is an "emotional bond a child develops with a parent that ensures the regulation of risk-taking during child exploration of the surrounding environment" (2021, 59). Their works focused on the "paternal function" of opening the child to the world (Paquette et al., 2009; Le Camus 2000). ART provides a greater understanding of the impact of fathering on a child's social development and predicts that fathers can activate children more than mothers (Paquette and Bigras 2010, 33). ART also confirms Bowlby's (1969) concept on the importance of exploration as a component to develop a child's survival skills as "one feels safe to explore the surroundings and returning to the safe base as needed" (Nadeen 2015, 41).

Paquette and Bigras (2010) classified father-child activation relationships into three patterns using the RS method. Firstly, the *under-activated* relationship was linked to "overprotective fathering", where children tended to be passive, anxious, engaging in little exploration, and remaining close to the father (38). Under-activated children would have a greater tendency to develop internalising problems (e.g., control of behaviours, feelings of sadness, low self-esteem, behavioural inhibition, and fears) (Ibid., 48). Secondly, the *activated* relationship referred to "close-distance fathering", allowing the father to protect the child in case of danger while providing the child with the necessary room to practice abilities independently (Ibid., 47). Children confidently explored and obeyed the parent's limits (Ibid., 38). Lastly, the *over-activated* relationship was linked to "uninvolved fathering" (i.e., passive, absent), where the father had difficulty protecting and controlling the children. Children tended to be reckless, to take advantage of freedom, and to disobey the limits (Ibid., 38) *Over-activated* children would have a greater tendency to develop externalising problems (e.g., aggression, delinquency) to survive in exploring the adult world (Paquette et al. 2021, 48, 60).

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[12] RS is a standardised procedure designed to assess the quality of the parent-child activation relationship with both fathers and mothers (Paquette and Bigras 2010, 33-50).

Paquette and Dumont (2013) found that fathers activate their children while acting as a caregiver (e.g., feeding, comforting) for them (7). The father-child activation relationship works as a "protective factor" (Paquette et al. 2016, 372), ensuring a smooth transition that launches a child from a secure base to confidently explore their surroundings (Grossmann and Grossmann 2020, 9-11). The paternal activation relationship is a "circle of security" (Marvin et al. 2002) which predicts the socio-affective development (e.g., competition, risk-taking, aggression regulation) of children into adulthood (Nadeen 2015, 41).

iii) Parental investment model

Trivers' (1974) Parental Investment Model (PIM) also confirms the importance of father-child attachment on children's socio-emotional development. PIM refers to "any expenditure (e.g., time, resources) a parent incurs to benefit a child" by providing an environmental condition that regulates the dynamics of the parent-child relationship (Wang 2016, 1). Parent-child attachment is a manifestation of parental investment (Geary 2000, 84). The PIM suggests that a higher level of satisfaction (e.g., emotional support, companionship, attention) and a lower level of cost (e.g., conflict, argument) are factors that maintain the commitment for long-term close relationships (Rhatigan and Axsom 2006; Reis and Rusbult 2004).

The PIM proposes two aspects of investment in a relationship: 1) *intrinsic investment,* which refers to everything parents put directly into their relationship, namely: care, food, finance, and 2) *extrinsic investment,* which refers to indirect things that parents bring into their relationships (e.g., memories, friendship) (Reis and Rusbult 2004, 172). The PIM's "paternity uncertainty" concept identifies that "mothers" invest more in their children than fathers (Wang 2016, 1). Further, the children of low-investing fathers tend to give less parental investment to their children (Ellis et al. 2003; Scaramella et al. 1998), leading to earlier onset of sexual activity and an increased short-term relationship orientation as a reaction to the uncertain availability of future relationships (Antfolk and Sjolund 2018; Coley and Chase-Lansdale 1998). However, high-investing fathers promote inner growth and strength in children's lives as the foundation for lifetime social skill development (Francesconi and Heckman 2016, 1).

In summary, attachment theory provides a perspective on the importance of a child's emotional bonds with his/her mother. However, the dual attachment figure model, the

activation relationship theory, and the parental investment model all confirm the significant role of the father in children's emotional and social development. The father-child relationship works as a protective factor for children to explore their surroundings confidently, predict children's socio-affective development, and promote inner growth as the foundation for lifetime social skill development.

<div align="center">2. The Effects of Fatherlessness</div>

This section explores the literature on fatherlessness and its impacts on the socio-emotional development of youth. The earned-secure attachment theory is explored to understand the relational healing process for fatherless youth.

**a) Father Attachment Hunger**

Fathers play a significant role in providing "attachment security" for young people, especially from ages 6 to 22 (Grossmann and Grossmann 2005, 3), to master their intense emotions (Paquette and Dumont 2013). However, research in 21 countries, mainly in Africa and Asia (Bartlett 2013; Carstens 2014; Dobbs 2013; Freeks 2017, 2018; Richter et al. 2012; Williams 2014) has identified three most severe problems of the world; drugs, violence, and poverty, where "fatherlessness" has been the significant factor contributing to those problems. The crisis of fatherlessness is the most destructive trend of our generation for its long-term consequences on children's lives (Blankenhorn, 1995, 1).

Fatherlessness is defined as the "absence of a father where children are raised in homes without residential fathers by death, dysfunction, divorce, separation, or non-marital birth" (McLanahan et al. 2013, 399). The threat of losing father-child relationships leads to an attachment wound, "painful experiences that threaten the integrity of self" (Brazeau 2018, 30), creating an "attachment void" (Arriaga 2014, 3) or "attachment hunger" (Sherwood 2019) which is "a deep longing for secure bonding with a paternal figure that is fuelled by the unmet essential needs in childhood" (1).

The term "father-wound" (Dalbey 2011; Lanse 1996; Miller 2013; Pease 2000) is used to address an "internalised, unresolved conflict between father and child" (Diamond 2007, 161) that pervasively imprints a normative development trauma in a child's life (Levant 1996, 263). Father-wound manifests in "direct and disguised forms of

desperately seeking contact with one's father figure or in being furious at him for his absence" (263). The unmet need of being known and approved by a father leaves a pervasive father-hunger as one carries an "extreme unsure feeling of sense of self-worth and lovability" (Brazeau 2018, 31). "Father-hunger" (Herzog 1981; 2002) is a "psychological longing for a father who has been physically, emotionally, or psychologically distant in a person's life" (Perrin et al. 2009, 315). The pain of loneliness, identity confusion, and the emotional brokenness of fatherlessness is often transmitted across generations (Hix 2018, 128). The fatherless seek a father figure who can fill his/her need for love, identity, value, and life meaning (Kelly 2017, 41-43).

**b) Father Absence and Youth Socio-Emotional Problems**

The father-child relational problem is associated with a child's higher externalisation and internalisation behaviours (Paquette et al. 2021, 67; Groh et al. 2014, 103). A father's activation relationship is more closely associated with externalising behaviours than a mother's attachment relationship (Paquette and colleagues 2010, 2013). *Over-activated* youth whose fathers were absent/uninvolved tended to have higher externalisation behaviours and could not regulate aggression or impulsivity (Paquette et al. 2021, 67). They tended to develop an IWM prompting greater risk-taking to satisfy their compulsive needs, using physical aggression toward self or others when exploring their social environment (Ibid., 67).

Many studies (see Appendix N) have linked the poor quality of the father-youth relationship to the higher incidence of conduct problems, namely: risky sexual behaviour (Delpriore et al. 2017), substance-user (Thompson 2018), mental illness (Ellis and Garber 2000), suicide (Mendle et al. 2009), criminal involvement (Hemovich and Crano 2009), drop out of school (Qureshi and Ahmad 2014), and poverty (Snarey 1995). The research has shown the need for a father's involvement that influences the youth's developmental process.

Paquette's (2015) study indicates that children activated by a father-child relationship have a vast repertoire of behaviours, using assertiveness and cooperation to cope with diverse survival situations (325). *Under-activated* individuals tend to avoid conflicts and submit to others, while over-activated children use aggression, antisocial or risky behaviours to survive in social exploration (Ibid., 328). Fathers are actors in young people's emotional regulation skills, and their involvement in activation relationships

could be the most important "protective factor" in children's socio-emotional functioning (Paquette 2021, 68). The presence of a father figure is shown as the most capable of curbing the social problems of youth (Father Facts 2004; Hix 2018; Lamb 2015) and developing earned security (Strong 2003, 56).

**c) Earned-Secure Attachment**

Earned-Secure Attachment (ESA) (George, Kaplan, and Main 1985; Pearson et al. 1994) is "a process by which individuals overcome malevolent parenting experiences" (Roisman et al. 2002, 1206). The ESA challenges Bowlby (1973) and other researchers (Hamilton 2003; Thompson 2008) who believe that early development tends to continue unchanged throughout the rest of life (202). The ESA explains how individuals with insecure attachment in childhood can develop secure attachment in his/her adulthood by attaining a calm and logical acceptance of their unstable childhood (Feinberg 2015, 2) through reparative relationships and healing experiences (Guana 2016, 233).

i) ESA and secure relationships

Grossmann and Grossmann's (2005) review on major longitudinal studies on "attachment from infancy to adulthood" acknowledged the contribution of a new relationship with significant trusted and reliable others whose presence becomes a secure base from which one develops emotional security (3). The insecure person becomes increasingly secure by participating in relationships that disconfirm the negative features of IWM and building a new "secure interpersonal cycle" into ones' working memory (Kobak et al. 2015, 221; Shaver et al. 1988, 85).

Roisman et al. (2002), in their 23-year longitudinal study, found that adults with a history of insecure, harsh, and ineffective parenting can repair their early adverse experiences and the resultant psychopathology by developing an earned-secure attachment through "positive relationships" with new attachment figures (1206).

Wallin (2007; 2014) suggests a "therapeutic relationship", a model of treatment in psychotherapy that focuses on transformation through relationships by tailoring interventions to fit the attachment needs of their patients, helping them generate an internalised secure base and promoting a shift in attachment from insecure to secure.

Mikulincer and Shaver's (2012) study found that "attachment insecurity" is a major contributor to mental disorders, and the enhancement of "attachment security" can facilitate the healing of mental/emotional problems (608). The ESA develops through a "corrective experience" of the person's IWM by requiring another person (in the relationship) to function as a secure base for exploratory behaviour. The corrective experience can be manifested in a safe and well-attuned relationship (e.g., therapy/counselling) to explore sensations and emotions in past attachment experiences, which can initiate a broaden-and-build cycle of attachment security (Ibid., 608).

Merrick, Leeb, and Lee (2013, 1) suggest that a safe, stable, and nurturing relationship is a significant protective factor for insecure people to express their affection and negative experiences as steps to overcoming their insecure attachment and developing earned security. A trusting environment facilitates individuals expressing their hurtful feelings, discussing negative thoughts of their past attachment experiences, and restructuring cognitions to engage in more healthy emotional functioning and behaviours (Cohen 2005, 23-24).

ii) ESA and substitute attachment figure

Some studies (e.g., Cohen 2005; Crowell et al. 2002; Daniel 1998) have challenged Bowlby's (1958) monotropic theory (i.e., mother as the only primary bond figure) and found that substitute attachment figures (SAF) can provide a secure and continual emotional support (Anderson and Reese 1999, 58) to develop ESA, as described below.

*Non-parental attachment figure.* Cohen (2005) proposes that positive non-parental attachment relationships have the capacity to alter the insecure IWM to a more secure view of self and others (233). She found that "earned secures" were less dependent upon their primary figures' approval of their self-worth and more secure in the new relationships. They expressed more trust and intimacy with their positive non-parental attachment figures and less dependency and greater closeness with their peers (i). The available familial figures (e.g., grandparents) and non-familial figures, namely: friends (Daniel 1998), teachers (Mitchell-Copeland et al. 1997), a romantic partner (Crowell et al. 2002), and therapists/ministers (Nelesen 2016), become positive non-parental attachment figures during childhood and young adulthood.

*Friendship attachment figure.* Lunsford (2017) recognises that youth often have greater "power distance" in a relationship with adults than with their peers (153). Power distance is defined as "inequalities in relationships where one individual has greater status and superiority relative to another person" (Hofstede 1983, as cited in Lunsford 2017, 154). Lunsford (2017) suggests "mentor-as-friend" as a concept where one provides "psychosocial mentoring support" to the other person, and mentorship becomes a close relationship as both relational partners influence one another (151-2). As a mentor becomes a friend and attached, youth can share confidently and feel close to their mentor (Ibid., 153). Friendship attachment (Bauminger et al. 2008; Liberman et al. 1999) plays a significant role in youth development into adulthood (Lim, Elijah, and Kho 2021, 33).

*Emotional supportive figure.* Main et al. (2002, in Roisman 2002, 406) classified the substitute figure's support into two dimensions: "instrumental support" (e.g., buying a present, financial support) and "emotional support" (e.g., emotional availability, listening, comforting, encouraging). The substitute figures who provided only instrumental support were considered unloving and unhelpful in overcoming past insecure experiences (Roisman 2002, 406). Emotional supportive figures were considered "loving" and provided a pathway to ESA (Ibid., 407).

Feinberg (2015, 42) suggests the four most important "emotional relationship" qualities that support the development of ESA are: 1) *love* (e.g., showing affection unconditionally), 2) *acceptance* (e.g., understanding, being patient, and non-judgmental), 3) *trust* (e.g., showing commitment, loyalty, and dependability), and 4) *caring* (e.g., generosity and selfless, giving). Steven (2017, 392) posits the importance of "authentic relationships" in the therapeutic process as an essential mediating factor to support the development of a youth's emotional functioning. The recipients of emotional support were more responsive and engaged, with consistently predictable psychological well-being (Morelli et al. 2015, 484).

*Continual supportive figure.* Researchers (Cohen 2005; Pearson et al. 1994; Roisman 2002;) identified that the *individual with ESA* had higher depressive symptomatology (40%) compared to *insecure* (30%) and *continuous secures* (10%). The reconstruction of past difficulties may remain complex emotional liabilities (Pearson et al. 1994, 364). The continuous support of substitute attachment figures is an important means for

breaking the cycle of insecurity through which one can regulate his/her past emotional experiences (Roisman 2002, 406). The long-term support allows ESA individuals to develop trusting relationships, feel worthy, and view themselves positively (Egeland, Jacobvitz, and Sroufe 1988, 1085-7).

***Substitute fathering figure***. Castelllini et al. (2005) state that "male bonding and contending with troublesome father-son relationships are critical to overcoming the father-wound" (53). The sense of isolation and existential loneliness of a fatherless childhood precedes young people turning to other men for a "masculine life model", as their "affect regulation support" (Ibid., 54). A fatherless child needs a substitute fathering figure (SFF) to give a "sense of purpose" in life (Buske 2007), to regulate aggression and behaviour problems (Fletcher and Sarkar 2013), and to encourage them in dealing with difficult situations (Sandseter and Kennair 2011). Without essential input from a male figure, a child "searches for the rest of their lives looking for identity, love, strength, and direction, mostly in wrong places" (Eldredge 2009, 119). An SFF gives protection and provision to meet a fatherless child's needs (Strong 2003, 70) through mentoring and coaching (Day and Lamb 2004), shepherding (Baucham 2011), and spiritual fathering (Wieja 2014). An SFF's presence enables fatherless youth to have a substitute for meeting their need for a father's love and care, which, if fulfilled, affects how they view God, self, and others (Strong 2003, 56).

iii) ESA, SFF, and attachment to God

A relationship with a significant father figure influences how a youth perceives God (Bruner and Stroope 2010, 18; Vitz 1999, 2013). One may exhibit a *compensation response* as a reaction to a negative perception of a father and perceive God positively as a perfect father figure and attachment substitute (Dobbs 2013, 57) and tend to experience a sudden religious conversion (Kirkpatrick and Shaver 1990, 329). An absent father leads to "metaphoric images of God as a safe haven and substitute figure" (Keisling 2011, 311), a source of emotional security (Hall 2007, 22) and strength in difficult times (Counted 2016b, 147).

Meanwhile, a negative perception of a father results in a *correspondence response*, transmitting negative feelings onto their view of God (Dobbs 2013, 108-117), who is seen as the way they perceive a father (Ibid., 57). Fatherless youth view God as more distant and less nurturing, involved, or accepting, as the thought of calling God as

Father "triggers memories of mistrust, confusion, deprivation, neglect, alienation, and can lead to despair and rejection to God" (Balthazar 2007, 549). Bierman's (2005) study on paternally abused victims mentions that "maltreatment perpetrated by fathers had a significant negative effect on the religiosity of youth which led them to distance themselves from celestial paternal figures" (357). Youth may struggle to relate to God, not knowing that God is a loving, caring, and present Father, while experiencing absence, abuse or neglect from their father at home.

However, insecure father-child relationships often remain open to modification across a lifetime through contact and dealings with a new substitute father-figure (Counted 2016b, 148). Earned security grows in the context of "reparative relationships" (Guana 2016, 233) with a SAF. He continually provides secure emotional support increasing his/her motivation to regulate past negative experiences (Mikulincer and Shaver 2004, 174) and to motivate him/her to be close to God (Granqvist 2010, 12). The presence of a loving, compassionate, and faithful "embodied father" will make sense of the loving, compassionate, and faithful God as the Father (Kiekhafer 2013, 49). This may increase one's motivation to regulate the past's negative experiences and develop secure proximity with self and others.

The following section attempts to relate spiritual fathering and discipleship to understand an approach that leads the fatherless youth to grow mature in Christ.

## 3. Spiritual Fathering and Discipleship of Fatherless Youth

This section reviews the literature on the importance of a youth discipleship approach that includes fathering and emotional processes, leading the fatherless youth into maturity in Christ.

**a) Youth and Individuation Process**

Stech (2016) defines "youth" as an integral part of one's identity that expresses *kairos* (i.e., very opportunity time), distinct from others, and characterised as "longing for love and acceptance, searching for meaning, openness, excitement, activity, creativity, hope, pursuing development, intensive sense for expecting the future" (128-9). Identity development is the primary task for a youth's *individuation*, a process of "forming a stable personality and gaining a clearer sense of self that is separate from their parents

and others" (Klimstra et al. 2010, 150). The process of individuation is based on seven vectors, namely: 1) developing confidence, 2) managing emotions, 3) moving through autonomy, 4) developing mature relationships, 5) establishing identity, 6) developing purpose, and 7) developing integrity-authenticity (Chickering and Reisser 1993, 45-51). These vectors are built on each other and lead youth to be more integrated, stable, and complex individuals (Evans et al. 1998, 38).

Fathers tend to encourage a youth's individuation more than mothers (Ravindran et al. 2020, 313). The *secure-individuated* youth gains independence and assertiveness (Power and Shanks 1989, 203) and significantly makes secure adjustments in various relationships (Kruse and Walper 2008, 390). The insecure attachment with a father may "compromise successful individuation by undermining relatedness, triggering insecurities or leading to early independence" (Ibid., 390) and feelings of anxiety, low self-esteem, and self-deception in social relationships (Counted 2016a, 87). A youth's unresolved emotional pain of fatherlessness may promote distorted thoughts and feelings, which in turn create sinful (e.g., externalised) behaviours to cope with the pain (Baugh 2016, i-ii) and potentially block or retard their process into spiritual maturity (Lang 2015, 259). Resolving a relationship conflict is an essential building block for building healthy youth self-identity (Counted 2016a, 85).

**b) Youth and Discipleship Approaches**

Youth ministry is "building a relationship that helps young people become what God created them to be" (Yi and Nel 2020, 1). However, youth ministry is often neglected (Nel 2000, 63). Many churches focus their youth ministries more on being content-driven and on behaviour modifications than on inward transformation and discipleship (Easum 2010, 53), with the result that "not many young followers of Jesus experience significant life-change in their faith journey in the church" (Toth 2015, 4-5).

A "content-driven" approach has dominated church history where instructions, a disciplined program of Bible studies, preaching services, specific groups, and witnessing training are the central means for youth discipleship (Hull 2006; Toth 2015). Discipleship is filled with information to modify behaviours (Geiger 2012, 18). Another model of content-driven discipleship is an *academic approach* (Robinson 2012) that stresses intellectual development (1) by training youth through worship, Bible study, and doctrinal teachings (Toth 2015, 14). The biblical knowledge is transferred well

through a systematic curriculum or program-based approach but is rarely in touch with the youth's inner life or emotional struggles (Lang 2015, 260) as it is measured only on spiritual performance and behaviour modification (Toth 2015, 18).

Modern churches attempt to be relevant by adopting a creative and dynamic model to engage with youth. Mccullum and Lowery (2006) suggest an *organic approach* to reach out to the youth outside of the church by creating a spiritual impact through high-quality relationships (21-23). Mcneal (2011) proposes a *missional-incarnational* approach, focusing on evangelism and aggressively engaging with youth to present the Gospel through social action (xiii-xiv). They invest their resources in providing for the needs (e.g., feeding the hungry, helping the poor) and bringing them to salvation (Toth 2015, 14). Shultz (2019) suggests a *community-based* approach, where small group interaction, Bible study, and ministry activities are conducted in a friendly atmosphere (12). However, discipleship approaches that focus on content-knowledge transfer, behaviour modification, and evangelism/church growth will not be enough to bring change to fatherless youth without addressing the emotional process that heals their broken relationships (Geiger et al. 2012, 18; Nel 2000, 43; Willard 2002, 69). Spiritual development is "more of an emotional process than an intellectual one" (Wilson 1998, 53; 2011, 111). Emotional health is an aspect of human development of utmost importance, and without it, "maturation and multiplication are impossible" (Anderson and Skinner 2019, 71).

**c) Discipleship Through an Emotional Processes**

Several researchers (McGee 2003; Lang 2015; Lang and Bochman 2017; Roberts 2007; Scazzero 2006) have explored the role of emotion on spiritual development. Emotion is an "essential medium through which Christian teachings get incorporated into the individual's life" (Roberts 2007, 5). Emotion gives us a sense of continuity (i.e., same person past, present, future), informs us about a situation, and moves us into decision-making and action (Izard 1991, 80-82). The Scriptures show that in Jesus' ministry, the emotional process was significant in His holistic approach to discipleship. Jesus undertook His ministry with thought and emotion (e.g., he wept, was angry, disappointed, and loving) (Anderson and Skinner 2019, 72). The disciples' emotional life was one of the most comprehensive areas touched by Jesus' discipleship approach.

As a process of becoming more Christ-like, discipleship "requires attending to all aspects of our lives, especially our capacity to emote" (Willard 2002, 118). Maturity in Christ moves a person into "a new emotional relationship with God who transforms their internal world as he/she is no longer ruled by feelings but by God alone" (Ibid., 119). The *balanced* approach (Seo 2009) that integrates an emotional process and spiritual maturity is essential in the discipleship of insecure-attached youth (164). Scazzero (2006) states that "it is not possible to be spiritually mature while remaining emotionally immature" (n. p.), and without integration of emotional health, a Christian's spirituality can be deadly to relationships with self, others, and God (12). Scazzero proposed a discipleship model that emphasises "emotional and spiritual wholeness" in personal or corporate life through six steps: 1) look inside, 2) break the power of the past, 3) live vulnerably, 4) receive the limits, 5) embrace grief and loss, and 6) make incarnation a model for loving well (Ibid., 18). Christians must nurture emotional growth in fostering true spiritual maturity (Seo 2009, 164).

Toth (2015, v) proposes a *real-context* approach, addressing the internal struggles faced by fatherless youth. Toth found that Jesus' discipleship was significant because he used the "immediate life circumstances" of His disciples to determine what he would say and do in the process of His disciple-making. Jesus understood His disciples' "inner life issues" (Lang 2015, 260) and personally walked with them in their daily struggles (Toth (2015, vi).

Anderson and Skinners (2019) suggest an *affective process* approach that is centred on a one-on-one emotional relationship investment (73) that enables fatherless youth not only to be shaped by the Gospel but also to walk through an "emotional bond" with Jesus daily (Putman 2010, 23; Willard 2002, 118).

Kinnaman, Matlock, and Hawkins (2019) suggest an *intergenerational* approach where young people have a realistic model from spiritually mature figures who build close relationships and walk with them through everyday matters (Allen and Santos 2020, 506; Knoetzel 2017, 1; Wealth 2019, 3-5). A spiritual father figure guides fatherless youth towards shaping their characters and discovering their gifts, talents, and abilities to fulfil Christ's mission for them (Dempsey 2008, 101; Nel 2000, 43).

**d) Discipleship through Spiritual Fathering**

Spiritual fathering[13] is "nurturing someone through a long-term father-like relationship where a mature male spiritual leader helps a disciple to discover and fulfil God's purposes in him/her" (Demares 2003, 38; Nador 2019, 21). It is active, responsible involvement of a substitute father figure in the spiritual birthing of someone (Wieja 2014, 23-34) as a pinpoint of change that promotes spiritual formation within their life (Blackaby and Blackaby 2011, 129). Spiritual Fathering is an approach to speaking biblical truth in a "caring relationship" between a spiritual father and his spiritual son/daughter, encouraging them to pursue God (Hartzell 2016; Putman et al. 2013).

A spiritual father's primary responsibility is to invest his life into the life of his spiritual children (Wealth 2019, 17-18) by providing for the holistic needs of fatherless youth, such as spiritual, social, emotional, and physical needs that are equally significant for them to thrive and to achieve God's purpose for them (Cooper 2012, 138), as described below.

i) Birthing father

A spiritual father links God's two-fold works, namely evangelism and discipleship (Isato 2016, 89). A spiritual father is responsible for the spiritual birthing of his spiritual children by bringing fatherless youth into a personal relationship with Jesus through evangelism and spiritual guidance by the "practice of hospitality" (Wealth 2019, 21-23). A spiritual father "receives his spiritual child into his space/life with openness and care and creating a safe and trustworthy environment" (Anderson and Reese 1999, 77; Benner 2004, 46) that enables them to relate securely with God as his/her Father. Through discipleship, a spiritual father encourages and trains his spiritual child into a *sanctification process*, an "ongoing journey towards holiness and a continual life-long process of being united to Christ" (Vander Wal 2017, 11). Both evangelism and discipleship are God's ultimate tools to make disciples (Moffit 2015).

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[13] Spiritual fathering can be categorised by two mindsets. First, an institutional mindset, which is organisational leadership through a systematised rule of conduct and formal ministerial roles (e.g., teaching, sacrament, etc) with less interpersonal relationship. Second, a relational mindset, where a spiritual father works in genuine love and care, and where responsiveness to demands placed harmoniously at the centre of the personal relationship between a spiritual father and spiritual child to create a culture of growth (Alley 2008, 21; Dihnam and Scott 2008, 19).

ii) Social father

A spiritual father provides social and economic support for fatherless children, primarily from low-income families (Brown et al. 2018; Jayakody and Kalil 2002). Involvement and the presence of a social father have been linked to reductions in youth behaviour problems and an increase in pro-social behaviours (Coley 1998; Zimmerman et al. 1995). A social father improves a child's well-being significantly, especially for those without a biological father (Berger et al. 2008). However, a spiritual father ensures that his primary mission is to introduce God the Father to his spiritual child as the only source of love, fulfilment, and security (Wieja 2014, 18-20).

iii) Covering father

A spiritual father is a soul-care father who labours over the emotional brokenness of the fatherless youth and facilitates an emotional process through attentive and reflective listening, counselling, and a soul-healing process (Anderson and Reese, 58). He is a daily life model for the fatherless youth. He guides them with his authoritative voice and watches over their souls through his fatherly blessing and prayers upon his spiritual children (Wealth 2019, 63). He assists his spiritual child in recognising and overcoming their inner struggles (i.e., sin, trauma, habits). He journeys with them to recognise their inner struggles, talents, giftedness, life assignments, and how to reach their God-given potential" (Wieja 2014, 32-34; Kreider 2008, 2) by imparting love, identity, and concern for their well-being (Alley 2008, 4).

The primary characteristic of facilitating an emotional process is through expressing covering love towards the weaknesses, shortcomings, and growth process of fatherless young people (Hartzell 2016; 1 Pet.4:8). Vitz (2013) reminds the church not to oversimplify the pain and complicated lives of those whose hearts were conditioned or hardened by a biological father who had rejected, abandoned, or abused them (197). They need a safe environment that provides love, care, and affirmation to replace their fear and shame and reopen their hearts to a substitute fathering figure and God's love (Ibid., 198).

iv) Mentoring father

A spiritual father is a training father who influences his spiritual child through his mentorship and training in specific skills, knowledge, and life strategies (Demarest 2003, 37). He journeys alongside his spiritual child by giving continual "life projection"

training through words of blessing that they may remain in a close relationship with God, applying biblical principles in making daily wise decisions (Wealth 2019, 33; Wieja 2014, 56-62). They are directed to grow skilfully as a disciple of Christ (Isato 2016, 90) where they find a new secure identity in Christ and live it daily" (Keller 2003, n. p.).

## 4. Summary of Psychological Insights

Attachment theory provides a perspective on the importance for fatherless youth of affective bonds with significant others. The dual attachment model, activation relationship theory, and parental investment model confirm the role of a father in his children's skill in regulating their emotions and as a protective factor in his children's socio-emotional functioning. Social pathology has been strongly linked to fatherlessness as the most destructive effect, which has long-term consequences on a child's development. Various studies on "earned-secure attachment" theory confirm that the presence of a non-parental substitute fathering figure who provides secure emotional support in a reparative relationship may increase motivation to regulate the negative experiences from the past and develop a secure closeness to God and others. Effective youth discipleship should include fathering and emotional processes in order to move the youth from their broken relationship into a new secure attachment relationship and identity in Christ. The practice of spiritual fathering may lead the fatherless who are hurting emotionally, physically, and spiritually into a healing relationship with self, others, and God in total trust as a newly earned-secure individual who grows as Christ's disciple. The literature also reveals the need to consider local cultural contexts, especially in non-Western, rural, and low-income cultures, to better understand the father-child attachment, which needs to be emphasised more in future research.

The following section briefly explores male spiritual leadership in Melanesia and the Lani culture to understand the context of this research.

## C. Anthropological Concepts of Male Spiritual Leadership

This section explores the anthropological literature on male spiritual leadership in Melanesia (South Pacific) and Lani's family systems to better understand the cultural research setting. The researcher focuses on Melanesian culture as it has similar

traditions, worldviews, and religious practices to the Lani tribe as the context of this research[14].

## 1. Male Spiritual Leadership in Melanesia

In Melanesia, male figures have a central spiritual leadership role in alleviating the spiritual forces around them to protect the community (Brown 1949, 1). Life is a spiritual matter where human and spiritual beings relate to one another, and human activities are driven by the fear of harmful spiritual attacks (Lauer and Nolis 2002, 3). Avoiding "taboo" and gaining more *mana* (i.e., supernatural power) is essential for survival (Oroi 2015, 183). The penalty for violating taboo is the coming of curses (e.g., bad luck, disease, war, death) as signs of ancestors' disapproval (Duhamel 2021, 43). Adult males focus on accumulating mana through certain rituals to gain ancestors' approval and the community's respect (Keesing 1984, 137) but, in practice, neglect their primary role in the family and society (Solis and Elna 2015, 72).

### a) Melanesian Father Absenteeism

As a spiritual defender, a Melanesian father ensures that his family is well protected, with the assistance of mana (Meylan 2017, 49; Nilan 2009, 327). Mana can be transmitted from father to son to invoke spiritual blessings on the family (Tuza 1979, 104). Children enjoy the presence of their father as they feel safe and protected (Ratele et al. 2012, 255). However, the high rates of father-absenteeism (McLaren 2002, 58) and the increasing number of failing marriages, divorces and separations, pregnancy outside of marriage, violence, and migration have contributed to Melanesian youth growing up in a fatherless home (Solis and Elna 2015, 72-4).

Melanesian single parenting tends to be headed by women (Parker and Patterson 2003, 3) who live in an extended family having one to three generations with familial connections (Katoanga 2007, 25). Several adverse experiences (e.g., health issues, incest, violence, and conflicts) can create difficulties in providing a safe place for children to develop well (Pane et al. 2009, 8), increasing enmeshed and dysfunctional relationship (Feeny 2016, 745). However, Steward-Withers (2010) finds that in an

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[14] Papua has been part of the Melanesian Spearhead Group (MSG) since 2015. The Papua National Council for Liberation (PNCL) hopes to use MSG as an international platform to fight for independence (Andrew 2015; Fox 2015).

extended family, the fatherless youth have a chance to access a close father-child relationship through the involvement of an alternative father figure (e.g., grandfather, uncle) who directly engages with the fatherless youth (26) and plays a significant role as an "authoritative voice" in cultivating respect for God, others, and society (Ibid., 27).

**b) Tribal Leaders and Vulnerable Children**

Melanesian tribal leaders (big men) are respected men who are believed to have *mana* to nullify supernatural attacks through various rites (Keesing and Keesing 1971, 272). They also function as managers in socio-economic matters to ensure that all basic needs of the tribe are secured (Lederman 2015, 1163), including the needs of vulnerable children (e.g., fatherless/orphans). However, in the Melanesian leadership system that requires competition, big men spend much time strengthening their political position (Lederman 2000, 1163). They are "self-interested" leaders (Haviland 1974, 457) who manipulate social relations through the slogan "I help you; you help me" in order to maintain followers (Sahlins 1963, 290-3) while neglecting their responsibility to provide care for the vulnerable children (Feeny and McDonald 2016, 447).

**c) Melanesian Church Leaders and Animistic Power**

The Melanesian church's two fastest-growing issues are *prosperity theology* and *spiritual forces*. These issues easily take root in a Melanesian church since its central traditional belief of *mana* becomes part of their vision of the cosmos and daily lifestyle (Paroi 2007, 28). Melanesian Christians connect spirituality with prosperity (Mani 2010, 70-72).

Church leaders are expected to protect people from spiritual forces and to be the means of bringing a prosperous life for the congregation through a sow-reap[15] theology and total submission under their leadership (Zaku 2013, 9). With prosperity theology becoming its central theme, the church has rapidly lost the power to answer the reality of suffering, poverty, illness, and death the followers face. The disparity between prosperity teaching and suffering reality confuses vulnerable young people, who choose to leave the church (Tabani 2013, 7-27).

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[15] The more you give, the more you will reap (Mani 2013, 6).

The influence of a traditional spiritual-forces worldview also remains strong in the church, particularly at moments of crisis (e.g., sickness, danger, marriage, new birth, and death) (Paroi 2007, 28; Zaku 2013, 9). Along with this, the Melanesian church faces the issue of the presence of "nameless forces", which increases the fear of harmful spiritual attack and drives many Christians to return to their animistic practices for spiritual covering (Lauer and Nolis 2002, 28; Mombi 2013, 79).

**d) Melanesian's Need for Male Spiritual Leadership**

Mombi (2013) urges Melanesian church leaders to firstly transform their worldview into one based on freedom in Christ and not on bondage or fear to spiritual forces (78-82). The church leaders need to develop a proper theological dynamic between prosperity and vulnerability to solve the current problems of poverty, suffering, family brokenness, and fatherlessness in Melanesia, without losing social concern, a compassionate heart, and practical care (Mani 2013, 5-78). Richardson (1984) proposes that the Melanesian church uses its theology of power to serve the vulnerable youth who refuse a theology that only serves as a "source of morality and prosperity promise maker" (66). The youth need a God who is always present to protect and cover them, answer their prayers, and reach out to them in their vulnerable daily experience (Ibid., 67).

Tabani (2013) elaborates four characteristics of the spiritual leaders needed by Melanesian youth: 1) a model of a good life, 2) a moral teacher who accepts and guides them into a transformation of life, 3) a life-skill trainer who brings well-being, and 4) a friend who understands their background and is eager to walk with them without controlling them (7-27). Melanesian spiritual leaders are called to guide vulnerable youth into a personal relationship and total trust in God as the Father who protects and provides for their well-being (Mani 2013, 62). This theology will empower the church to accomplish its social responsibilities and to take action to protect the "least of these" (Matt 25:40).

## 2. The Lani Family System

Lani youth live between the traditional and modern contexts (Munro 2015; Mansoben et al. 2019). Several factors that influence the Lani family system are described below.

**a) Animistic Worldview**

Lani men are seen as being contrasted with ghosts (Hayward 1980, 13). Everyone has a vital essence called *edai-egen* that resides below their sternum. *Edai-egen* is a source of goodness and should be protected to benefit the whole tribe (Heider 1970, 94). Severe illness will relocate *edai-egen* into his/her backbone. When a person dies, the *edai-egen* will transform into malicious spirits which send misfortune, illness, and death into the community. The tribal leaders conduct rituals to placate the malicious spirits (Heider 1991, 45-46). They avoid taboos to gain approval from the ancestors' spirits, who provide power for community protection (Wahyudi et al. 2015, 155). The fear of harmful spirits is the essence of Lani's animistic spirituality, which influences their family system (Heider 1991, 46-54).

**b) Patriarchal System**

The Lani live in extended family relationships (Wahyudi et al. 2016, 30) and adhere to a patriarchal system that prioritises men's hegemony over women (Ridwan and Susanti 2019, 159) and differentiates men and women in public and domestic roles (Mansoben et al. 2019, 66). The Lani man is a procreator, while the woman is a child-bearer. A man has only fulfilled his role when a wife bears a male child who carries the family name (Bannerman 2007, 41). Masculinity requires assertiveness, activity, and initiative, while femininity requires passivity, gentleness, and obedience (Ibid., 67). A father's power affects the family system and becomes a risk factor behind men's violence against women and children in traditional culture (Sathiparsad et al. 2011, 4).

**c) Shame Culture**

Many patriarchal cultures emphasise "shame" to regulate individuals' social interactions (Pattison 2000, 54). Shame culture is "shaping and displaying one in a particular form to make them visible and seek recognition by others" (Toraman and Zlatimirova 2020, iii). The Papuan term *nekali-nayuk* emphasises concern over outward appearance, which develops a positive character according to social expectations (Munro and Slama 2015, 171-2). Lani men are concerned about their public recognition, showing their capabilities but hiding their shortcomings publicly in order to reach influential political positions. In contrast, Lani women show their domestic capacities for gardening, child-rearing, or being submissive in marriage (Alua 2006, n. p.).

In Lani culture, shame arises when personal weaknesses are exposed (Munro and Slama 2015, 171). The youth are taught to participate and submit to the leader's authority (Bensley 1994, 15) without asking questions or disagreeing confrontationally, to avoid public shaming (Miller and Guthrie 2007, 267). Bukobza (2018) observes that "shaming" tends to produce rebellious spirits and to develop intergenerational conflicts, emotional upheaval, and an identity crisis in young people's lives" (29).

**d) Parenting Style and the Value of Children**

A parenting style is influenced by the parents' cultural worldview (Berger 2011, 273–278), and parents' value of their children affects intergenerational relations (Kagitcibasi and Ataca 2015, 377). The Lani commonly use a permissive or uninvolved parenting style (Wahyudi et al. 2019), which is non-directive, warm, indulgent, and with few/no rules, but is associated with children behaving impulsively, being egocentric, poor academically or in social skills, and having problematic relationships (Baumrind 1991, 61-2). Most Lani fathers value pigs higher than a child, as the number of pigs determines social and ritual rank in the community, while mothers feed their pigs and babies from the same breasts (McNeely and Sochaczewski 1988, 174).

Most Lani parents prefer girls more than boys to support the family (Laksono and Wulandari 2019, 4). Girls are perceived as multitaskers (e.g., taking care of children, garden, and livestock) and breadwinners for the whole family (Wahyudi et al. 2016, 30). The bride price is associated with a girl as a "transaction mean" which brings wealth to the family (Schwimmer 1997, 4-8). The Lani assesses children as their assets and source of happiness (Laksono and Wulandari 2019, 5-8).

**e) Domestic Violence and Emotional Problems**

Papua has one of the highest incidences of domestic violence globally (Wisely 2019, 1). Patriarchal domination becomes exploitative, causing violence against women (Mansoben et al. 2019, 65; Apituley 2015, 156). The UNDP (2016) revealed that the rate of sexual/physical violence in Papua is 38 per cent among women aged 14-64 (13). Four of five Papua women had experienced physical, emotional, and sexual abuse (Ibid., 14). Domestic violence against women and children is one of five causes of the high mortality rate in Papua (Giyai 2012, 1; UNDP Report 2016, 82). The influence of modernity, unemployment (Butt 2019; Sahlins 1999), and alcohol-drug use among men

and boys (Guttmann 1999, 44-45) breaks family relationships which may affect Lani young people's emotional development (Breiding et al. 2015, 245-9)

Lani children who witness domestic violence tend to suffer severe emotional and developmental difficulties similar to those of direct abuse victims (Armstrong, Modi, and Palmer 2014, 253). Children perceive abusive fathers as "absent and dysfunctional", which influences their gender identification (Krampe and Fairweathers 1993, 572-5) and identity development (Kallstrom 2004, 45). Boys who witness domestic violence, or become victims of abuse, are at serious risk of long-term physical and mental health problems (Armstrong et al. 2014, 253-9) and tend to externalise their behaviour to cope with a fearful situation in the family (Breiding et al. 2015, 249). Girls tend to be withdrawn and experience depression (Moylan et al. 2011, 60-2). Lani children are at greater risk of repeating the violence cycle as adults, in abusive relationships, or becoming abusers themselves (Vargas et al. 2005, 67-69).

**f) Abusive Home and Social Problems**

Mansoben et al. (2019) found that domestic violence by fathers has become a major social problem of Lani society (76). Mothers are the most influential persons for Lani children (Butt 2001, 131). Children feel secure when their mother is around them (Butt and Munro 2007, 575-6). Fathers are frightening figures for the children, who feel insecure and are hesitant to stay with their fathers without their mothers around. Young people left by dead or runaway mothers try to survive through the generosity of relatives, neighbours, and non-Papuan migrants (Ibid., 576). Thousands of Lani youth live as child workers in the market, living on the street as prostitutes or merging themselves into gangs and criminal organisations (Butt et al. 2002, 283-5).

Research on the epidemic of runaway wives and youth (Butt and Munro 2007), secret sex, sex for sale and extra-marital pregnancy (Butt 2001), and the increase of alcohol and drugs consumption (Munro 2019) relates Lani's abusive homes to youth externalised behaviours (Moylan 2011, 53-63). Sexual activities tend to modify strategies of young girls' running away to gain more control over their reproductive life and provide an opportunity to gain extra-marital relationships in a safe place (Butt and Munro 2007, 119). The increase of STD, HIV-AIDS, abortion, and homosexuality (Bensley 2004, 85; Butt, Morin, and Numbery 2010, n. p.) is linked to aggressive sexual activities among Lani youth. Seventy per cent of the HIV-AIDS victims in Papua are

Christians and primarily young women under 25 (Clarke et al. 2011, 7). Male domestic violence has become a major social problem in Lani society. External behaviours uncover the profound internal needs of vulnerable Lani youth who long for a sense of belonging and acceptance, especially from their paternal figures (Butt 2005; 2007).

## 3. Summary of Anthropological Concepts

The anthropological literature above informs us of the increasing problems of male spiritual leadership in the Melanesia and Lani tribe. The broken marriages, divorces, non-marital pregnancy, violence, and migration have created father absenteeism and single motherhood in the family. An animistic worldview, shaming culture, and patriarchal domination have increased male domestic violence against women and children in society. The issues of prosperity theology and spiritual forces have led churches to rapidly lose their authority to answer the reality of suffering and poverty, leading vulnerable youth to leave the church and return to their old animistic lifestyles. The literature identifies the need of youth for a "male spiritual leader" who becomes a model of life, moral teacher, life-skill trainer, and friend, one who walks with them to build a new strong personal relationship with God and stops repeating the violence cycle in the future.

After exploring the theological, psychological, and anthropological literature that informs the significance of spiritual fathering in discipleship, the following section briefly summarises this chapter to recognise the focus area of this research.

## D. Chapter Summary

This chapter explores the relevant literature to address the research sub-question one, "What are the theological, psychological, and anthropological insights that inform the significance of spiritual fathering as an approach to disciple the Lani youth?" Bringing the literature insights into the context of discipleship of Lani youth, some areas need to be explored to recognise the focus area of this research.

Firstly, the concept of spiritual fathering in the Scriptures relates to God's entire redemptive action to heal the relational brokenness of human life. God as the Father initiates to "invest" Himself to love and care for sinners through "divine adoption" and

becomes the spiritual father to the fatherless. God calls all fathers/father figures to embrace the responsibility as spiritual leaders and to "visit-help-prepare" the fatherless to help them thrive as Christ's followers. God uses spiritual fathering as His approach to discipleship in the Bible. Jesus' discipleship approach was paradigmatic of the concept of spiritual fathering. He invested His life to introduce God the Father to His disciples through His daily relationship with them, teaching, mentoring, guiding, training, and modelling a life that inspired His disciples to live like Him.

However, a question arises: "How this theological concept of spiritual fathering as a discipleship approach can be put 'into practice' within a culture where men are viewed negatively by increasing father absenteeism, male domestic violence against women and children, and decreasing male spiritual leadership in the family, society, and faith community". A study on "father-youth relationships" from the *emic* (i.e., insider) cultural perspective is still difficult to find. It challenges many cross-cultural mission workers to understand the youth's context and determine a more effective discipleship approach for those who face "relational problems" from their daily cultural practices. "Youth discipleship" that explores their relationship with paternal figures seems to have received little attention.

Secondly, the literature has given plenty of psychological insights that identify the importance of paternal attachment in a child's socio-emotional development. Various theorists have also found how devastatingly fatherlessness impacts a child's physical, emotional, relational, and spiritual life. However, attachment theorists recognise limited research that includes cultural influences. Most studies on parent-child attachment in the cultural context were related to "mothers" in a Western and middle-class context. Nine ethnographic studies on parent-child attachment in non-Western rural contexts (1971-2017) focused on maternal attachment. Little work has been done in the area of paternal attachment in a non-Western rural context. The literature suggests the importance of considering the cultural context in understanding father-child attachment to address differences within cultures and to enrich our understanding of human relationships in their social context.

Thirdly, the literature also identifies the need to include *fathering and emotional processes* in the discipleship of fatherless youth. The presence of a non-parental substitute father figure who provides secure emotional support in a reparative

relationship can motivate fatherless youth to regulate past negative experiences and develop an earned-secure attachment to self, others, and God. According to the researcher's knowledge, no research has been identified that includes fathering and emotional processes in the discipleship of the youth in the Lani context.

This research aims to understand how spiritual fathering can be used as an approach to disciple the Lani youth of Papua, Indonesia. Besides the literature review to lay the foundations for thinking, the researcher needs to consider the cultural approaches of fathering and its impact on youth life to understand their actual "inner" situations, and also the spiritual fathering approach that is accepted by those who have relational problems with their fathers, and the practices of spiritual fathering approach to disciple the Lani youth. Hence, Chapter Three will report on the qualitative field research using Spradley's ethnosemantics Developmental Research Sequence (DRS).

**CHAPTER 3**

**Research Methods**

This chapter describes the field research methodology for the qualitative ethnography research regarding how spiritual fathering can be used as an approach to disciple the Lani youth of Papua, Indonesia. The chapter explains the research procedures using Spradley's ethnosemantics[16] Developmental Research Sequence methods, which allow the authentic expressions of thoughts, feelings, and attitudes of the Lani youth. It helps the researcher better understand the dynamics and meaning of the father-child relationship and provides a framework to practice spiritual fathering as a discipleship approach in the Lani cultural context. The research questions and field research procedures, including the methodology, a pilot test, fieldwork process, site and informants, data collection, data analysis, trustworthiness, and ethical concerns, are outlined in this chapter.

**A. Restating Research Questions**

This study seeks to answer the central research question: "How can spiritual fathering be used as an approach to disciple the Lani youth?" Four sub-questions guided the fieldwork: 1) "What are the fathering approaches in the Lani culture?" 2) "In what ways do the fathering approaches influence the spiritual life of the Lani youth?" 3) "What is a spiritual fathering approach that is accepted by the Lani youth?" 4) "How to practice the spiritual fathering approach to disciple the Lani youth?"

**B. Research Methodology**

As mentioned, this field research uses a qualitative ethnographical approach to study the "situated activity that locates the researcher in the world of people being researched" (Denzin and Lincoln 2005, 3). The qualitative approach is suitable for research when the goal is to understand and explain a phenomenon by relying on the perception of a

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[16] Ethnosemantics or ethno-science studies "the way meaning is structured in different cultural settings" (Crystal 2008, 174) by exploring relationship between language and culture (Kerswill 2011), and how social agents recognise, produce, and reproduce social behaviours and structures (Sturtevant, 1964; Geertz, 2003).

person's experience in a given situation (Stake 2010). A qualitative approach is relevant for this research because the purpose of the study is to understand the perception and discover the meaning of the relationship between Lani youth and their fathers or father figures.

Ethnographical methods "strongly accentuate collecting data in naturalistic social settings" to better understand the culture of a group (Hammersley and Atkinson 2007, 4). Ethnography means "a portrait of a people" (Harris and Johnson 2000, 5), and is defined as a set of qualitative methods that use the cultural lens to study the meaning of the behaviour, language, social practice, and interaction among members of the cultural-sharing group through immersion in their natural context (Creswell 2007; Hammersley and Atkinson 2007; Morse 2016). Ethnography is a helpful process of discovering and describing the meaning of action and experience from the insider's point of view, and in a particular culture, to understand how informants participate in everyday social practice (Hallett and Barber 2014, 307).

Ethnography also enables the researcher to understand the problems and to design a better solution from the *emic* (insider) perspective (O'Reilly 2012). It enables the researcher to address problems, repair tensions, deal with difficulties, or improve a situation because the researcher understands the case from those involved (O'Reilly 2008; Pelto 2013). Ethnography also includes an advocacy perspective in a society in which the systems of power, prestige, and authority serve to marginalise individuals from different classes and genders, and especially to speak out against inequality and domination in a patriarchal community (Creswell 2007, 70; Thomas 2021, 30-34).

Ethnography assisted the researcher to collect information from where the group works and lives by 1) talking with them directly in their context, 2) creating a safe space to encourage them to tell their stories, 3) exploring their thoughts and feelings about their relationship with their paternal figures and with God the Father which shape their spiritual life, and, 4) working with them to find a solution to their relational problems and to answer the research questions (Creswell 2007, 37-40; Harris 2011, 68). The field research used Spradley's (1979) Developmental Research Sequence (DRS) as the procedure for gleaning data. DRS is further explained in the Fieldwork Procedures.

# C. Pilot Test

A pilot test helps to "detect any possible flaws at the early stage by identifying potential problems which may require adjustment" before being used (Gani et al. 2020, 140) and adding credibility to the research (Wijk and Harrison 2013, 570). The researcher conducted a pilot test in Surabaya, Indonesia, on 20 January 2021 with two Lani senior students, a male and a female (age 22), who know the Lani culture well, have experience in building a relationship, and in communicating with the younger Lani students. The purpose was to test whether the survey and interview questions were understandable and clear enough, determine the questions' effectiveness, and allow the researcher to practice his interview skills.

Before the pilot test began, the researcher asked the two students taking the pre-test to read the Pilot Test Participation Information Sheet (Appendix A). Once they consented to be "pilot testers", the researcher handed them the Pilot Test Consent Form (Appendix B) to be signed. First, the researcher asked them to read and answer the demographic survey. The survey was completed in 10-15 minutes. They commented that the survey's questions were clear, but they suggested using short and simple questions to gain the informants' attention quickly. They also suggested mixing the multiple-choice questions with short essays to gain more data from the informants. As the survey requested informants to answer sensitive issues about Lani family relationships, this strategy of mixing the type of question, provided more "space" for the informants to express their thoughts freely and to explore their answers more deeply in the interview process. The pilot test then continued with the interview process.

After finishing the demographic survey, the researcher conducted interviews that lasted 30-40 minutes for each pilot tester. The open-ended questions of semi-structured interviews presented ten main questions with some sub-questions. The questions were clear and easily understood by them. However, they suggested four points that need to be considered.

Firstly, they suggested the researcher be sensitive to the "father-absent" issues faced by the informants, especially those who never met their biological father before or were abused victims where the issue of emotional transference needed to be considered. The researcher needed to anticipate the possibility of "intense emotions" (anger, sadness,

etcetera) present in the interview. Secondly, they reminded the researcher to be sensitive when using "eye contact" during the interviews, as usually, Lani youth were not "comfortable" having intense eye contact during their conversations. They suggested that frequently, the researcher makes sure that the informants feel safe and comfortable telling their stories. Thirdly, they also suggested that the researcher add more questions that allow the informants to share their perspectives, even different from the standard cultural view. It would help the researcher and informants explore the more personal meaning of the father-youth relationship of Lani youth in the current situation. Lastly, the pilot test participants also suggested using non-formal or casual conversation to interview the informants, as "family issues" are rarely discussed with outsiders or non-family members. Upon completing the pilot test, the researcher amended the survey and interview questions and his interview skills to be more precise, unambiguous, and contextual in undertaking the research in the field.

## D. Fieldwork Procedure

This section provides an overview of the fieldwork procedures. These were based on Spradley's (1979) ethnosemantics Developmental Research Sequence (DRS) that guided the researcher to better understand the reality of an individual's experience by studying the meaning behind the spoken word (Frake 1962, 12-14), and for analysing problems in cultural research (Garrido 2014, 44). The informants shared their experiences, and the researcher identified common themes that emerged from the data (D'Alonzo and Sharma 2010, 235). The five aspects of Spradley's DRS method were conducted, namely: 1) locating the site, 2) choosing the informants, 3) collecting data, 4) analysing data, and 5) discovering cultural themes to answer the research questions.

### 1. The Research Site

The field research was conducted at the Jayawijaya Christian College's (JCC) dormitory in the central highlands of Papua, where the youth are preparing to be educators in remote areas. Most of the students came from the three largest ethnic groups around the central highlands, the Dani, Lani, and Yali. They have lived together in the college dormitory for an extended period. Their shared language, patterns of behaviours, and attitudes have merged into a discernible pattern (Creswell 2007, 71).

JCC is located in Wamena where the indigenous Papuans live together with migrants from Sulawesi, Maluku, Jawa, and Sumatera, creating distinctive relationships and social tensions (Munro 2013). Social conflicts were easily ignited, and several large riots occurred in 2000 and 2019, which further widened the relationship gap between Papuans and migrants. JCC students, who come mostly from remote areas of Papua, have faced a cultural collision between their traditional values, modernity, and Islamisation brought by the migrants (Bensley 1994; Munro 2016).

The researcher had personally visited JCC in 2015 and learned its vision for advancing education in remote areas of the central highlands. One significant obstacle to the teacher training in JCC is discipling these young teachers before sending them to remote areas. Many conflicts and demonstrations occurred at the campus, and tension between students and their authority figures seemed to increase from time to time. The JCC president mentioned the need for renewing its discipleship approach by addressing the family, community, and cultural relational problems. Since then, the question: "How to disciple the youth effectively?" has echoed in the researcher's heart, leading to a decision to study this problem in his doctoral study at AGST Alliance in 2017. He then chose JCC as the location for this research. As a missionary-teacher to the Lani people for eight years, the researcher recognised the need for a study that focuses on equipping Lani youth in knowing Christ in their unique context.

Before the fieldwork process, the researcher sought permission through personal conversations with the JCC president to study Lani students at the College. He agreed to support the study, allowed the college pastor to assist the researcher, and hoped to benefit from the research to equip the JCC's discipleship strategy. Once AGST Alliance Ethical Panel approved the ethical clearance application and granted permission to proceed with the fieldwork, the formal "request letter" was emailed to JCC's president (see Appendix C). Details about the fieldwork process were explained, permission to stay in the college dormitory for three months, and involvement of the local college pastor as a research assistant for this project were requested. Other forms and letters needed for the fieldwork were prepared, first drafted in English, and then translated into Bahasa Indonesia (see Table 1).

Table 1: List of Forms and Letters

| Appendix A | Pilot Test - Participant Information Sheet |
| Appendix B | Pilot Test – Consent Form |
| Appendix C | Letter to JCC President |
| Appendix D | Confidentiality Agreement for Research Assistant |
| Appendix E | Introduction Information (Opening Speech) |
| Appendix F | Participant Information Sheet |
| Appendix G | Participant Consent Form |
| Appendix H | Demographic Survey Form |

The researcher then contacted the college pastor via phone, explained the purpose and data collection procedures to him, and asked for his willingness to be involved in the project as a research assistant. Once he accepted the request, the researcher then emailed him a confidentiality agreement form (see Appendix D) to be signed as a commitment to assist in the research and to keep the research material confidential.

## 2. The Informants

This ethnographic study focused on the Lani youth between 19 and 24 years old who currently study at JCC Papua. Once the researcher arrived at the site, the college pastor introduced him to all the students during a prayer meeting and advised them that he would be present in the dormitory as a researcher for three months. He read the introduction information sheet (see Appendix E) in front of the students and also informed them that the researcher was willing to participate and help when the students needed him in the dormitory.

The researcher consulted with the JCC college pastor, who knew most of the students' family backgrounds, and sought his suggestion of possible participants. They needed to include both males and females who: 1) know the Lani culture well, 2) have had relationship problems with their fathers, 3) have had relationship[17] experiences with a substitute father figure, and 4) are available and willing to participate.

The college pastor recommended some students to be potential informants that met the research criteria. He then, along with the researcher, privately invited the potential informants to participate in the study according to their willingness and availability. He briefly introduced the research, provided space for the researcher to explain the research details, and allowed potential informants to clarify or ask questions about the research.

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[17] The experience can be a negative or positive relationship with one or more substitute father figures.

Simultaneously, the college pastor provided the Participant Information Sheet (PIS, see Appendix F) and consent forms (CF, see Appendix G) for the potential informants. The researcher then explained the PIS and CF simply and slowly because most Lani students have limited understanding of the complex Indonesian language.

As an outsider to the Lani students, the researcher realised he needed time to gain their trust. He learned to be flexible if the potential informants refused to participate in the research or sign the written consent form and needed more time to think. He ensured that all the informants gave their written consent before the data collection began. To minimise the potential for coercion, the students could take the PIS and CF to their rooms for consideration. They returned their consent forms to the college pastor within one day of the PIS explanations. This gave potential informants time to think about their involvement in the research. The researcher also allowed the informants to change their minds about involvement and use of their data at any time, but no longer than one month after they had given their information.

After listening to the explanation and reading the Participant Information Sheet (see Appendix F), twelve students (six males and six females) decided to participate in this research (see Table 2).

Table 2: Informant Demographic and Schedules

| No | ID | Age | Places of origin | 1st Interview | 2nd Interview | Transcript Validation | Interview Venues |
|----|----|-----|------------------|---------------|---------------|----------------------|------------------|
| 1 | M1 | 19 | Tolikara | 6 June | 4 July | 1 August | JCC Dormitory |
| 2 | M2 | 22 | Jayawijaya | 6 June | 1 July | 4 August | |
| 3 | M3 | 24 | Yahukimo | 7 June | 10 June | 21 July | |
| 4 | M4 | 20 | Yahukimo | 7 June | 8 July | 24 July | |
| 5 | M5 | 20 | Tolikara | 8 June | 4 July | 2 August | |
| 6 | M6 | 22 | Jayawijaya | 8 June | 7 July | 2 August | |
| 7 | F1 | 20 | Jayawijaya | 8 June | 4 July | 3 August | |
| 8 | F2 | 20 | Jayawijaya | 9 June | 8 July | 30 August | |
| 9 | F3 | 20 | Tolikara | 9 June | 8 July | 21 July | |
| 10 | F4 | 23 | Lanijaya | 10 June | 10 July | 30 August | |
| 11 | F5 | 20 | Lanijaya | 10 June | 8 July | 30 August | |
| 12 | F6 | 22 | Lanijaya | 11 June | 10 July | 1 August | |

The informants came from four different regencies across the central highlands of Papua to represent various places where most Lani people reside, namely Tolikara, Yahukimo, Lanijaya, and Jayawijaya. They grew up in families where the tradition and cultural beliefs were *strictly* taught and internalised by tribal elders. Some necessary information (names, place of origin, and some basic background and latest conditions) were

obtained from the college pastor, who knows the informants well. The informants were coded according to their gender. M was for "Male", and F was for "Female". The interview and validation discussion schedules were based on the informants' availability. The researcher realised that the rest of the students (non-informants) needed to be appreciated and reinformed about this project. Therefore, he communicated respect and appreciation to all dormitory members by participating in the dorm's daily activities and offering help whenever needed during the research.

## 3. Data Collection

The purpose of data collection was to capture the social meanings in ordinary activities of informants in natural settings (Brewer 2000, 10). Twelve informants, six females and six males, ages 19-24, participated as informants for this study, an appropriate number for qualitative research (Clarke and Braun 2013; Fugard and Potts 2015). The primary technique for collecting data in the field was through ethnographic interviews, a "series of friendly conversations into which the researcher slowly introduces new elements to assist informants to share their stories" (Aronson 1995, 1; Spradley 1979, 58). The data collection process and interview questions are described below.

### a) Data Collection Procedure

After living in the student dormitory for two weeks, a "closer relationship" was established between the researcher and the informants, and the data collection could be conducted. The objective of these interviews was to learn more about people in their natural community setting based on their own words (Allen 2017; Frake 1962).

Before the interview process, the researcher conducted a brief survey (see Appendix H) of all informants to gain basic information about their relationship with their fathers/father figures in the families, communities, or faith organisations. The survey was used as a background/context for the interview process. The researcher made "ethnographic notes" about the interaction processes, what happened before, during, and after the interview with the informants, gave attention to the language, key terms, gestures, and expressions, all to be synchronised with the interview details. He also noted the way informants used their "cultural artefacts" (Spradley 2012, 8), such as colourful bracelets, pig tusk necklaces, grassy-bag ornaments, and wristbands, as room

decorations or physical accessories for daily use[18]. The goal was to understand the meaning of the relationship of Lani youth with their father in their cultural context. The researcher wrote notes and asked for more explanation in the interview process. The daily "field journal" of personal reflections, experiences, ideas, feelings, evaluation, and problems faced during the fieldwork, also provided additional support for the data analysis process.

The interviews were conducted in *Bahasa* Indonesia. The semi-structured interviews were conducted with open-ended questions in a relaxed conversation to create a safe space for the informants to share sensitive stories about their family relationships.

The semi-structured interview encouraged two-way communication and comprehensive discussion of pertinent topics (Doyle 2020). The researcher used an "interview guide approach" (Garrido 2017) where the interviewer has the "freedom to decide sequences and wording of questions during the interview but still tried to follow a script" (44). The researcher followed the prepared question guide and flexibly followed the informants' stories needed for data collection.

The ethnographic interview involves two distinct but complementary processes: developing rapport and eliciting information. *Developing rapport* encouraged informants to talk about their culture, and eliciting information fosters the development of rapport (Spradley 1979, 78). It was a process of building a relationship and trust between the researcher and the informants. There were three stages in building rapport. The first was the *apprehension* stage, where the researcher sought to address the relationship's unfamiliarity and sense of uncertainty. In order to build trust, he ensured that informants felt safe to tell their stories by listening, showing interest, and acceptance. The second was the *exploration* stage, where the researcher listened, observed, asked questions, and showed interest without pressure. In this stage, the researcher made repeated explanations, restated what informants had said, and did not ask for meaning but the *"use"* of the information. The third was the *cooperation-participation* stage, where the researcher and informant trusted one another, and the

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[18] Cultural artefacts usually were related with fathers' gifts to their children to protect them from evil spirits or to gain success in life/study (M1 and M2).

informant was then ready to participate in the research, and the ethnographic interview could be moved on (Black and Metzger 1965; Spradley 1979).

The researcher built "rapport" and "secure relationships" by living with the informants at the students' dormitory. Both questions and answers came from informants' everyday life (Spradley 1979, 48). The researcher made detailed notes and descriptions from the things he heard, saw, felt, remembered, or something based on impressions in the interviews and daily activities with the informants in the dormitory. The researcher tried to understand by asking questions about what the informants *did* (behaviours), *said* (language), the potential tension between what they did and said, or what they made and used, such as artefacts in their daily life (Spradley 1979; 1980). Informant's questions, statements, and gestures always imply answers and must be considered carefully (Black and Metzger 1965, 144). All emic data were considered to understand the meaning of the father-youth relationship in the Lani culture.

All interviews were undertaken in the campus dormitory (e.g., football field, prayer room, study rooms, and dorm stairs). The chosen venues were comfortable locations with "less background noise" to provide a semi-private setting for the interview process (Jacob and Furgerson 2012, 7). In two interview sessions with each informant, twenty-four interviews were conducted during June-July 2021. Most of the interviews were done individually, except for F2, F4, F5, and F6, who preferred to be interviewed in a small group of two as they felt embarrassed talking with a "male-outsider" researcher privately. The informant F2 and F5 were in one group, and F4 and F6 were in another group. However, each informant was still interviewed personally in those groups of two. The interviews were carried out smoothly.

Some key terms, concepts, and quotes were thoroughly noted in three languages: Lani, Indonesia, and English. There was also one in-person validation discussion with each informant during July-August 2021, where the researcher asked the informants to re-check, discuss, and validate the transcriptions to ensure the data collection and a triangulation process[19] were accurate. The interviews lasted 40-50 minutes per session, while the transcripts' validation lasted 20-30 minutes. The interviews were taped with a

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[19] Triangulation refers to the use of multiple methods or data sources to develop a comprehensive understanding of phenomena (Carter et al. 2014, 545).

"Samsung-M20" recorder according to the informants' consent. The researcher then transcribed the voice recording into Bahasa Indonesia before the data analysis process. The researcher ensured the trustworthiness of the collected data by providing a space for the informants to give feedback or edit the data before the data analysis phase.

**b) Interview Questions**

Spradley (1979, 97), based on the relational theory of meaning (Montague 1974), introduces an essential principle of an ethnographic interview, "Do not ask for the meaning, ask for use". When the informants were asked for the *meaning* of a statement, they mostly responded with brief, referential definitions. When they were asked the *use* of the information, the informants revealed relationships between one term and other terms (97). The ethnographic interviews employed three open-ended questions in collecting data: the descriptive, structural, and contrast questions.

*Descriptive* questions were helpful to start the conversation and to keep the informants talking freely from a broad and general perspective about their experiences, daily activities, and objects-people in their lives (Malinowski 1922, 25). Descriptive questions (e.g., could you tell me about your father?) helped the researcher collect an example in the informant's language and point of view, and raise the informant's awareness on a particular topic (Spradley 1979). The purpose was to establish a general descriptive overview of domains within the study and help the researcher make domain analysis.

*Structural* questions were more specific, as they allowed the researcher to find out how informants organised their knowledge (Crane and Angrosino 1992). Structural questions (e.g., can you think of any other kinds of activities you would like to do with an adult male/father figure?) guided research into the relationships between included terms within domains (i.e., the basic unit/categories) selected for focused attention. The purpose was to discover information about the Lani youth's cultural meaning of relationship with their fathers and to help the researcher undertake taxonomy analysis.

*Contrast* questions (e.g., what is the difference between your father and other male figures in your church/school?) were used when the researcher wanted to determine the meaning of something from the informants' perspective. They guided inquiry into the similarities and differences among the terms in each domain at all levels, not just among

the first level of included terms under a given domain cover term, but also among the subsets of included terms within included terms (Spradley 1979). The purpose was to find out the meaning of the father-youth relationship from the informants' perspective and help the researcher make a componential analysis.

The interview questions were shaped by the recurring themes from the literature and pilot testers and were adapted from Krampe and Newton's (2006) Father Presence Questionnaire (FPQ) main items. The FPQ was chosen to assist the researcher's interview questions because of its comprehensive psychological construction, in order to understand the dynamics of a Lani youth relationship with their fathers, their "beliefs" and "feelings" about fathers, and the impact of father figures on their lives. The interview questions sought to achieve three purposes: 1) to raise awareness, 2) to understand reactivity (emotional attunement), and 3) to investigate receptivity of Lani youth toward their relationship with their father figures (Krampe and Newton 2006, 162). Each informant was interviewed twice. The first interview covered purposes #1 and #2, while the second interview covered purpose #3. There were ten main questions and some sub-questions asked in two interviews.

i) Questions for Interview #1

The first interview aimed to raise awareness about affective, behavioural, and cognitive/perceptual elements of the relationship of Lani youth with their father. These interviews were also designed to understand their "attunement" (i.e., emotional connection) and "reactivity" towards their relationship with their father. The physical and emotional relationship with their father, feeling about their father, the father-mother relationship, the father's influence on a youth's spiritual life, and their concept of God as the Father were explored through the interviews. Research sub-question two: "What are the fathering approaches in the Lani culture?" and research sub-question three: "In what ways do the fathering approaches influence the spiritual life of the Lani youth?" were answered through these interviews.

**Question one:** *Perception of a Father*, aimed to understand how a father was viewed in Lani culture and to help raise informants' awareness of their father's presence. The term father was redefined culturally and practically. The main question was: "Who is a father in Lani culture?" The sub-questions were: 1) "What does a father do in typical daily

life? How is the father's relationship within the family? What do you think about most of the fathers in your village?" 2) "Could you tell me about your father?"

**Question Two:** *Relationship with Father*, aimed to understand the closeness of Lani youth to their father. The main question was: "How is your relationship with your father?" The sub-questions were: 1) "How close is your relationship with your father? Do you have any childhood memory about your father?" 2) "Could you tell me what you did with your father? How do you feel when you stay close to your father?"

**Question Three:** *Feeling about Father*, aimed to understand the feelings of Lani youth toward their father and their perception of their father's feelings toward them. The main question was: "How do you feel about your father? The sub-questions were: 1) "Do you feel close to/distant from him?" 2) "Could you describe your happy/sad moments with your father?" 3) "Could you describe how your father feels about you? Do you feel that he loves and cares for you? Did he say or do something to show his love for you?" 4) "Could you describe how you feel living with/without your father?"

**Question Four:** *Perception of the Father's Influence*, aimed to understand how a father influences a youth's life. The main question was: "In what way does your father influence your spiritual life?" The sub-questions were: 1) "What did he teach you about life? How did his teaching influence your behaviour and relationships (with friends, the opposite sex, and God?" 2) "How is your father's spiritual life? What do you need from your father to help you be a better Christian and to live a better life?"

**Question Five:** *Perception of God as the Father*, aimed to understand the youth's perception of God as Father. The main question was: "What do you think about God as Father? The sub-questions were: 1) "What does God look like to you?" 2) "How would you describe your relationship with God as Father?" 3) "Could you tell me your personal experiences or thoughts that made you feel that God is close or distant from you? Do you feel it is easy/difficult to accept God as a Good Father who always loves or wants to help you?"

ii) Questions for Interview #2

The second interview aimed to understand the receptivity and openness of Lani youth towards substitute fathering figures (e.g., spiritual fathers) in their lives and to find

some practical approaches of spiritual fathering to disciple Lani youth. Research sub-question four: "What is a spiritual fathering approach that is accepted by the Lani youth?" and research sub-question five: "How to practice the spiritual fathering approach to disciple the Lani youth?" were answered through these interviews.

**Question Six:** *Involvement in Faith Community*, aimed to understand the Lani youth's perspective on the Christian community (e.g., church, youth ministry, campus fellowship) and its impact on their spiritual growth. The main question was: "What is your involvement in a Christian community?" The sub-questions were: 1) "Do you feel you grow/stagnate/decline in the Christian community? What makes you grow/stagnate/decline spiritually in the Christian community?" 2) "How does the Christian community's discipleship model support/impede your spiritual life?"

**Question Seven:** *Relationship with Male Figures in the Faith Community*, aimed to understand the presence of the male figures in the Christian community and the feelings of youth about those male figures. The main question was: "What do you think about male figures in your Christian community (e.g., pastor, youth minister)? The sub-questions were: 1) "Do you have any relationship with a male figure in your Christian community? How is your relationship with him?" 2) "How do you feel (close/distant/supported/helped/served) about him/his presence? 3) "How significant is his presence, and how does it affect your life?"

**Question Eight:** *Characteristics of Male Figure*, aimed to identify the characteristics of the adult male figure accepted by Lani youth. The main question was: "What kinds of adult male figure do you accept who impacts your life positively?" The sub-questions were: 1) "Can you think of any activities you would like to do with the adult male figure?" 2) "What kind of male figure do you like/dislike to have in your Christian community?" 3) "What are some criteria that motivate you to build a relationship with him?"

**Question Nine:** *Response to the Presence of Spiritual Father Figure*, aimed to identify the acceptance by Lani of the presence of a spiritual father who fills the "father-gap" of fatherless youth. The main question was: "What do you think about a "spiritual father", a substitute father figure who comes to develop a personal relationship with you; to love and care, to guide, protect and provide for you?" The sub-questions were: 1) How do

you feel about his presence? 2) What is your response when an adult male figure wants to be your spiritual father and accept you as his spiritual child? 3) What kind of father figure do you accept as a spiritual father for you?

**Question Ten:** *The Ministry of Spiritual Fathering*, aimed to identify what a spiritual father can do to lead Lani youth into discipleship in Christ. The main question was: "What can the spiritual father do to help you grow to be a faithful disciple of Jesus?" The sub-questions were: 1) "What does your relationship with a spiritual father look like in daily life? 2) What do you expect a spiritual father to do to help/assist you to live as Christ's follower?"

## 4. Data Analysis

In this research, data analysis began a short time after data collection to shape the direction of next/future data collection (Hatch 2010, 149), which continued during and after the data collection process. DRS's ethnographic analysis was used to "search for the parts of a culture and their relationships among those parts as conceptualised by informants" (Spradley 1979, 93). The researcher analysed the interview transcripts in the order of the interviews conducted, one at a time, allowing him to carefully search for cultural symbols and the relationships between those symbols that lead to discovering cultural meanings that people use. Data analysis involved a "systemic examination of social behaviours recorded in the fieldwork to determine its parts, the relationship among its parts, and their relationship to the whole" (Spradley 1980, 85). The researcher described the data and examined relationships between the data, to understand the cultural meanings of action and experiences shared by the informants ((Reeves et al. 2013, 1370; Creswell 2007, 70-72). The purpose was to find cultural themes and meanings from the insider's point of view (Spradley 2012, 6).

The researcher used Spradley's DRS model (1979) to analyse the collected data. This model identifies four essential assertions in data analysis: 1) Cultural meaning systems are encoded in symbols. 2) Language is the primary symbol system that encodes cultural meaning in every society. 3) The meaning of any symbol is its relationship to other symbols in a particular culture. 4) The task of ethnography is to decode cultural symbols and identify the underlying coding rules by discovering the relationships among cultural symbols (88-99). He conducted four analytic processes: domain,

taxonomic, componental, and theme analysis, to identify cultural themes based on the ethnographic records, including interviews, field notes, recordings, and other relevant documents. The researcher consistently looked for patterns in Lani students' language, thoughts, and behaviours, comparing and analysing many patterns simultaneously (Sugiyono 2007, 347). By analysing the ethnographic interviews, the researcher acquired a deeper understanding of the Lani father-youth relationship and identified the cultural themes that answered the research questions (Spradley 1979).

**a) Domain Analysis**

After ethnographic interviews using descriptive questions, the researcher collected general cultural concepts to conduct a domain analysis. Cultural concepts were in the form of cultural knowledge, behaviours, and artefacts recorded in the interview process. The researcher did a preliminary domain[20] search that focused on searching for "folk domains" and informants' original terms/names for things they experienced, which occurred in the interviews (Spradley 1979, 107). The preliminary domain search helped the researcher start the systematic domain analysis procedures.

Domain analysis is the first stage in ethnographic data analysis, a process for reviewing field notes to "discover the domains of meaning associated with the lives of people studied" (Spradley 1979, 100). The purpose is to search for the larger or general units of cultural knowledge (Lee et al. 2011, 53). Domains are categories of cultural meaning, including sub-categories semantically related (Garrido 2017, 45). The researcher looked for cultural terms and symbols that occurred in the interviews and identified relationships among terms and symbols in and between the domains used by informants. The terms and symbols were grouped into domains according to their similarity in cultural subjectivity. The structure of a domain includes 1) 'included terms', which are several different terms in the same category, 2) 'cover terms' such as the head or name of a category, and 3) 'semantic relationships', where two categories were linked together. The domain was established when the interviewer referred to the concepts or terms used (not meaning) (Ibid., 45). The researcher searched for included terms for the semantic relationships. Spradley (1979, 111), using Casagrande and Hale (1967), proposes nine types of widely used semantic relationships to find out the description of the problem/topic being analysed in domain analysis. They are: 1) strict inclusion

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[20] Domain is any symbolic category that includes other categories (Spradley 1979, 100).

(form), 2) spatial (area), 3) cause-effect (result), 4) rationale (reason), 5) location for action (place), 6) function (use), 7) means-end (way to do), 8) sequence (step), and (9) attribution (characteristic). Semantic relationships allowed the informants to "refer to all the subtleties of meaning connected to its folk terms" (Spradley 1979, 108). The researcher then looked for similarities among the various semantic relationships to identify suitable types for the domain.

Following Spradley's (1979) methods, the researcher conducted the six-step process of domain analysis, that is, 1) selecting a single semantic relationship, 2) preparing a domain analysis worksheet, 3) selecting a sample of informant statements, 4) searching for possible cover terms and included terms that fit the semantic relationship appropriately 5) repeating the domain search using different semantic relationships, and 6) making a list of all the identified domains (Spradley 1979; Sugiono 2010). Once the list of identified domains was established, the following interviews using structural questions and taxonomic analysis were conducted to reveal subsets and how the domains related to the whole cultural meaning (Garrido 2017, 45; Spradley 1979).

**b) Taxonomic Analysis**

After the domain analysis, the researcher focused on the informants' responses to the structural questions of the interviews. The structural questions explored the organisation of informants' cultural knowledge that led the researcher to clarify the domains, "cover terms", and "included terms" found in the domain analysis, and to discover more symbols or included terms (Spradley 1979, 131-133). Spradley's model begins with a broad focus of domain analysis, then narrowing for intensive investigation of a few selected in-depth and focused domains. A taxonomic analysis is an in-depth analysis of the cultural meaning system to discover how people have organised their tacit (i.e., implicit) and explicit cultural knowledge related to the focus of the research. The purpose is to search for the internal structure of domains that identify contrasting sets (Lee et al. 2011, 53).

Taxonomy is different from the domain as it shows the relationships among all the folk (included) terms in a domain. The taxonomic analysis includes a set of categories organised based on a single semantic relationship that shows the relationships among all the included terms in a domain and reveals subsets of folk terms and the way these subsets are related to the domain in a systematic way (Leech and Onwuegbuzie 2007,

572). The researcher systematically organised the folk taxonomies from what people said or did during the interviews (Spradley 1979,138).

Spradley's (1979) eight-step taxonomic analysis was used in this research: 1) to select a domain for taxonomic analysis, 2) to identify the appropriate substitution frame for analysis, 3) to search for possible subsets among the included terms, 4) to search for larger, more inclusive domains that might include a subset within the one being analysed, 5) to construct a tentative taxonomy, 6) to formulate structural questions to verify taxonomic relationships and elicit new terms, 7) to conduct additional structural interviews; and 8) to construct a completed taxonomy (132-54). The researcher subsequently returned to the interviews' transcripts and field notes to expand the list of details of included terms associated with the domain selected according to the focus of this research. The researcher moved from analysing the broad and general domains (domain analysis) in culture to an in-depth analysis of one or more focused domains through taxonomic analysis.

**c) Componential Analysis**

The researcher conducted componential analysis after the relationships between terms were found, and the differences between the sub-components of domains were identified in the taxonomic analysis. Componential analysis is used when "a researcher is trying to uncover relationships between words" (Leech and Onwuegbuzie 2007, 574). The basic idea in the componential analysis is that all folk terms in a domain could be decomposed into combinations of semantic features to give the cultural meaning Spradley (1979, 175).

Spradley (1979) defines componential analysis as a "systematic search for attributes (i.e., components of the meaning) which are associated with cultural symbols" (174) and "related to folk terms" (Ibid., 175). The purpose is to search for contrasts, sort them out, group some together as dimensions of the contrast, and enter all this information onto a paradigm (Lee et al. 2011, 53). The contrast questions were asked in the interviews with three purposes: 1) to discover contrasts among the cultural terms of a domain, 2) to distinguish between included terms and their subsets, both tacit and explicit, and 3) to find a more prominent component of meaning from the informants being researched (Spradley 1979, 171-5). The researcher focused on the multiple relationships between folk terms and other symbols. Componential analysis was a way

to organise and represent these newly contrasted terms to discover the psychological reality of the informants' world and understand the meanings in which informants associated with their experiences (Ibid., 176).

In the componential analysis, the researcher subsequently visited his field notes to verify the taxonomic analysis by selecting one or more domains of interest from those already found in the taxonomic analysis. While reviewing the elements of the selected domains, the researcher found the most important attributes for any set of folk terms. An inventory was made for all contrasts previously identified by using a paradigm, a "schematic representation of the attributes that distinguish the members of a contrast set" that shows "multiple semantic relationships" (Spradley 1979, 176-7). The researcher identified dimensions of contrast with "dichotomies or binary values", which combined closely related dimensions of contrast into multiple values. The researcher recognised the missing attributes, prepared contrast questions, and conducted a second ethnographic interview with the informants to elicit missing attributes and new dimensions of contrast. The researcher then prepared a complete paradigm to see the pattern emerging before moving to theme analysis to discover the cultural themes of people researched (Ibid., 178-84).

**d) Theme Analysis**

The *theme* is an "element in the cognitive principles, tacit or explicit, which make up a culture" and "recurrent in several domains and serving as a relationship among subsystems of cultural meaning" (Ibid., 186). The theme is used to denote the fact that the data are grouped around a central issue (Brink and Wood 1994, 215) and to describe a structural meaning unit of data that is essential to presenting qualitative findings. (Streubert and Carpenter 1995, 317). Most cultural themes are "tacit" knowledge where people barely recognise their cultural knowledge but practically express it in behaviours and solving problems (Opler 1945, 198).

Cultural themes are derived from patterns of "conversation topics, vocabulary, recurring activities, expressions, feelings, folk sayings, proverbs, and mottos" (Taylor and Bogdan 1989, 131). They can be identified by linking all the components of informants' stories together to form a comprehensive picture of their collective experience where different components fit together in a meaningful way (Leininger 1985, 60). The search for themes involves identifying another part of a culture to find cognitive principles that

frequently appear and relate to the different subsystems of the culture (Spradley 1979, 189).

Theme analysis was used to understand and convey a holistic sense of the entire cultural scene (Spradley 1980, 151). It involves "searching for the relationships among domains and how they are linked to the culture" (Lee et al. 2011, 53). It assumes that "every culture and cultural scene consists of a pattern and system of meaning which is integrated into larger pattern" (Spradley 1979, 140) and "signifies how the cultural group works and lives as a whole" (Creswell 2007, 71).

In conducting theme analysis, the researcher used the immersion strategy, where the researcher lived together with the informants for three months, built more profound relationships with them, and carefully listened to their stories and feedback, to "generate insights into the themes of the culture" (D'Andrade 1976, 179). Immersion is "the most frequent and effective technique used for studying the cultural meaning systems to develop a means of testing the study's accuracy" (Agar 1976, as cited in Spradley 2016, 190). The patterns of informants' common ideas and experiences were listed. The researcher then identified all data that relate to the already classified patterns by making a cultural inventory through four steps: 1) making a list of cultural domains, 2) making a list of possible unidentified domains, 3) making a list of examples, 4) gathering the miscellaneous data, to discover the cultural scenes (Spradley 1979, 191-5).

The researcher made a componential analysis of all cover terms as a contrast set, identified larger domains, searched for similarities among dimensions of contrast, identified an organising domain, made a schematic diagram to visualise the relationships between domains, and searched for universal cultural themes of the scene (194-8). All the data that fit the classified pattern were identified, placed together with corresponding patterns, and combined into sub-themes (Aronson 1995, 2). When the pattern emerged, the researcher used the interview transcriptions, asked the informants to give feedback about the emerging pattern, and integrated the feedback into the theme analysis. Once the themes had been found, the researcher built a valid argument for choosing those themes by referring to the literature and interview findings. Then, the researcher interwove the identified themes and relevant literature to formulate the cultural themes to address the research questions.

## E. Trustworthiness

Trustworthiness is a central aspect of qualitative research, which refers to "the degree of confidence in data, interpretation, and methods used to ensure the quality of a study" (Polit and Beck 2014, 489), the close relationship between the data collected and repo rted, and the real phenomenon being studied (Trimmer 2016). Credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability (Lincoln and Guba 1985) establish the trustworthiness of the research.

Firstly, *credibility* refers to the researcher's confidence in the truth of conducting the study, procedures, and findings (Guba 1981, 79; Polit and Beck 2014, 106). He ensured that the research findings were true and accurate by using triangulation, combining theories and methods, taking thorough field notes, and asking the informant to re-check/validate to ensure the data were credible.

Secondly, *transferability* refers to how the researcher demonstrates that the research findings apply or are helpful to persons in other contexts (Guba 1981, 80; Lincoln and Guba 1985). The researcher ensured that the findings were transferable for other research in similar situations, populations, and phenomena. He ensured the chosen informants have the knowledge and experience to discuss the phenomenon he seeks to explore, and using thick descriptions, namely: feelings, actions, meanings (Ponterotto 2006), to show that the findings become meaningful to outsiders from other contexts, circumstances, and situations (Polit and Beck 2014, 111).

Thirdly, *confirmability* is the "degree of neutrality" in the findings which are linked to the conclusions in a way that can be followed and replicated (Moon et al. 2016; Polit and Beck 2014). The researcher ensured the findings were based on informants' emic responses by minimising bias through listening attentively to the informants, writing the detailed field notes and transcriptions (Leedy and Ormrod 2013), choosing the proper venue for interviews (Jacob and Furgerson 2012), and setting clear rules and following them diligently (Yin 2011).

Lastly, *dependability* is how other researchers could repeat the study and that the findings would be consistent (Guba 1981, 80). The consistency of the research process could be followed, audited, critiqued, and repeated by other researchers (Polit et al.

2006; Streubert 2007). The research must be accessible to aid trustworthiness (Yin, 2011). The researcher displayed the research design transparently, including the details of data collection (Guba 1981; Tong et al. 2007) to show that detailed methods have been followed appropriately (Shenton 2004) and to ensure the stability of the data over time and conditions.

## F. Ethical Considerations

The researcher realised that ethnographic research has more ethical problems than many research methods because it examines people's lives, behaviours, attitudes, and beliefs (Hammersley 1990). Ethical boundaries guided the researcher to ensure no harm was done, and the informants were protected and respected (Ashwanden 2002). He raised his sensitivity to "vulnerable populations, imbalanced power relations and placing participants at risk" (Hatch 2002, 44), and considered his role as an outsider to the informants (Weis and Fine 2000). The researcher ensured that ethics remained the highest priority during the study.

This research was done overtly (i.e., openly and honestly) to enable the researcher to build rapport, establish respectful relationships with informants, and learn from them. All the informants were over 18 years of age and could participate independently in the research. The informants were well informed about the research, and the informed "consent form" was provided to each informant before the interviews and voice recordings. Respect for the informants' privacy, anonymity, and confidentiality were prioritised in this research. After the interviews, the researcher offered them the transcript of their interview to peruse and comment on, edit, or change according to their own decisions in order to respect their rights. All informants understood that their participation was entirely voluntary, and that they had the right to stop being part of the project and to withdraw at any time. They also knew they had the right to withdraw their information (data) for up to one month without giving any reason.

When living with the informants for three months, the researcher maintained the ethical boundaries through five considerations: 1) respecting the daily lives of individuals at the site, 2) being responsible when collecting and keeping a wide variety of materials, 3) being respectful when deciding who owns the data and always asking permission to use the data, 4) being sensitive to the fieldwork's issues (e.g., how researchers gain access,

giving back to the informants, and being ethical in all research aspects), and 5) being patient, waiting and flexible, willing to adjust timing to when the informants were ready to share their stories. The researcher humbly, respectfully, and attentively listened to the counsel of local leaders (college pastors, senior teachers) to help him raise his social and cultural sensitivity and minimise the harm of his presence in the location. The result of the research may be used to benefit and solve the problem of the tribe being researched. Finally, all the data were carefully and confidentially stored safely and destroyed three years after the research was done.

### G. Chapter Summary

The purpose of this chapter is to describe the research methodology for the qualitative ethnographic research related to how spiritual fathering can be used as an approach to disciple the Lani youth of Papua Indonesia. The research procedures, including methods, pilot test, fieldwork processes, the site and informants, data collection, data analysis, data trustworthiness, and ethical considerations, were addressed in this chapter. Spradley's ethnosemantics Developmental Research Sequence was used to process the informants' authentic expression of their thoughts, feelings, and attitudes to understand the meaning of the father-youth relationship. The research analysis process and findings are set out in Chapter Four.

**CHAPTER 4**

**Research Analysis and Findings**

This chapter analyses and discusses the field research findings from Chapter 3. The process applies the four steps of Spradley's (1979) ethnosemantics data analysis method of: 1) domain analysis, 2) taxonomic analysis, 3) componential analysis, and 4) theme analysis, as outlined in Chapter 3. The informants' emic terms and phrases were analysed to identify the cultural themes that define father-youth relationships in the Lani culture. This chapter includes tables and graphics to present the detailed cultural symbols, domains, and themes found in this ethnographic research to address the research sub-questions two, three, four, and five.

**A. Data Collection**

As stated in Chapter 3, this ethnographic study focused on youth from the Lani tribe, those aged 19-24 from four different regencies across the Central Highlands of Papua (see Table 2). The informants are male and female who knew the Lani culture well, had relationship problems with their fathers, had relationship experiences with a substitute father figure, and were available to participate in this research. All informants grew up in a traditional family where animistic cultural beliefs are still practised. Twelve informants were interviewed twice, with a total of twenty-four interviews conducted to collect the data. The open-ended questions in semi-structured interviews were asked in friendly conversations to create a safe space for the informants to share sensitive stories about their family relationships.

**B. Data Analysis**

Before analysing data, the researcher listened to the ten hours of voice recordings several times, read 152 pages of interview transcripts, and twenty-eight pages of field notes to ensure familiarity with the data, and that the informants' original folk terms and phrases, both in Indonesian and Lani language were transcribed accurately before translating them into English and conducting the domain analysis.

## 1. Domain Analysis

Domain analysis was conducted to identify the cultural domains (i.e., category of cultural meaning) raised by the informants (Atkinson and Haj 1996, 148). Firstly, using descriptive questions, the researcher searched for a general description and prepared a preliminary domain search. The data were analysed manually, breaking down all the symbols (i.e., names for things) used by the informants as responses to the interview questions. He listed the verbs and nouns of symbols to establish what was important, based on the frequency of their use by the informants. The researcher asked questions such as: "What is this?" How do the informants explain this?" and "Is this related to that?" He also used his field notes and journal to recall the informants' gestures, facial expressions, and other non-verbal responses when they used the phrases or terms to tell their stories. Repeated phrases were specially highlighted. After thoroughly searching out, adding, and segmenting terms/phrases, 556 broad concepts (terms and symbols) were listed (see Table 3).

Table 3: List of Broad Concepts

| Broad concepts | Number of Concept |
|---|---|
| 1. Perception on father | 163 |
| 2. Relationship with father | 48 |
| 3. Feeling about Relationship with father | 37 |
| 4. Father's Influence on Youth's Life | 85 |
| 5. Involvement in Faith Community | 22 |
| 6. The presence of another father figure | 98 |
| 7. Characteristics of another father figure | 81 |
| 8. Response to the presence of spiritual father | 14 |
| 9. The Ministry of spiritual father | 8 |

The researcher then analysed the relationship between the symbols by identifying semantic relationships and grouping the 556 broad concepts according to their semantic relationship. The broad concepts of informants' responses were categorised according to "cover terms" and "including terms" that fit the semantic relationships appropriately. After initially coding the informant's responses, four semantic relationships were used, namely "strict inclusion" (a kind of) in 96 concepts, "attribution" (a characteristic of) in 25 concepts, "cause-effect" (a result of) in 21 concepts, and "means-end" (a way to do) in 7 concepts of informants' responses (see Appendix I). For example, Table 4 shows that a domain of "Father" was made by including a symbol with its referent meaning through a "strict inclusion" relationship.

Table 4: Domain of "Father"

| Included Terms | | Semantic Relationship | Cover Term | Structural Questions |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Biological father<br>Adult male<br>Male acts like a father<br>Valuable adult male | Powerful leader<br>Close male figure<br>Well-known man<br>Males who care/feed me | Strict Inclusion<br> X is a kind of Y | Father (Nogoba) | Who are any other kinds of fathers in the culture? |

By using a *strict inclusion* relationship, the researcher found that "*Nogoba*" was used to address "father" in the Lani language and referred to different kinds of male figures, such as biological father, adult male, male who acts like a father, valuable male, powerful leader, close male figure, or a well-known male who shows care by feeding. The informants' answers about the "kinds of father" indicated the significance of how people used the term "father" broadly, based on their relationship with particular figures. The researcher continued this process and used semantic relationships to identify more domains. Finally, eleven general folk domains (see table 5) with 149 included terms were added (see Appendix I).

Table 5: General Folk Domains

| General Folk Domains | |
|---|---|
| 1. Father (*Nogoba*) | 7. Substitute Father |
| 2. Father's Power Relation | 8. Relationship with substitute father |
| 3. Uncle's (Nami) Animistic Power | 9. Characteristics of substitute father |
| 4. Problem of father's absence | 10. Response to spiritual father's presence |
| 5. Feeling of father's absence | 11. Ministry of Spiritual fathering |
| 6. Influence of father's absence on spiritual life | |

Following this analysis, the researcher revisited the transcripts and field notes and asked structural questions (see Appendix I) to expand the included terms associated with the eleven general folk domains as focused attention. The researcher asked, "Who are other 'kinds of father' in the culture?" and found that all informants consistently mentioned, "a kind of" other paternal figure developed from an animistic worldview called "*Nami*" (i.e., uncle/mother's brother) who was believed to have higher spiritual power/authority over children than a biological father. Three informants (M5, F2, and F4) explained that *Nami* could also be addressed as "*Nami Nogoba*", an uncle functioning as a father. The researcher continued to ask more structural questions for all general folk domains to identify more included terms. The relationships among the included terms were clarified. Once the list of hypothesised domains was established (see Appendix I), the researcher moved from analysing the broad and general domains to a more in-depth

analysis of focused domains. According to their similarities, eleven general folk domains were grouped into four "focused domains" (see Figure 1) namely: "Father", "Power", "Influence, and "Presence", and were used for the taxonomic analysis (see Appendix J).

Figure 1: Focused Domains
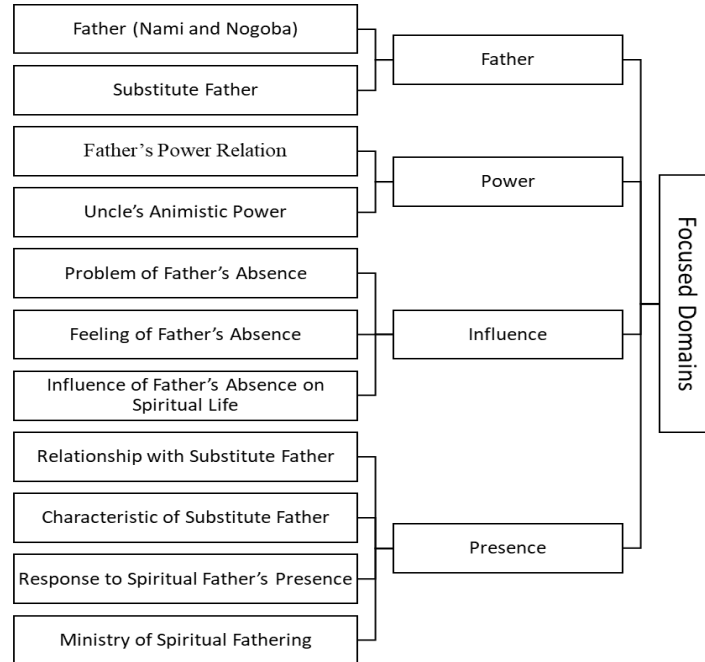


## 2. Taxonomic Analysis

The researcher conducted the taxonomic analysis to identify the internal structure of the domains by identifying *subsets* within a domain and the relationships between these subsets (Spradley 1979, 144). Included terms were first organised systematically within a domain using the responses from the structural questions to collect more of them. The substitute frame (similar to a semantic relationship) was identified to differentiate those included terms and to continue searching for possible subsets among the included terms. Similar included terms were grouped in a subset of a more inclusive term (see Figure 2).

Figure 2: Taxonomy of "Father"
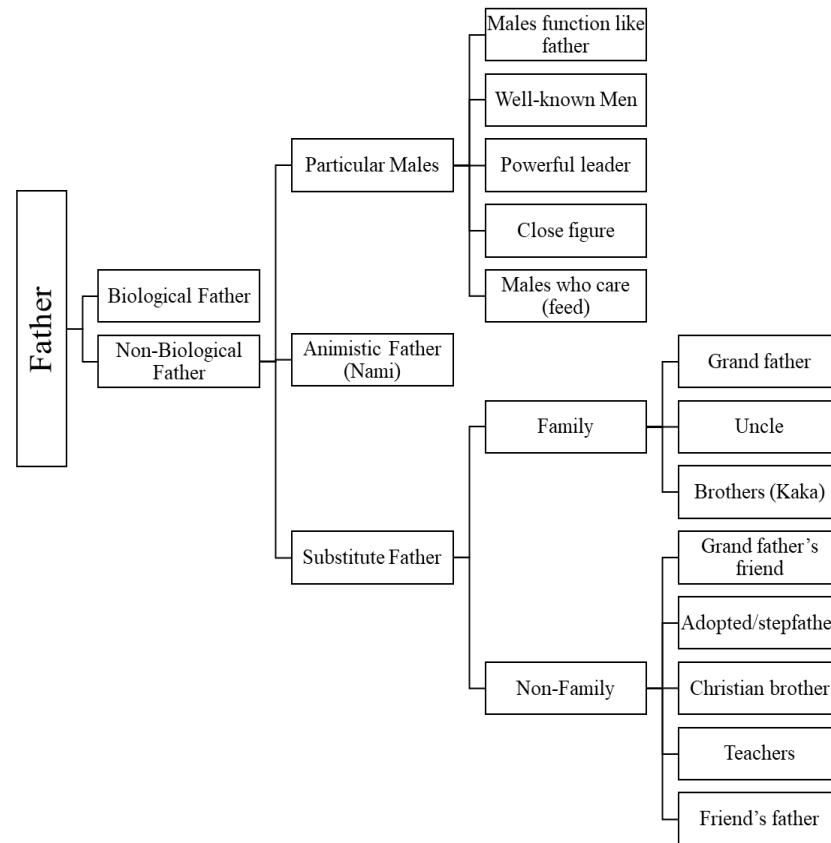


For example, in the domain "father", the informants (M4, M5, M6, F1, F2, F4, F5, and F6) explained that *Nogoba* was used not only to address a biological father, but also inclusively to address some kinds of "adult male". They mentioned that "males who function like a father", such as "a powerful male figure", "a close male figure", "a well-known man", and "males who feed them", could be addressed as *Nogoba*. These five symbols were then included under a subset term of "particular adult males" and, together with the animistic father *Nami* to be subset terms under the "non-biological father" as part of "kinds of fathers" in the Lani culture.

When asked more structural questions, all informants mentioned some adult males who were present as their substitute fathers when their fathers were absent or neglected them. There were two subsets of substitute fathers: 1) family members (i.e., grandfather, uncle from father, and brother) and 2) non-family members (i.e., a friend of grandfather, an adopted or stepfather, a Christian brother, teachers, and a friend's father). Surprisingly, most informants (M3, M5, M6, F2, F3, F4, F5, and F6) mentioned *Kaka* or older brother as their substitute father figure. Even though informants M1 and M5 said that "Kaka" could also be called *Nogoba*, most informants (M3, M5, M6, F2, F3, F4, F5,

and F6) agreed that *Kaka* could not be called *Nogoba*, but could be accepted as a father figure, *"who cared for me like a father"* (Informant M1, M5).

A substitute father was another folk concept of "a father" for the Lani youth, which was then included under the subset term "non-biological father". Different levels of subsets as substitution frames were also recognised, describing the emic language of the informants. Another example, in the taxonomy of the "father's power relationships" (see Figure 3), the included terms were organised into levels of subsets.

Figure 3: Taxonomy of "Father's Power Relations"
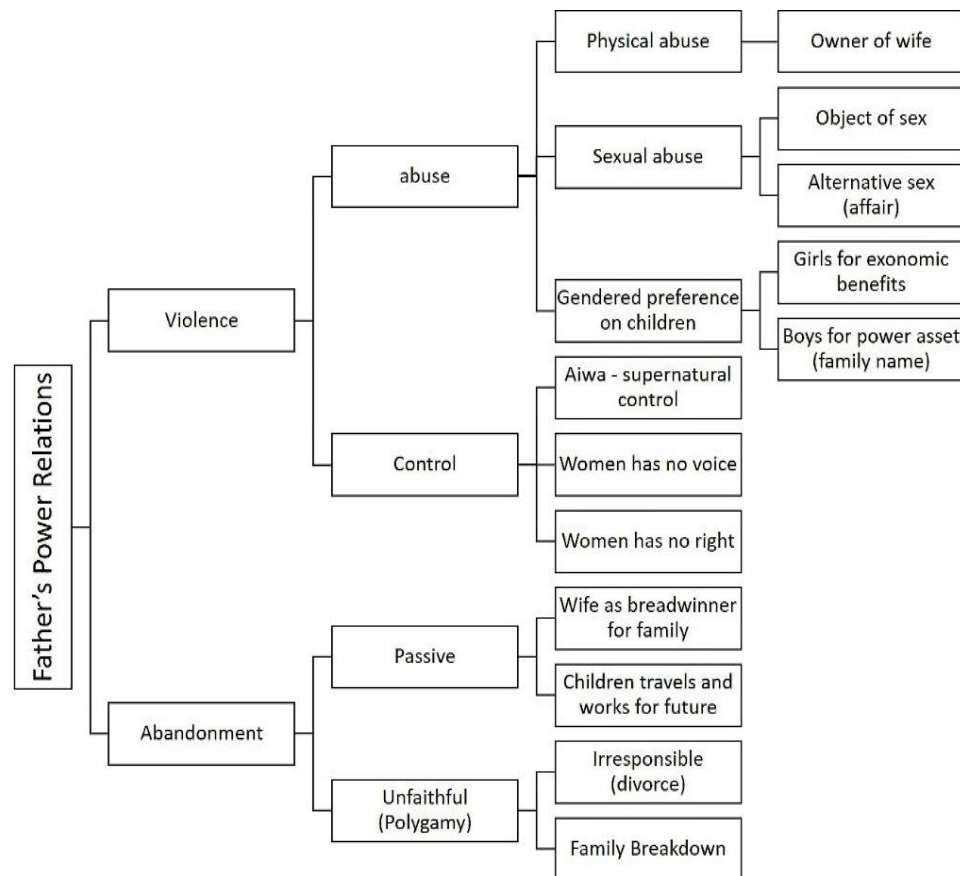


These different levels of subset terms indicated a set of categories showing the relationship among the symbols inside the domain and potentially served as the cultural meaning for informants of "father relationships". The domain "Father's power relations" was then subdivided into "violence" and "abandonment" and divided further into smaller subsets: "abuse", "control", "passive", and "unfaithful". These subsets were again divided into smaller domains to express the cultural meaning of a father's domestic relationships. This process continued for the other domains to determine the internal structure of the domains. A tentative taxonomy was developed, and the

taxonomic relationships of the subsets were verified before a complete taxonomy was constructed (see Appendix J).

Based on these taxonomies, the analysis moved from a broad focus of finding domains to an in-depth ethnographic focus related to the aims of this research: to understand Lani youth's relationship with their father figures. Contrast questions were used to identify similarities and differences among the terms at all levels of subsets in each domain (William 2020, 118). Dyadic and triadic questions were used to compare two or more included terms or subsets in a domain (e.g., "In what ways are these two things similar and different?", "Which two are most alike in some way, but different from the third?"). For example, each element of "Animistic Father" (see table 6) was grouped in a spreadsheet according to the level of subsets. According to earlier field notes, all elements in each level were then compared by answering the three contrast questions: "What is the difference between competitor, problem solver, and owner?" "Which two are most alike but different from the third?" "In what ways are sacrifice, negotiate, rule, and curse similar and different?"

Table 6: Animistic Father's (*Nami*) Level of Subsets

| Level 1 | Level 2 | Level 3 |
|---------|---------|---------|
| Competitor | Sacrifice | Provide care to gain power |
| Problem Solver | Negotiate | *Nogoba* dysfunction, *Nami* influence |
| Owner | Rule | Obedience |
| | Curse | Respect |
| | | Provide gifts |
| | | Curse determines youths' future |
| | | Motivation for action: fear of curse |
| | | Bride Payments |

In subset level 1, three kinds of *Nami*'s role were contrasted: competitor, problem solver, and owner. "Competitor" and "owner" had a similar purpose - to gain control over the children, but the intent of "problem solver" was to gain financial benefit from the children through bride prices and customary payments. Four terms in subset level 2 were contrasted: sacrifice, negotiate, rule, and curse, and the relationships between them identified. "Sacrifice" is a way to "rule" over the children, and "curse" is a way to "negotiate" power with children.

In subset level 3, three contrasting concepts were found. First, "gained power versus given power". *Nami* gained the power to influence children by providing their daily needs (e.g., food, school, finance). However, *Nami* also had a given animistic power to

require obedience, respect, and to expect gifts from the children. Second, "weak *Nogoba* versus strong *Nami*". *Nami*'s power would become more influential when *Nogoba* is not functioning well. The weaker the *Nogoba*, the stronger the *Nami*'s influence on children. Third, "fear of *Nami* versus dedication to the family". The fear of *Nami*'s curse (i.e., bad luck in future life) was the motivation behind every child's action and submission. However, the bride payment is a girl's commitment to bring happiness and wealth *Nami, Nogoba,* and her entire family members. The elements of contrasts and similarities can be identified to conduct a componential analysis by asking contrast questions about all terms in all selected domains (see Appendix K). The responses to these contrast questions established the dimension of contrast used in the componential analysis.

## 3. Componential Analysis

In the previous analysis, elements were organised from the general patterns in the descriptive detail of field notes into relevant structures. Contrasts and similarities were identified and clarified between subsets within domains. The researcher then conducted componential analysis by systematically "searching for attributes (i.e., components of meaning) associated with cultural symbols" (Spradley 1979, p. 174). Contrasts among the category members were identified, especially from the first and second levels of subsets, which served as the attributes or components of meaning for any terms. Relevant contrasts were then grouped in "contrast inventory" (see Appendix L), and dimensions of contrast[21] were identified and included in a paradigm sheet (Table 7).

Table 7: Paradigm Sheet

| Contrast set | Dimensions of Contrast | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Super natural power | Power relations | Compete to influence | Effect youth spiritual life | Present in youth life | Feeling / emotions | Good character and actions | Role Model of life |
| Biological father | Yes | Yes | Yes/No | Yes | No | Ambivalent | No | No |
| Animistic father | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | No | Reject | No | No |
| Particular figure | No | No | No | N/A | N/A | N/A | Yes | N/A |
| Substitute father | No | No | No | Yes | Yes | accept | Yes | Yes |

---

[21] A dimension of contrast is a concept that has at least two values (binary).

The researcher then contrasted a set of "fathers" with all other terms from the related domains (see Appendix L), focusing on the first and second levels of subsets. Eight relevant dimensions of contrast were used to search for attributes of "father" in the Lani culture: "supernatural power", "power relations", "compete to influence", "effect on spiritual life", "present in youth' life", "feeling/emotions", "good character and actions", and "role model of life". These attributes help to understand the father-youth relationship and serve as a relationship among all sub-systems of Lani father's cultural meaning. Each kind of "father" can be viewed differently.

Since the biological father and animistic father were believed to have supernatural power, they must compete to influence the children. The particular male figure and substitute father did not compete to influence the children. However, all four kinds of fathers affected the spiritual life of youth by their presence or absence. The responses on the paradigm sheet also explained the contrast of feelings, emotions, and hope expressed by the informants according to their relationships with their different kinds of father figures in life. Component analysis assisted to understand the meaning of "father figures" according to the youth's experiences with them in the cultural practices.

The next stage of the process focused on the most relevant domains. A pattern emerged from the data that focused on the four domains: "father", "power", "influence", "presence". These "selected" domains are related to all the folk domains (see Table 5) and focused domains (see Figure 1) previously identified. The central point that links those four domains was named the "concept of spiritual fathering in Lani culture", a concept of male spiritual leadership that influences the Lani youth's spiritual life practically and culturally (see Figure 4).

Figure 4: Four "selected" domains
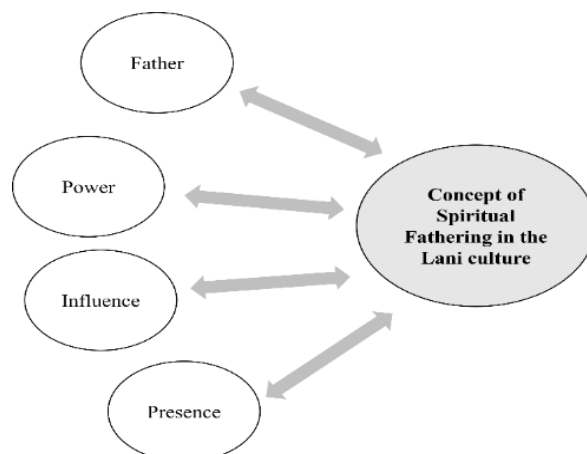
"Father" was the pivotal domain that provided a concept of male spiritual leadership in the culture. The term, "Father" has different but also personal meanings for the informants. The different kinds of father figures, that is, biological father, animistic father, particular figure, and substitute father comprised a broad meaning for understanding the term, "father" for Lani youth. "Power" was used to describe the "fathers' relationship" in the family through their roles, such as competitor, problem solver, owner, or the one to sacrifice, negotiate, and rule. "Influence" expresses the relationship between "father" and "power" and explains problems, feelings, and the impact on the perception of life and God for youth. "Presence" explains the relationship between "father", "power", and "influence", and where the youth look to figures for healing, character, actions, and acceptance.  The relationship of those four domains is, "*Father* has the *power* to *influence* by his *presence.*" This pattern defines a concept of the father-youth relationship in the Lani culture. This pattern recurs throughout different parts of the data and connects different subsystems of the culture, linking them together as cultural themes.

## 4. Theme Analysis

Theme analysis involves a search for the relationships within domains. The cultural theme is "a postulate or position declared or implied and usually controlling behaviour or stimulating activity, tacitly approved or openly promoted in society" (Opler 1945, 198 as cited by Spradley 1979, 185). Cultural themes are the cognitive principles that frequently appear from the terms and phrases of the informants. They consist of several symbols that appear in the domains, and are linked to meaningful relationships (Ibid., 186). The analysis "consists of answering the major research questions and forming an in-depth understanding of the central phenomenon of the culture" (Creswell 2012, 270). Eight cultural themes most relevant to this study's research questions were identified (see Table 8).

Table 8: Cultural Themes

| Cultural Themes | |
|---|---|
| Competition for influence | Face of God |
| Relationship as Investment | Feeding as Care |
| Hunger to Survival | Sacrifice to Lead |
| Emotions and Identity | Authentic Brother |

These themes were identified in the four selected domains and are related to the concept of spiritual fathering in the Lani culture, the central relationship that linked all the cultural themes, and the selected domains (Ashwanden 2002, 130). This concept also expressed the relationships of four selected domains that a *father* has the *power* to *influence* his children through his *presence*. The informants' data indicated that one kind of father's power to influence the children was through the competition between the father figures. For example, the informants revealed that *Nogoba* and *Nami*, as Lani's father figures, compete to gain more power and influence over the children. According to the informants' responses, *Nami* is a central animistic father figure and has more power than the biological fathers (F1, F2, M1, M3, M4, M5, and M6). *Nami* has power to determine children's life and death. One informant (F2) said, "*Nami* has the right to curse or kill disrespectful children." *Nami*, as a ritual judge, works to make ensure everyone who violates the tribe's law pays a customary fine according to his decision (M1, M4). A biological father who is functioning well for children will be able to take his power and influence his children. Fathers (*Nogoba* and *Nami*) compete to have more power to influence the children.

The relationships between domains and cultural themes were centred on the concept of spiritual fathering of the Lani culture (see Figure 5).

Figure 5: Relationship between Four Domains and Eight Themes (Adapted from Ashwanden 2002, 129).
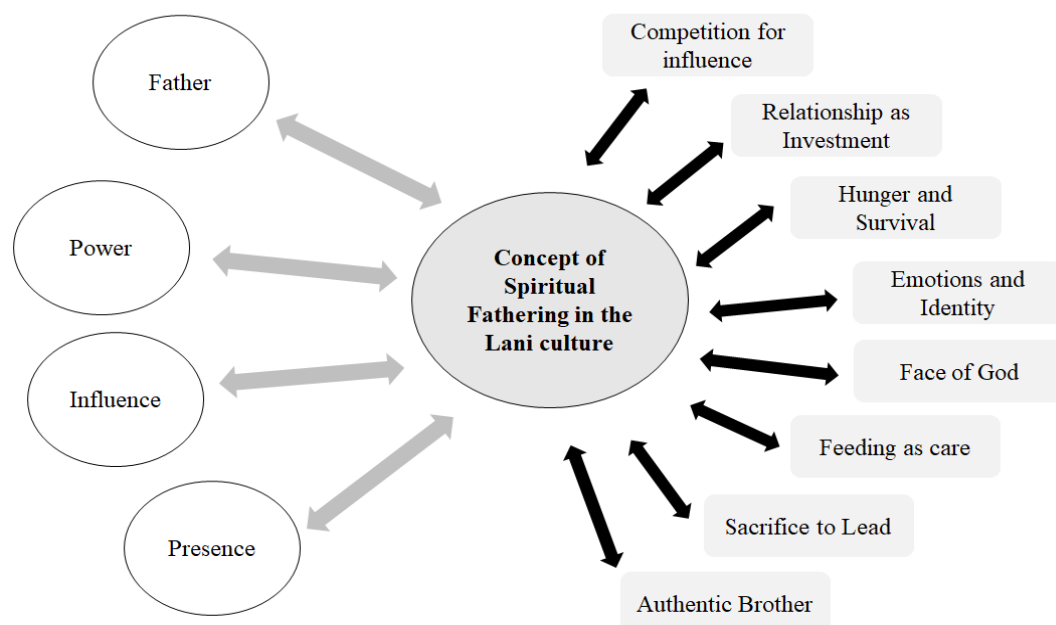
The eight cultural themes can only be understood through the interconnection between the themes and the four selected domains and how they are linked to the cultural meaning (see Table 9).

Table 9: Interconnection between domains and cultural themes (Adapted from Ashwanden 2002, 131).

| Central Relationship | The concept of spiritual fathering in the Lani culture | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Domains | Father | Power | Influence | Presence |
| Relationships | **Father** has the **power** to **influence** by his **presence** | | | |
| Cultural themes (Taken from Informants' terms and phrases) | _Father_ must **compete** with other figures to **influence** the youth's life. The **relationship** has significant _power_ as an **investment** to _influence_ the youth. When the father is absent, the youth must overcome his/her **hunger** and work for **survival**, living with ambivalent **emotions** and **identity** crisis. This father-youth relationship leads to the way the youth perceive the **face of God**. However, the _presence_ of an **authentic brother** as a spiritual father figure through **feeding as care** and **sacrifice to lead** the Lani youth to the process of discipleship. | | | |

The four selected domains and eight cultural themes describe "the concept of spiritual fathering", which revealed the cultural meaning of the father-youth relationship, and the concept of fathers' spiritual leadership in the Lani culture. Evidence for each theme and the sub-themes based on multiple perspectives of the informants' words were also identified (cf. Creswell 2012). The informants' quotes were used to provide the authentic voices of the emic perspective, which then addressed the research questions. The cultural themes were analysed as below.

**a) Cultural Theme One: Competition for Influence**

In most cultures, a father holds the leadership of his family, and his life influences the whole family, especially his children. However, the concept of "father" in Lani tribe is based on an animistic belief, which emphasises "power" and "influence". One who has more power will have more influence on others.

In the Lani culture, the term "father" has a broad meaning for young people as biological, animistic, and practical perspectives are needed to understand the term "father" culturally. The Lani used the term, "_Nogoba_" to address the biological father and the non-biological male figures who function as fathers. The informants recognised a "father" as an "adult male who is close to me," (F1, F2, F6) and one who "provides food and takes care of my life." (M1, F2, F6). A father is "a figure I respect" (M5, M6,

F6), "whom I have known for a long time" (M4), and who "replaces my father in my life" (M3, M5, M6, F6). A "father" is a "valuable man" (M6).

The Lani people also have an animistic perspective of a father called "*Nami*". *Nami* is a mother's brother(s) who has "extraordinary power over the children" (F5). F5 and M4 mentioned that when a *Nogoba* and *Nami* make a life contract through the symbol of *ye* (rock) and *wam* (pig), *Nami* becomes powerful to rule over the children (M1, M4). "The children must "be polite" (M1) and "bring happiness to the *Nami*'s heart" (M4). "The children must give whatever the *Nami* asked for" (M3). For example, when the *Nami* wanted a child's pig but did not get it, the *Nami* would feel embarrassed and disrespected. The child could be cursed with a bad future. Curse words were everything that came to the *Nami*'s mind at the time (M1, M4, F1, and F2). Practically, "children are more afraid of the *Nami* than the *Nogoba*" (M1). When the *Nami* and *Nogoba* have different ideas, the children tended to obey the *Nami* more than *Nogoba* (M3, M4, and F1). F2 told a story about a *Nami* who brought his niece to the city and sold her to a wealthy older man. "A *Nami* has all the power of life and death over the children" (F2). M4 said, "When a *Nami* says something, a *Nogoba* can never say, "no". The *Nogoba*'s power is a little below that of the *Nami*."

However, the informants also indicated that the *Nogoba* and *Nami* have similar supernatural power, such as when a *Nogoba* competes for the "fathering position" that influences their children (M1). M6 said, "When *Nogoba* is weak, *Nami* will be more powerful. A *Nogoba* must show that he cares, provides, and sacrifices for the children. A *Nogoba* who plays his fathering roles in the family will gain respect from the children." M3 shared, "Children will listen to the one who feeds them daily and is close to them." Informants recognised how the *Nogoba* and *Nami* gained more power and influence over the children by competing to care for and provide for their needs. The *Nogoba* and *Nami* compete to win the sympathy of the children. When the *Nogoba* is dysfunctional (e.g., weak, passive), the *Nami* would emerge and ultimately control the children's lives.

The *Nogoba* or *Nami* who lost power over their children tend to seek power through violence and domination in the family. Informants frequently identified the power relations as a "show of power and influence" between the *Nogoba* and *Nami* over their families. Fathers tended to have power relations over their wives in the family (e.g.,

through violence and abuse, taking control, being passive or unfaithful). In traditional belief, a married woman is placed under her husband's authority as she has been bought through expensive bride payments. Some informants (M1, F1, and F6) noticed that a husband had the right to do anything he wanted (e.g., punching, kicking, and killing) to his wife. Women have no rights to defend themselves. "A woman has no voice and must stay behind and work for the whole family. When a father is talking, a mother should not interrupt. She can be punched or kicked" (F1). "Women suffer in their own home" (M2). In abusive relationships, F5 said that the mother became closer to her children as "Women did not like to ask for their husband's help but preferred their sons and daughters to help." A father's violence and the close relationship of mother-children increased the relational gap between father and children. "After domestic violence, I do not like to stay near my father anymore" (F1, F2, and M5). "I am afraid of my father" (F3 and F5). M4 said, "I do not want to live with my father because I do not feel safe. I prefer to live in a public house rather than with him." The informants expressed their discomfort having a close relationship with their fathers.

Most *Nogoba* and *Nami* try to show a different degree of relationship with their children. They tend to be permissive or to spoil the children to draw them closer for the fathers' pragmatic reasons" (e.g., financial, power) (M2 and M3). Children are seen as assets for the family. Most Lani fathers prefer to have daughters because daughters bring economic benefits to the family, such as an axe, pigs, *noken* (grassy bag), and money (M3, M5, F6). "Girls are more reliable and dependable than boys in helping their parents" (M3, M5). The relationship with fathers became shallow and emotionally distant. The girls felt used for the fathers' benefit (F4, F6) and the boys felt left behind (M5, M6).

The informants also shared the negative influence of polygamy on their relationship with their fathers. In their culture, fathers practise polygamy because of the cultural belief that, "to have more power, a man needs to be wealthier. To have more wealth, a man needs more wives and more children to work on more land or to take care of more pigs" (F1). Eleven of twelve informants come from polygamous families, and they share a common problem of passive fathers who abandoned their first family and take care of their new wives. The family breakdown starts when their father divorced their mother and *lepas* (i.e., released) their first wife and children to find another place to stay. Thus, a father-child relational gap is created, and the father's influence becomes

weaker in their children's life. The *Nami* then establishes their relationship with the children and influence the children's lives significantly. M4 mentioned that, "*Nami* says...", which is the word of a *Nami,* is powerful and requires obedience to avoid a curse. M1 commented that "Lani children are like living in the middle of a "seesaw" between the *Nogoba*'s power relations and the *Nami*'s spiritual control." When the *Nami* took care and sacrifice for the children, he becomes a powerful influence over the children (F2 and M6).

However, one important reality shared by F2, M1, and M4 mentioned that the *Nogoba* or the *Nami* cannot automatically gain their position as "father" in the children's lives. M4 said, "I only listen to, and obey people who take care of me, raise me, and feed me". The *Nogoba* and *Nami* can only compete with one another, but actually, the children will be the ones who decide who will finally be a "father" for them (F2, M1, M4). A father must compete with other father figures to gain the power to influence the children's lives.

**b) Cultural Theme Two: Relationship as Investment**

A personal relationship is an essential element for a youth's healthy development. In Lani culture, children and wives are seen as assets for the whole family's wealth (F6). Most male informants discussed how children are perceived in the culture and how the father value the daughters more than their sons when they were born. Most female informants highlighted how women and girls are treated in the culture. The gender inequality issues affected the male and female youth differently. The relationships are perceived more as a *baku-balas* (i.e., investment) to gain future benefits, "I did good things for you, now it is your turn to do good for me" (M2).

Gender inequality issues were shared by most of the informants. They mentioned how the husbands or fathers in the culture treated the women and children. Men are seen as more powerful (M3), and married women must live under their husband's authority and control (M1 and F1). "A woman is like a maid for her husband. She has to work in the garden daily and provide food on time, or her husband will hit her" (M1, F1, and F3). Another informant said, "Coffee and breakfast must be served on time. When children come home, lunch must be ready, or the women will be perceived as not competent or incapable of being good mothers. The women can be the target of physical or emotional abuse from their husbands and the wider family" (F5).

F1 shared with tears in her eyes, "It is the mothers who work hard: planting gardens, feeding pigs. Mothers have too much work," F2 mentioned, "I feel angry and sad. Men should be responsible for the work, not women." Another angry informant said, "When father beat mama, I resented him. My emotions became so intense when I saw my mother crying. I just want to kill my father, so he would stop hurting my mother" (M2). However, the informants realised that there was nothing they could do to stop abusive husbands in the Lani's domestic relationships. When asked what other people should do to stop this abusive relationship, the informants said that, "Everybody will say that it is their family problem. There is no need to intervene, or you will get into trouble" (M1, M2, M6, F1, F2, and F4). Gender inequality seemed to be normalised by the culture, which brought painful and emotional problems for the youth, affecting their perspective on their relationship with their father figures.

Boys and girls are given different value in Lani culture. The boys are successors of the family name to replace their *Nogoba* in spiritual rituals or family leadership (M5 and F3), while the girls are economic sources as they bring bride payments (e.g., money, pigs, lands) from the groom to the family, and especially to the *Nami*. F6 shared her feeling that, "Girls have no other function. We are just a transaction, a means for the family wealth."

According to animistic beliefs, children must obey and bring happiness to the *Nami* through respect and gifts, which protect the children from his curse. F1 said, "*Nami* has the power to curse if the children do not give him what he asks for." The *Nami* has extraordinary power in the family because he plays a central role as a "problem solver" in rituals, such as death, marriage, and conflicts, and is a central "negotiator" of customary fines of inter-family conflicts in the community. The *Nami*'s central role give them "super" power over the children's life and death (F1and F2). The *Nami* even have the power to force a child into marriage, especially after receiving many dowries (e.g., money, pigs, things) from the male's family (M1, M3). "As respectful children, we need to "*kasih-tangan*" (i.e., bring gifts or help) whenever *Nami* needs to be made happy" (F6). A happy *Nami* will provide for all the children's needs, and in return, the children will give more respect and bring more financial benefit to him, and so protect the children from his curse in their future life.

The concept of *Nami* is firmly embedded in the Lani culture. Most of the informants recounted receiving "a curse" from the *Nami*. Their responses to the *Nami*'s curse were varied from "unconcern, uninterested, angry, or even frightened that what the *Nami* said would happen" (M3, M4). F1 and M5 shared their disagreement with the concept of *Nami* in their culture. "No need to be afraid of the *Nami* because they are not the owner of our lives. God has the full right over our lives. I refuse the *Nami*'s animistic power because God gave 100% authority to our parents, not to the *Nami*" (F1). Other responses showed how the youth related to the *Nami*'s power. F5 shared that "I always avoid meeting my *Nami*. I refuse to accept all gifts from him because when I receive something, the *Nami* will require payback for their gifts." Another informant said, "The *Nami* has no power over me if I refuse to receive anything from him" (F5).

However, even though the youth shared how they refused the *Nami*'s power, the informants admitted that the N*ami* was too powerful over their lives. F6 shared a sad story about a time when a *Nami* forced a girl to marry at a young age. With tears, she shared, "I have a friend who was forced to enter marriage with a boy she did not like, because my *Nami* had already received a gift from the man. She then ran away from her parents and committed suicide by hanging herself on a tree." Another informant shared suicides stories (e.g., throwing herself into the river, cutting her vein, drinking poison, etcetera) to resist the *Nami*'s power in a young person's life (F1 and F6).

When young people have no other choice or control over their own lives, a shortcut to death is often taken, one which brings sadness to the whole community. When a father values a relationship as an investment for his wealth, breaking the relationship, brings sadness, brokenness, and distrust into his children's lives. A wise word that came from an informant is, "A close relationship between fathers, mothers, and children is a treasure that will bring happiness, trust, and joy for the whole family for the rest of their lives. Furthermore, it should start with a father who loves his family. The family relationship is a priceless investment that brings a legacy to the next generations" (M6). A close relationship is a priceless investment for future generations of the Lani people.

**c) Cultural Theme Three: Hunger and Survival**

The informants' stories about their violent or absent fathers exposed many physical and emotional struggles within their hearts. They frequently shared about how they struggled with physical hunger during their childhood. Most informants connected their

problematic relationship with their fathers as a source of their childhood hunger and maltreatment. M2 shared how his father abandoned him since he was a baby. He said, "I used to feel sad when I saw a boy walk with his father. I wanted to be like him." M4 even shared his confusion when he said, "I do not even know who my real father is. Since I was a baby, I have lived in four houses and called many adult men my father. But who is my real father?" Another informant talking about his father, commented, "I am afraid that my father will reject me, so I do not want to get close to him. I feel distant and am afraid to tell him what I need. If I do something wrong, he will punish me harshly and rudely" (M5). "I do not dare to ask my father when I need something" (M2).

All informants agreed that most Lani children feel comfortable staying near their mothers and feel accepted and free to talk to them. However, the Lani mothers are-not always available to take care of their children. The informants shared about their mothers, who are hurting emotionally and struggling to live in a patriarchal culture like the Lani tribe. M2 shared, "Polygamy destroys a father's presence. Relationships with family are falling apart, and all family members break into pieces." Mothers have to work harder in the garden because they have to feed more people (e.g., fathers' new wives), and the mothers have no spare time to take care of their children (M5). M2 explained how the new wives controlled and pushed the fathers to divorce the senior wives. He witnessed how his father and new wife tortured his mother until she agreed to divorce and move out from the community. With intense emotion, M2 and F5 shared how they got angry and vengeful when they saw their father beating their mothers and seeing their mothers cry and beg them to stop the beating. In most cases, the senior wife will take all her children and move to another place. "Mothers must move from one land to another land and work hard, only to survive, for their children's sake" (M5).

With tears, M2 told how the violence experienced by her mother turned into a mental illness (schizophrenia). He said, "Mama became ill and could no longer control her behaviour." Since then, M5 has to move from one house to another, working and studying, while feeling hungry most of the day. M3 and M4 have similar stories. "I often feel hungry. If I am hungry, I just drink more water and go to sleep. I felt so sad" (M3). He continued, "If a child has no father, he has nothing, as no one forbids him to do something bad. If a child has a father, he can have enough food and will not have to work hard. If he is fatherless, he must work to have one plate of food, or he will starve

to death." M4 shared his story with tears, "People said I am an idiot, and nobody wants me. I felt alone, hungry, and sad."

The informants' stories explained a situation in which a physical hunger could transform itself into an "emotional hunger". A hungry stomach might become an emotional hunger for love, a sense of belonging, and acceptance. M5 explained that being continually hungry made him angry all the time. He said, "I have been angry since childhood. When I grew up, I feel negative towards things, such as being angry and fighting with my parents." Three female informants shared how their physical hunger transformed into emotional hunger, longing for a father figure in life. F5 said, "I was looking for affection from adult male figures." F6 said, "I went down to the city, and my life was very chaotic. I often went out of the house, living with others and looking for a father figure that I had never had before. It frustrated me." F3 even shared how she offered her body to have sex with a couple of adult males, only to feel loved and accepted by someone. She said, "I slept with some adult males, and I felt wanted by them."

However, the informants also shared how hunger could transform itself into a survival strength. M2 shared, "When my stomach was sore because of frequent hunger, I tried to find my food. I needed to survive to help my mother and to continue my study for my future." The informants shared that "survival motivation" mostly came from changing their mindsets and perspectives about life. M3 said, "I do not have a father, but I know God will provide food for me through other people." Another informant mentioned that the presence of other father figures brought a change to his mindset. He said, "I thank God that I have another figure who has become a role model for my life. He helped me a lot, and I need to fight for my future" (M6). Informants (F1, F5, and M5) also stated that the presence of another father figure has given them hope to survive. "I do not feel lonely anymore since I have '*Kaka*' who supports me" (M5).

Motivation for a transformation from hunger to survival could only be evident when the "transformation of the mind" happens in one's life, as one openly accepts the presence of other figures. F6 said, "The presence of an adult brother has helped me to make peace with myself and my past. It is hard to forgive myself. Since he accepted me, I can accept myself and learn to forgive my father. He helped me to see life differently."  F5 said, "We all need someone who helps us grow spiritually. Since I have one, I do not feel

lonely again. I have a different perspective on life. I want to survive by focusing on my strength to fight for my future." Physical and emotional hunger could be an opportunity to build a survival motivation through the presence of a substitute father figure who brought change (i.e., healing, transformation) into an absent father youth's future life.

**d) Cultural Theme Four: Emotions and Identity**

In Lani culture, people do not express their emotional reactions openly before certain people, events, or situations (M2). However, emotional reactions reveal the internal process of how people view their identities. The informants expressed their emotional reactions in different intensities. Some of the informants (F1, F3, F4, F5, M1, and M3) expressed them plainly at the beginning of the interviews. F1 said that "It is unusual for a female to express her emotions in front of new people. We need to make sure that one can be trusted, and our secrets are safe." F4, who always smiled in the interview, said, "I am confused about my own emotions, so I just smile in every story I share, even my sad stories." M3 expressed his confusion as he shared, "I have not had parents since I was young. I am an orphan and have lived with many other people for a major part of my childhood. I do not even know how to express my emotions about my father. I have never met him even once." Emotional expressions can be challenging for the female informants, as they are confused about *how,* and *which* proper emotional reactions should be expressed in certain situations.

M2 shared his confusion between his feelings and what the church taught him to think about his absent father. He felt ambivalent between his anger toward his absent father and how he must respect and obey his father. He said, "I am confused about that dilemma. Should I be honest about my feelings that I hate my father, or should I hide the feelings and show respect to him?" All informants (except M5 and F5) expressed their ambivalent feelings as they shared, "my father is good, but..." "I actually feel close to my father, but..." "My father loves my mother, but..." The informants wanted to tell their stories without embarrassing their fathers. They seemed to do this unconsciously because they had been taught to keep the family's good name since they were young. "We do not talk badly about our parents. It is not allowed here" (F6). However, a person's confusion about his or her emotional expressions can also indicate how they perceive life and identity. Some informants (M2, M4, M5, M6, F2, and F6) who were open to their emotional expressions seemed to connect with their own stories more

deeply than informants (F1, F3, F4, F5, M1, M3) who did not or were confused about their emotions.

As the interviews continued, the informants felt more comfortable expressing their feelings while telling their stories. They then expressed their sadness, anger, confusion, distrust, insecurity, and quickly connected more deeply with their own stories. The stories became alive, and emotional expressions became more consistent with their stories. Their various voice intonations described the details of their stories differently. The tears, laughter, and pauses seemed to lead these young informants into their true feelings that have been stored inside their hearts for many years. Some informants (M2, M5, and F6) said that the researcher's willingness to listen to their stories attentively had made a difference. M2 said, "Your attentive eyes, expressions, and tears have grown my trust, and I can tell you more of my stories." "You have listened patiently for almost thirty minutes without cutting my sentences. I feel listened to and understood. I know you can be trusted." (M5). Other informants (M1, F5, and F6) mentioned that they had never told their stories before to anyone. The interviews were the first time they had shared their secret stories. When the researcher asked about the impact of openly telling their stories, they replied, "I feel relief that I can trust someone to listen." (M1). "I do not know why I told you the story, but it helped me deal with my feelings. I am glad to do it." (F5).

The informants' stories showed the importance of expressing emotions in order to understand more about their stories and themselves. The informants felt the difference as they expressed genuine emotional reactions in their stories. They became more connected to themselves and their stories and learned more about themselves. They may have felt sad, angry, abandoned, distrustful, fearful, traumatised, in a dilemma, ambivalent, lonely, and blamed for their situation. However, when they learned to express their emotions openly, they learned to embrace and accept those emotions as part of their lives. M2 confirmed how openly expressing his emotions helped him to understand himself better. He said, "I never tell others about my life story. When you sit here with me, look at my eyes, listen carefully to my words, I do not know why but I cannot stop telling you, my stories. Surprisingly, I feel better about myself, and am motivated to fight for my future." Expression of emotions is a God-given tool to explore and expose the knowledge about themselves and embrace the truth about "who they

really are". The presence of someone who listens attentively, being there (present) with them, and accepts their stories made a difference in their lives.

**e) Cultural Theme Five: Face of God**

In traditional Lani culture, God is perceived as a masculine spirit called *Mbok* and *Ninogoba-Alla* (i.e., God the Father) (M4). The informants saw the *Ninogoba-Alla* closely related to their experiences or visual images of their father figures' facial expressions (M4, M6). Twelve informants who experienced fathers who were absent, uninvolved, or distant, expressed their God image using the cultural theme of "face of God".

The informants' image of God the Father was divided into three groups. The first group expressed a "good face" response (M1, M2, M4, M6, F1, and F3). Even those who had negative experiences with father figures perceived God positively as a "secure, close, purposeful, and provider" God. M2 said, "When I am sad, I can turn my mind to God. I replace my earthly father with my heavenly father in my mind, and I feel close to God, and I know He will provide for my needs." Another informant said, "Even though I do not have a good father, I am really glad to have a heavenly father" (M4). "I can tell God about all my needs and talk easily to Him. God pays attention to me" (M6). "If I have problems, I can always go to God. He is always available, the provider of my life" (F3). These informants perceived *Ninogoba Alla* positively even though they have had negative experiences with their earthly father figures.

The second group expressed a "bad face" response (M5, F2, F5, and F6). They had had negative experiences with father figures and also had negative perceptions of God as the Father. God was perceived as a distant Father, and they felt "distrust, confusion, fear, guilt, restlessness, and distance. F2 perceived God as "a bad Father." She shared her painful experiences of witnessing her father beat and torture her mother to death. She was cursed frequently. Her father was full of anger and abused her. She prayed to God, but nothing had changed. She said, "If an earthly father is bad, then a heavenly Father must also be. God is too busy to help." Her perception of her earthly father influenced her perception of God. Another informant shared his concern, "I used to feel fear and guilt. I must become a good person to make God feels happy. I am trying to do good things and hope God can accept me. I feel tired and restless." (M5). F5 and F6 expressed their negative feelings about the church. F5 said, "I hate the church. I hate

conflict in the church. They are fighting about doctrines and hurting one another." F6 said, "It is difficult to understand God. We do not know which teaching is right, so I refuse to go to church anymore. The church is nonsense." The informants expressed their response to God with negative perceptions of God, life, and church. Their responses gave a bigger picture of how their "antagonistic relationship" with their father figures influenced their perception of God.

The third group (M3 and F4) expressed "blank face" responses, feeling confused and finding it difficult to perceive God as their Father. From the interviews, it was clear that M3 has been an orphan since he was four years old, and F4's father died when she was a baby. Both M3 and F4 are confused about how to see God as Father because they had no "memorable relationships" with their biological fathers. It was challenging to express their thoughts on the *Ninogoba Alla* concept. God was perceived as the "No face God" (M3 and F4). "God is a man, but I cannot see His face. God has an empty face" (F4). "I cannot see if God smiles, is angry, sad, or else when I look at His face. I cannot see any face and expressions" (M3). They felt confused and distant from God. F4 said, "I do not go to church because I do not know what to do. When I pray, I do not know what to say. I learn to believe in God, but I feel confused. What is God like? Uh... uh... maybe... I do not know."  These two informants expressed their inability to recognise God as Father because they have little to no experience with father figures. F4 lived by moving from one family to another, while M3, an orphan, had lived with six different families from his childhood.

All three groups frequently mentioned the "Face of God" as the way they perceive God. They seemed to view God according to their mental picture of God's face, related to their personal experiences. The first group perceived God's face as happy, loving, helpful, and accepting. The second group perceived God's face as angry, resentful, irritating, displeased, and dissatisfied. The third group perceived God's face as empty, expressionless, blank, and emotionless. The informants' perception of God the Father was influenced by their experience with their own father figures' facial expressions.

Some informants (M2, M4, M6, F6, and F3) also shared one factor that has changed their perception of God the Father. M2 said, "I used to feel confused about whether God can curse me like my father. However, my teacher then taught me that God is different. God blesses me and wants the best from my life."  M4 shared, "My biological father has

abandoned me. At first, I was confused about *Ninogoba-Alla*. When I was born again through the ministry of a Christian brother, I realised that *Ninogoba-Alla* is my real Father." F6 said, "God is not the same as the father in the world. God does what is good. He is God of everything. Maybe I have done something wrong but, thank God, He accepts me. I used to be confused about life, but now, I find a purpose to live. I learn it from my spiritual leader." Even M3 shared his confusion about God the father and a heart-warming story about his pastor. He said, "As an orphan child, I had no one who cared for me. When everyone ignored or said bad things about me, my pastor came and taught me how to read and work in the garden. He taught me God's word and shared food with me. He never said bad things. I do not know many things about God, but one thing I know, I want to be a pastor like him." The informants expressed how the presence of a substitute fathering figure who was presenting a different face of a father figure changed their perception of the "face of God." The presence of a figure representing God influenced the young people's God-image and altered their perception of life.

**f) Cultural Theme Six: Feeding as Care**

Youth who grow up without fathers may experience a lack of protection and provision in life. All informants, who are fatherless, shared their sad and painful stories about lacking their basic needs from childhood. The informants experienced maltreatment, feeling hungry every day, living nomadic lives (i.e., constantly moving), and from childhood, labouring to earn food and education. These experiences raised questions in their heart, "Where is my home?" (M2), "Do I belong to somebody?" (M3) and "Do I have a future?" (F6). In a more existential question, M5 and F6 asked, "Am I worthy of being loved?" and F5 and M3 asked, "Am I worthy enough to live?" F5 even shared that she attempted to commit suicide three times since elementary school. Her painful experiences of a broken family relationship have hurt her self-worth deeply. The existential questions above indicated a severe lack of basic needs when a father is absent from a child's life.

The ability to trust others became the central issue raised by the informants. The informants (M2 and F1) shared how difficult it was to trust a substitute father figure who wanted to care for them. M2 said, "I do not want to be hurt anymore." M5 said, "I do not trust their words. If one comes and says he wants to help, he needs to prove it in practice. I can only trust someone who fulfils my needs." M6 said, "I need someone

who accepts and allows me to stay, play, and eat with him for a longer time. I need to convince myself that he is serious with his words." The informants felt insecure and unable to start a new relationship, especially with adult male figures, in order to protect themselves from being hurt again.

However, one theme that was often shared by the informants was "feeding as care". According to two informants (M1, M6), feasting together has a significant meaning for relationships in Lani culture. People who are closely related spend time together-by eating or chatting together. Eating together could be understood as acceptance for a special relationship. "Only people who were considered close were invited to eat together at one table" (M1). This concept enlivens the "feeding as care" as a safe practice to begin a new close relationship with fatherless youth. M2 shared, "When my teacher fed me as a fatherless child, I felt motivated to do whatever he said to me. I opened my heart to him and wanted to be like him." F6 said, "My brother feeds me and allows me to stay in his house. I trust his heart, and whatever he says, I will obey him." M3 shared, "As an orphan, I was fed by my pastor. He always told me to do good things. He motivated me to continue my education and taught me to work in the garden. He never spoke bad words. I want to be a pastor one day." The informants' stories of "feeding as the way to show care" are powerful practices of how trust can be built through an invitation to feast together.

"Feeding as care" also has the power to generate other influences over the life of Lani youth. The informants explained how "feeding as care" has motivated them to live differently, such as pursuing education, serving God, trying new things, and working hard for their future. M4 shared how "feeding as care" has changed his life. He said, "My *Kaka* (i.e., big brother) gave me a good example of life. He worked hard to feed me and to pay for my education. *Kaka* taught me to work, trained me with new skills, and taught me to obey and respect authority and God. It changed my life." "Feeding as care" rebuilt broken trust and gave me a new dimension of building a healing relationship. M2 shared his heart-warming stories, "My *Nogoba* and *Nami* cursed me, saying I will have a miserable future. I was afraid that would happen to me. However, one day, a *Tete* (i.e., old man) who fed me and invited me to stay with his family gave me a different life picture for my future. He said, "You will continue your school. You will do something no one has ever done. You will study to a higher level, study in different places, and then become a successful person." *Tete*'s "prophetic projection"

has had a great influence on M2's life, as he said, "I am serious about my life now" (M2).

"Feeding as care" also influenced how the informants rebuilt their ability to trust. "I feel safe" (M5), "I feel stronger" (M6), and "I feel motivated by his examples" (F3 and F6). "When we ate together, I felt accepted" (M5). F2 concluded, "My relationship with my spiritual father (pastor) impacts me greatly. He took me from the street, fed my empty stomach, and my life was changed. I then opened my heart to his spiritual guidance. He appreciated my talents and encouraged me to move forward to reach a brighter future. I will always remember his word that I must put God in the first place, and everything will be all right." The practice of "feeding as care" provides not only the basic need of food but also the feelings of safety and acceptance that heals their ability to trust others. The one who feeds to care becomes a motivator, trainer, projector of life, and builder of new trusting and meaningful relationships with others.

**g) Cultural Theme Seven: Sacrifice to Lead**

Self-sacrifice is accepted as an essential principle in leadership. A leader selflessly sacrifices him or herself to set an example of life for their followers. As a family leader, a father sacrifices himself to give the best to protect and provide for his family. A father leads his family through his sacrifice. While the concept of "self-sacrifice" is not necessarily a primary value and common approach to fathering in Lani culture, on further reflection, the informants did recognise many informal examples of this type of leadership. Power, control, and influence have been recognised as the central principles in the Lani male leadership concept. A male "selfish leadership broke the marital relationships and hurt the children deeply" (M2).

Within a "power, control, and influence" cultural concept, the informants shared their amazement when learning about the concept of "self-sacrifice to lead", one that changed their perspective on relationships. The informants shared how a substitute fathering figure's sacrifice has changed their perspective about life. F4 said, "My brother loves me. He sacrifices himself for all of us to make sure we can live a better life. He stopped schooling, went to work so I can go to school." M4 mentioned, "My mentor is responsible for his family. He always put his family as his priority. It is unusual for me to see a man sacrifice himself for his family." F2 mentioned someone who sacrificed by spending time with him. He said, "My pastor sacrifices his time for me. He is always

available and comfortable to talk with. We can sit, eat, and have a conversation freely even though I know he is busy with his ministry." The informants recognised "self-sacrifice" as a way to lead and influence fatherless youth.

For the informants, the "sacrifice to lead" is also related to the issue of "trustworthiness" and "attentiveness." One who sacrifices for others is perceived as "A good father figure" (M6, F3, and F6), one who "can be trusted" (F4) and is "attentive and caring" (F1). F2 personally recognised small things like "remembering his name, celebrating his birthday, and asking about personal matters" as examples of the sacrificial love of his spiritual father. The informants sensitively recognised others' sacrificial actions as a practice of love and care, touching their hearts. Another small act of sacrifice, namely, sharing food (M3), listening to their stories (M3, M4, F1), rebuking their wrongdoing (M3, F3, F5, M4), motivating them to do right (M5), helping them to forgive others/parents (M2 and M5), and accepting their weaknesses (F2, F4, and M1) all helped the informant to develop trust in one who sacrifices and cares for them.

The informants also shared the meaning of "sacrifice", which led to a better understanding of themselves. M4 said, "My mentor taught me to be responsible. He motivated me to do many things I could not do before." F4 said, "He motivates, trains, and praises me and makes sacrifices for me. I will make him proud." M6 said, "He raised me up when I was down. He helped me to see myself rightly." M5 mentioned that his spiritual father changed his perception of life. He said, "He challenged my thoughts and led me 'step by step' to forgive my father. Now I am a better person. I want to be like him." The principle of "sacrifice to lead" helped the informants to know themselves more deeply and to grow differently to be like those who made sacrifices for them.

"Sacrifice" is a way to lead Lani youth to view God differently. The informants recognised that their perception of God changed after the example of one who sacrificed for them. M6 observed, "My brother is a father figure for me. He sacrifices to help meet my daily needs. My understanding of God grows every day as I treasure his teaching. He loves God fervently and talks a lot about Him. I want to know God more, to love Him more." F1 said, "My brother opened his house for me. Now I open my heart to his teachings and obey them. I want to follow God just like my brother's example."

"Sacrifice to lead" profoundly influenced the informants' lives. An example of self-sacrifice changed the informants' perspectives on their relationships, healed their trust, led them to a better understanding of themselves, and perceived God differently.

**h) Cultural Theme Eight: Authentic Brother**

"Authenticity" is an important factor shared by the informants in building a trusted relationship with substitute fathering figures. Their experiences with dysfunctional fathers and broken family relationships brought painful relational wounds which influenced their future relationship. The informants defined an "authentic" person as one who keeps his promise (M5), one who acts more than talks (M2). One who openly shares his stories and encourages others to tell their stories (F4), who keeps secrets (F4 and F6), rebukes misconduct directly and gently (F5), one who entrusts others to do something important (F5) and is comfortable to stay with (M4). The informants' concept of authenticity confirmed the need for one who can be trusted, whose actions showed openness consistently, and who was serious about helping others.

The data collected showed that a substitute father figure mentioned by the informants is in the figure of a *Kaka* or big brother (M3, M4, M5, M6, F1, F2, F3, F4, F5, and F6). The brotherly relationship seemed to be the safest kind of relationship accepted by most informants. They mentioned a pastor, a spiritual father, a Christian brother, a mentor, and a big brother, as father figures. However, most informants felt comfortable addressing those male figures as a *Kaka* rather than a father. The "big brother" concept is more familiar to the Lani people in their close relationships with God. According to informants (M2, M4, and F1), the concept of Jesus and the Holy Spirit are more acceptable to the Lani people than God as the Father. God the Father is perceived as a distant and fearful spirit. Jesus is accepted as an elder brother while the Holy Spirit has a "true heart" or "benevolent spirit", evident in a closer personal relationship (F1).

The informants explained that they are more confident in building a close relationship with a brother figure than a father figure. M2 said, "A father figure seems to be someone distant from me. I feel comfortable building a relationship with a big brother." F3 said, "In my culture, I do not walk alongside my father. I walk behind him. But as a brother, we walk together." M4 shared, "My father is too quiet, and he does not talk much. I feel comfortable talking with my brother." M6 said, "I feel safer calling someone my brother." The "authentic brother" concept is necessary for an acceptable

substitute fathering figure, a brotherly figure having authentic (i.e., trusted, open, and serious) relationships with the informants.

The "authentic brother" can be an approach for practicing spiritual leadership among the Lani youth. The informants confirmed that they just listen to and obey the one who cares about them. They shared about a brotherly figure with whom they could "stay, play, walk, and talk" as the process to influence their lives spiritually. M5 mentioned about imitating the spiritual father figure, as he said, "If he walks with me. I will do what he says. I will live just like him." M4 shared the importance of a spiritual father as a model for his life, "He is a role model of my life. I know what to do and how to do it as I spend time with him. It will make me just like him." F2 said, "I only listen to and obey people who feed me and have raised me. I will grow just like him."

The concept of an "authentic brother" explained the cultural concept of how Lani youth can accept a father figure through a brotherly figure in an authentic relationship. The youth will follow an "authentic brother" as they can spend time together with him, learn to imitate and model his life, and finally live like him. This cultural theme relates to the concept of spiritual fathering as an approach to discipleship, where a brotherly figure of a spiritual father builds an authentic relationship with the youth, as they follow, model, and imitate his life, and finally, follow Christ as His disciples.

## C. Summary of Findings

The interconnection between four selected domains and eight cultural themes (see Appendix M) addresses the research question: "How can spiritual fathering be used as an approach to disciple the Lani youth?" Five Research Sub-Questions (SQ) guided the study. SQ #1 was discussed in Chapter Two, and SQ #2 to #5 are addressed in this chapter, as shown below.

# 1. Research Sub-Question Two (SQ #2)

The second research sub-question asked:

> "What are the fathering approaches in the Lani culture?"

## a) Findings for SQ #2

As a communal tribe, the participating Lani youth recognised the various perspectives of fathering approaches in their culture.

Firstly, *Nogoba* and *Nami* are two significant terms used to address father figures in Lani culture, and explain the male's power, control, and influence in the family. The youth defined *Nogoba* from a broad perspective covering a biological father and a non-biological father, functioning as a father who provides for the children. As a biological father, *Nogoba* relates to his family through power relations where violence and abandonment are practised to control the family members. On the other side, *Nami,* as a mother's brother, is an animistic concept of a father who has a "given supernatural power" to control the children. In animistic belief, *Nami* has more substantial authority than the *Nogoba* over the children. *Nami* is perceived as an owner of children, a solver of family problems, and a competitor to the *Nogoba* to influence the children. The *Nami* adds more power to control the children by his sacrifice in order to provide for them. The *Nami* also uses "curses" to negotiate his power over the children. If the children disobey and dishonour him, the *Nami*'s curse can be a means to regain control. Fear of the *Nami*'s curse is the primary motivation behind every child's action and submission. The *Nami* has the power to determine the life and death of a child.

Secondly, the *Nogoba* and *Nami* must compete to gain more power in order to influence the children. The *Nogoba*, who functions well as a protector and provider, gains spiritual power to protect his children from the Nami's spiritual influence. As the *Nogoba*'s influence on his children becomes weaker because of his violence and abandonment in the family, the *Nami* becomes a more powerful influence on the children. However, the *Nogoba* and Nami can only influence the children by taking care of and feeding them. A male figure who cares and provides for the children will be accepted as a "father", who has the power to influence them. The Lani youth only listen and obey the one who takes care by raising and feeding them. The *Nogoba* and *Nami*

may compete with one another, but the children will be the ones that decide who will finally be a "true father" who has the power to influence them.

Thirdly, Lani fathers (i.e., *Nogoba* and *Nami*) perceive their relationship with their children as an investment in order to gain more power, wealth, and influence in the family and community. Gender inequality towards wives and girls is a serious issue related to fathers' relationships in the family. Husbands are seen as more powerful if they control the women and require them to work for the family. Fathers prepare the girls to gain economic benefits through bride payments in the future. The boys are usually left behind, as the father values his daughter higher than his son. The Nami's relationship with the children is also perceived as an investment for future economic benefit (e.g., bride payment, customary payment, etcetera).

For Lani youth, a close relationship with their fathers, mother, and other children is a treasure that will bring happiness, trust, and joy for the whole family. It should start with a *Nogoba* who loves his family. A father, who is absent, uninvolved, and violent, will lose his power to influence the children.

**b) Summary of Findings for SQ #2**

The study identified three fathering approaches in Lani culture. These are: 1) a father has the spiritual power to control his children, 2) a father must compete with other father figures to gain more power and influence over the children, 3) a father's relationship with his children is an investment to gain more power, wealth, and influence in the family and community.

<div align="center">2. Research Sub-Question Three (SQ #3)</div>

The third research sub-question asked:

> "In what ways do the fathering approaches influence the spiritual life of the Lani youth?"

**a) Findings for SQ #3**

The relational problems of youth with their absent, uninvolved, or violent fathers, influenced them physically, emotionally, and spiritually.

Firstly, Lani youth recognised that their relational problems with their fathers and their "unavailable-hurting" mothers are the primary source of their physical hunger and maltreatment, which then turned into an "emotional hunger" for love, a sense of belonging and acceptance. However, hunger can also be transformed into a "survival motivation" by changing their mindset and perspective about life. Lani youth realised that their openness to the presence of substitute father figures and to God can build up their "motivation to survive", which in turn brings transformation in their lives.

Secondly, Lani youth recognised that their relational problems with their fathers influenced their emotions and sense of identity. In the Lani culture, people do not express their emotional reactions openly before certain people, events, or situations. The youth sought to tell their stories without embarrassing their fathers because they were taught to keep the family's good name. For Lani youth, emotional expressions can be challenging, especially for male youth, as they feel confused or ambivalent about which emotions should be expressed appropriately in certain situations. The issue of trust needs to be overcome first before they can comfortably connect to their "genuine emotions". The youth who are "listened and understood" become more connected to themselves and their stories. They learn to know themselves, feel better about themselves, and are motivated to fight for their future. The Lani youth realised that emotional expression is one of their God-given tools to explore themselves and embrace their identities eagerly. The presence of someone who is willing to listen with attentiveness and acceptance creates a safe space for the youth to trust, grow, understand and accept themselves.

Thirdly, the relational problem of Lani youth with their father influences their perception of God. In the traditional Lani culture, God is perceived as a masculine sacred spirit. The Lani youth expressed their perception of God by using the phrase, "face of God". They perceive the "face of God" based on their mental picture, which is influenced by their experiences with their father figures' facial expressions. Youth who have negative experiences with their fathers have three responses about the "face of God". First, the "good face" category perceives God's face positively as the Father who is secure, close, purposeful, and their provider. God is seen as a happy, loving, helpful, and accepting Father. Second, the "bad face" category perceives God's face negatively, as the Father whom they cannot trust, and who makes them feel confused, fearful, guilty, restless, and distanced" from them. God is therefore seen as being an angry,

resentful, irritable, displeased, and dissatisfied Father. Third, the "blank face" category perceives God as an empty, expressionless, blank, and emotionless Father, and makes it difficult for the Lani youth to understand the nature of God. The Lani youth confirm that the presence of a substitute fathering figure who shows himself to be a "loving and caring father" can modify their perception about God, a Father who becomes realistic and secure, One to whom they can relate.

**b) Summary of Findings for SQ #3**

Lani youth express that their culture's fathering approaches influence them physically, emotionally, and spiritually. First, their relational problems with their fathers, who are the primary source of their physical hunger and maltreatment, leads to an emotional hunger for love, belonging, and acceptance. Second, the issue of distrust and an ambivalent feeling towards their father figures influences their sense of identity. They feel confused about their emotions and their identities. Third, their perception of God the Father is influenced by their experience with the facial expressions of their father figures. The presence of a substitute figure who presents as a "loving and caring face", a father figure who can modify their perception about God and relate securely to Him.

3. Research Sub-Question Four (SQ #4)

The fourth research sub-question asked:

"What is a spiritual fathering approach that is accepted by the Lani youth?"

**a) Findings for SQ #4**

One of the most insightful findings generated by the Lani youth is the concept of an "authentic brother", one which becomes an acceptable spiritual fathering approach for them. Lani youth, who have issues of trusting male figures, can only accept a substitute fathering figure who presents as a brotherly figure, one who has an authentic relationship with them. While the Lani youth perceive a "father figure" as powerful, quiet, and distant, the "brotherly father figure" is perceived as close, warm, and available to "stay, play, walk, and talk with" them. They feel more comfortable and confident in building a close relationship with a "brother figure" than with a father figure.

The Lani youth need "authenticity" in a figure, one who can be genuinely trusted, showing openness and wanting to relate seriously with them. The Lani youth will listen

to an authentic brother who cares for them and will accept his spiritual leadership over them. As they spend time together, the Lani youth will imitate and model after their spiritual fathering figure and become like him.

The concept of an authentic brother can be a pattern of a spiritual fathering ministry to the Lani youth, where a brotherly father figure is present in their lives and wants to build an "authentic relationship" with them. This model of a spiritual father becomes their role model, one who brings spiritual leadership into their lives to disciple them as Christ's followers.

**b) Summary of Findings for SQ #4**

The Lani youth accept the concept of an "authentic brother" as a spiritual fathering approach that is suitable for them. An authentic brother is a spiritual father who shows himself to be a brotherly figure, and builds an authentic (true heart) relationship that is trusted, open and offers a serious long-term relationship with the Lani youth.

4. Research Sub-Question Five (SQ #5)

The fifth research sub-question asked:

"How to practice the spiritual fathering approach to disciple the Lani youth?"

**a) Findings for SQ #5**

The participating Lani youth expressed two practices of spiritual fathering approach that are meaningful to disciple them. Firstly, the Lani youth always mentioned "feasting together", which has a significant meaning for personal relationships in their culture. People who are close to each other spend time (sitting, eating, or chatting) together. Feasting together has a profound meaning as "an acceptance of a special relationship" and a "sign of care" for others. It also has the power to generate other influences over the life of the Lani youth' and motivates them to live differently, including pursuing education, serving God, trying new things, and working hard for their future. Feasting together not only provides for their basic need for food, but also encourages emotional healing, enabling them to rebuild a trusting relationship with others. A father figure who opens his home and feeds them has a special place in their hearts. He becomes a motivator, trainer, projector of life, and builder of new trusting relationships, healing their ability to trust others again.

Secondly, the participating Lani youth mentioned the significance of "self-sacrifice", a very different male leadership principle contradicting Lani's typical "self-interested" leadership that focuses on gaining more power, control, and influence for personal benefit. The Lani youth recognise that "self-interested" fathers break the family relationship and make the children suffer, but a substitute father figure who sacrifices himself for them has significant power to influence their perspective about life and relationships. The Lani youth also recognise that sacrifice is related to their major relational issue of "trustworthiness" and "attentiveness". They recognise someone who sacrifices themselves for others as someone who can be trusted and whom they will follow. The "sacrifice" is also a way to lead the Lani youth to view God as a "trustworthy and attentive" God who cares for them. Their perception of God is changed through the presence of one who sacrifices for them.

The presence of a person who feasts together and sacrifices for them influences their perspective on relationships profoundly, healing their trust, motivating them to better understand themselves, and finally leading them to perceive God as their Father differently.

**b) Summary of Findings for SQ #5**

The participating Lani youth expressed two practices of spiritual fathering approach to disciple them. Firstly, "feasting together" has a profound meaning of acceptance, demonstrating a special relationship and a sign of care for them. It can also generate other influences over their life and motivates them to live differently. Secondly, a "sacrificial life", one which influences youth's lives profoundly, changes their perspective on the relationship, heals their trust, leads them to a better understanding of themselves, and to perceiving God differently.

## D. Chapter Summary

This chapter explains the findings of the ethnographic research to address the research questions. The data were analysed based on Spradley's four ethnosemantics analysis, namely: domain, taxonomic, componential and theme analysis. The data formed a pattern, centred around four selected domains: "father", "power", "influence", and "presence" as an approach to better understand the father-youth relationship in the Lani culture, where "father has the power to influence [the youth] by his presence". This

concept ocurred repeatedly throughout different parts of the data, connecting all the domains identified.

The concept of spiritual fathering in the Lani culture is the central relationship that links all the selected domains with the relevant cultural themes identified in the informants' terms and phrases. Eight relevant cultural themes were identified, namely: "Competition for Influence", "Relationship as Investment", "Hunger and Survival", "Emotions and Identity", "Face of God", "Feeding as Care", "Sacrifice to Lead", and "Authentic Brother". The evidence of these relevant themes is based on multiple emic perspectives of the informant's words. They can only be understood through the interconnection of all the themes and the four selected domains, and how they are linked together to the cultural meaning (see Figure 4 and Table 11). The selected domains and cultural themes explained the concept of spiritual fathering and revealed the meaning of the father-youth relationship in the Lani culture (see Appendix M). The findings in Chapter Four answered the Research Sub-Questions #2, #3, #4, and #5. Chapter Five will interpret the findings in context of the Lani culture and recommend principles and practices for a spiritual fathering approach for the Lani youth.

**CHAPTER 5**

**Conclusion**

This ethnographic study aims to understand how spiritual fathering can be used as an approach to disciple the Lani youth of Papua, Indonesia. Chapter 5 concludes the research with a discussion on the research findings and its implications for spiritual fathering to disciple the Lani youth. The implications are based on a literature review of related key terms on the subject of fathering, fatherlessness, discipleship, and the attachment theory in context of the Lani culture. The implications will answer the central research question: "How can spiritual fathering be used as an approach to disciple the Lani youth?" The chapter concludes with a recommendation for further studies on the subject.

**A. Findings and Interpretations**

This section discusses the significant findings related to the meaning of spiritual fathering in the Lani culture. Eight cultural themes were identified as discussed in Chapter Four, namely, "competition for influence", "relationship as investment", "hunger and survival", "emotions and identity", "the face of God", "feeding as care", "sacrifice to lead", and "authentic brother". These cultural themes are categorised under the four sub-questions, namely: 1) fathering in Lani culture, 2) influence of fathering on Lani youth, 3) accepted spiritual fathering approach, and 4) practices of spiritual fathering as an approach to youth discipleship.

1. Fathering in Lani Culture

This study confirms the literature review (Gamble et al. 2008; Hall et al. 2020; Keller 2013, 2018; Miyake 2000; Ricaurte 2011) that parents' cultural beliefs and values affect child-rearing patterns, parent-child interaction, and parental responsiveness to children's attachment behaviours. The fathering concept and its practices in the Lani culture are influenced by the animistic belief that fathers have spiritual powers to control and influence their children. The Lani use *Nogoba* and *Nami* to address the fathering figures in their extended family setting. *Nogoba* includes both their biological father and a non-biological figure who functions "like a father". *Nami* is an animistic concept of an uncle (i.e., mother's brother), who has earned supernatural authority from his ancestor's

spirits. The father-child "control-based relationship" is expressed in the father's domestic power-relations (e.g., violence and abandonment), an uncle's controlling behaviour (e.g., an authoritarian ruler and decision-maker), and children's total submission under both authorities. Two cultural themes, "competition for influence" and "relationship as investment", are discussed to explain fathering in the Lani culture.

**a) Competition for Influence**

The study found that competition between the father and uncle to influence their children is the central theme of fathering concept in the Lani culture. *Nami* or the "uncle," is the central fathering figure approved by the ancestor's spirits to fully own and control the children. The fear of an uncle's curse is a primary motivation behind every child's action and submission. However, a *Nogoba* or the biological father who functions well as a caregiver and provider, gains spiritual power to take over the fathering authority in order to protect his children from an uncle's spiritual influences (e.g., a curse, spiritual attack). A functioning father provides security for his children. This finding is consistent with the literature on a father's involvement (e.g., present, trusted, supportive, dependable) as a protective factor (Paquette 2021, 68), as a secure emotional anchor (Bowlby 1988, 4), and as an "activator" of a secure relationship (Grossmann et al. 2008, 858) for the children.

In contrast, a dysfunctional and violent father gives the uncle more power to influence the children by taking on the father's responsibility to provide for the children. This finding indicates that an uncle who provides care and feeds the children becomes a functioning or influencing father with whom the youth feel safe and securely attached. Combining this finding with the Melanesian perspective on the alternative fathering figure in the extended family (Steward-Withers 2010, 26), it can be implied that male figures (i.e., biological, and non-biological fathers) who directly and personally engage, provide care and economic resources for the children, play a significant role as an "authoritative voice" of influence.

Further, most children have a close and warm relationship with their mother and see their fathers as frightening-distance figures. The children feel insecure when they have to stay with their fathers without their mothers' presence. This finding further confirms the literature stated (Butt 1998, 110; Butt and Munro 2007, 575-6). Interestingly, the findings also support the literature (Cabrera at al. 2018; Paquette 2004; 2010; 2021;

Grossmann et al. 2008; Lucassen et al. 2011) on the importance of considering the father as a child's significant attachment figure alongside with their mother. These figures are those who can provide an emotional relationship to protect and instruct the children, so they develop well (Ainsworth 1970, 78; Paquette 2004, 193). Fathering figures may compete to gain the power to influence the children, but finally, the Lani youth will have to decide who is the "true father", one they will follow and to whom they will listen and submit. The quality of the father's caregiving and provision is the most significant power for influencing the children's decision.

**b) Relationship as Investment**

In contrast to the view that a parenting investment is related to "any expenditure (e.g., care, time, energy, resources) that a parent incurs to benefit a child" (Wang 2016, 1), and which promotes social skill development (Francesconi and Heckman 2016, 1), this study found that the Lani father's domestic relationship is an investment to gain more power, wealth, and influence for himself. This confirms Haviland (1974, 457) and Sahlins' (1963, 290) concept of a "manipulation relationship" where a father uses social relationships for his benefit.

The practice of gender inequality has been normalised by cultural practices among the Lani, where children (i.e., girls) and wives are seen as assets who bring a positive living environment to the entire family. In a marital relationship, Lani husbands have full power to control, while wives are required to submit. Marriage is a high-cost investment, and in return, the husbands demand total obedience and service from their wives. This finding is supported by Laksono and Wulandari (2019, 5-8). When wives are considered incompetent or unable to serve the household, they can become targets of violence from their husbands, often leading to death. This is consistent with the research that shows Papua has one of the highest incidences of domestic violence globally (UNDP 2016, 13; Wisely 2019, 1), which contribute to one of five causes of the high mortality rate in Papua (Giyai 2012, 1; UNDP Report 2016, 82). This is confirmed by the informants, all of whom admitted witnessing or becoming victims of their father's abusive relationship within the family. Gender inequality brings emotional problems for the wives and the children, which affects the children's perception of their relationship with their fathers, which they experience as insecure and unsafe.

The concept of "relationship as investment" also affects how fathers or uncles value their children. In Lani culture, fathers value the girls more than the boys, as confirmed by Laksono and Wulandari (2019, 5), and use different child-rearing styles to relate to them. Fathers tend to use an authoritarian parental style to control the girls while neglecting the boys. Boys are the family successor but are also seen as a burden, because fathers have to prepare bride prices for them in the future. Girls are seen as a transaction, a means to bring wealth (e.g., money, pigs, prestige) and as multitaskers to provide for the family. This finding is supported by Wahyudi et al. (2016, 30). The practice of *kasih-tangan* refers to the children's obligation, especially girls, to bring happiness to the uncle through obedience, respect, services, and gifts. The uncle would guarantee that the children's needs (e.g., school fees, food, shelter, clothes) are met and prevent them from a curse in their future life. However, the youth perceived the uncle's kindness, care, and gifts as a debt that leads to greater control in the future.

The response of Lani youth to the above is reflected in two ways. Firstly, for self-protection, they avoid an uncle's control by refusing to meet, stay close, or to receive his gifts or care. These practices are associated with the "emotional isolation" theory (Knabb, Welsh and Alexander 2012), adjusting, or repressing emotional connection in order to survive or avoid painful emotions by rejecting the need for a close relationship (174). Secondly, when they lose control over their own lives, they will often choose to run away or commit suicide (e.g., jumping into a river, cutting a vein, drinking poison). These actions are often chosen to resist the father or uncle's control, which supports the theory of Papuan social epidemic (Butt and Munro 2007; Butt 2001).

Further, patriarchal domination and violence against women and girls affects the emotions and behaviour of boys and girls differently, which confirms the statements from Brieding et al. (2015). Lani boys tend to externalise their behaviours (e.g., by abusing girls, having excessive sex or alcohol-drug use) while the girls tend to internalise their behaviour (e.g., by withdrawal, becoming depressed, or committing suicide) in order to cope with a difficult family situation. This finding confirms the literature by Armstrong et al. 2014; Breiding et al. 2015; and Paquette et al. 2021. Insecure father-youth relationships developed distrustful, avoidant, and rebellious youth, but the close relationships of father-mother and father-children are a relational investment that should benefit the children.

## 2. Influence of Fathering on Lani Youth

This study identified that polygamy was a significant contributive factor to father absenteeism and domestic violence in Lani families. In a polygamous setting, a senior wife must be the breadwinner for her husband and his new wife, since they were mostly unable to take care of her children. The new wife controls the senior wife and forces her husband to abuse and even divorce her counterpart. The emotionally hurting mother is often forced to move to another area with her children, which, as a single parent, makes raising her children difficult.

The study also identified three cultural themes, namely "hunger and survival", "emotions and identity", and "face of God", that assist an understanding of the influence of Lani fathering among the youth in three ways: physically, emotionally, and spiritually.

**a) Hunger and Survival**

The study identified that Lani youth recognise their absent fathers as being the primary source of their physical hunger and maltreatment, confirming the literature review (Snarey 1995; Statista Research 2021). This is evident in a number of ways, such as inattention, rejection, distancing, and violence. The emotionally hurting and divorced mothers seem unable to raise their children alone, while the mothers' families will probably not do anything to resolve the problem, since culturally, their husbands have bought and have full control over them.

Further, physically hungry and maltreated youth felt alone, unwanted, and unworthy of being loved. The physical hunger turned into "emotional hunger", where youth long for love, a sense of belonging, and acceptance, especially from a paternal figure. The emotional hunger is externalised by their behaviours to "create a desire to attach with their significant one", which confirms the statements by George (2014). In addition, the boys are likely to struggle with anger, violence, and open conflict with authority figures, as suggested by Paquette et al. (2021, 59), while the girls are likely to look for affection from adult male figures (e.g., premarital sexual relationships, multi partners) in order to feel loved and accepted, as indicated in the literature review (Caetano et al. 2006; Moylan et al. 2011).

A significant finding of this study is that the youth can modify their physical and emotional hunger through survival motivation. They might have an intrinsic survival motivation (e.g., "I must work for food, school fees, and my future") or an extrinsic one (e.g., "I must survive to support my mother") to regulate their negative past experiences. This finding is in line with Mikulincer and Shaver (2004, 174). Survival motivation starts when fatherless youth accept the presence of a new supportive figure who can provide a trusted and reliable relationship. The relationship triggers a change in their mindset and perspective about life (e.g., accepting themselves and their past, forgiving the absent fathers, and refocusing their strengths on fighting for a future), as indicated in the literature review (Levy, Blatt, and Shaver 1998; Saunders et al. 2011). The findings also confirm the earned secure attachment theory (George, Kaplan, and Main 1985; Pearson et al. 1994) in a cultural context. It also proposes that fatherless youth may have a survival motivation in order to modify their physical and emotional hunger through the presence of a supportive father figure who develops a secure relationship with them.

**b) Emotions and Identity**

This study identified two main effects of a father's absenteeism on Lani youth. Firstly, it affected them emotionally and also their sense of identity. Expressing emotions could be challenging as Lani youth, especially females, are taught not to show their emotions publicly. They are confused about which emotional reaction is appropriate and should be expressed before people or situations.

Three factors that hindered youth from expressing their emotions openly are namely: cultural restrictions (i.e., keeping a father's good name), an issue of trust (i.e., making sure that they can be trusted and keep secrets) and ambivalent emotions (i.e., confusion about which feelings should be expressed). These findings are in line with Munro and Slama's (2015) study on the *nekali-nayuk* (i.e., shame culture) that emphasises Lani's concern about keeping a good "appearance, reputation, and privacy" before others (171). The boys are more open to expressing their emotions than girls, as culturally, males are allowed to speak in public while females are required to be silent and to submit. However, both genders are similarly confused, expressing their emotions openly towards their fatherlessness while feeling obliged to keep the good name of their fathers.

Secondly, the expression of emotions was related to how fatherless youth view their self-identity (i.e., who I am) and that of others, which is consistent with the concept proposed by Bartholomew and colleagues (1991; 1994) related to how they present themselves to others. Fatherless youth use "emotional isolation" (e.g., a smile or a laugh) when they share painful stories that are found difficult to understand. Youth who show their "emotional expressions" openly seem to understand their problems better than those who hide their emotions. An open expression of emotions enables the youth to recognise, accept, and regulate their negative emotions as part of their learning, and to better understand themselves and others.

It is clear that the presence of an "emotional supportive figure", one who is present, listens attentively, and who accepts a fatherless youth, is recognised as one who "can be trusted" and "is supportive", willing to help them regulate their emotions, as described by Feinberg (2015, 42). Lani youth feel comfortable expressing their genuine emotions and are willing to engage with a "supportive figure" to resolve their current relational problem, and to better understand themselves. Counted (2016, 85) suggests this is a building block for a youth's identity development.

**c) Face of God**

This study found that Lani youth perceive God as their Father based on their mental pictures of their fathers' facial expressions, supporting Bowlby's (1973, 1982) internal working model. These mental pictures are accumulated according to their attachment experiences with their fathers, which is in line with the literature review (Brunner and Stroope 2010; Vitz 2013).

Fatherless youth view God as the Father in three "face" categories. Firstly, the "good face" individuals who have had negative experiences with their father figures but who perceived God the Father positively as One who is "secure, close, purposeful, and a provider". This finding is consistent with Kirkpatrick and Shaver's (1990, 329) compensation model.

Secondly, the "bad face" individuals who have had negative experiences with their father figures and also have negative views on God as their Father, supporting Vitz (1999; 2008; 2013) and Dobbs' (2013, ii-iii) correspondence model. They perceived God as One who is "angry, resentful, irritated, displeased, and dissatisfied". Lani youth

who saw their fathers abusing their mothers, perceived God as the "evil father". Those who experienced a controlling father saw God as demanding and challenging, One who needed to be pleased. Thirdly, the "blank face" individuals perceived God as "empty, expressionless, plain and emotionless". This research found that the orphans who had never met their biological parents or had experienced inconsistent substitute figures, found it challenging to establish any God-image.

Based on the strong evidence of this study, the presence of a substitute father figure who provides a close and secure father-youth relationship, may modify the "face of God". The God-image (Counted 2015) could be recognised as a "good Father" when fatherless youth experience healing through "intensive encounters with a loving God" (Nygaard 2020, 487) as they see it in a supportive father figure.

### 3. Accepted Spiritual Fathering Approach

The concept of a "true-hearted brother" is a familiar Lani concept for expressing a secure relationship. Jesus is accepted as an "elder brother," and the Holy Spirit is a close and benevolent friend, which confirms Hayward (1997, 62-66). However, God the Father is believed to be a "distant-untouchable-mysterious" spirit, which leads to an uncertain/insecure relationship, contrary to the literature (Allen 2013, 325; Kiekhaefer 2013, 49), which argues that God the Father is "a loving and caring Father who builds a close relationship with His people". Fatherless Lani youth often mention the cultural theme of an "authentic [elder] brother" is an acceptable spiritual fathering approach for them. The concept of an "authentic brother" includes two characteristics, a brotherly figure, and an authentic relationship, as discussed below.

**a) Brotherly Figure**
This study found that an accepted substitute fathering figure (SFF) should be presented through the concept of a "brotherly figure" who was perceived as the safest kind of person to whom Lani youth sought to connect. The concept of a "brotherly attachment" is supported by other scholars (Bauminger et al. 2008; Liberman et al. 1999) who discuss the importance of "friendship attachment" that plays a significant role in adolescent development into adulthood (Lim, Elijah, and Kho 2021, 33).

Fatherless Lani youth feel more confident about building a close relationship with an elder brother than with an adult male. An adult male is perceived as "powerful, distant, detached, and quiet", while an elder brother is seen as a figure with whom the youth could be "close and attached, one who would stay-play-talk-walk with, and be trusted". A brotherly figure of a spiritual father explains the importance of "friendly companionship" in spiritual leadership, consistent with Lunsford's (2017, 141) "mentoring friendship" concept and Tabani's (2013, 7-27) "friendly leadership" where fatherless youth feel secure, comfortable, and confidently able to rebuild a close relationship with new fathering figures who are close, can be trusted and are genuine.

**b) Authentic Relationships**

In this study, it has been shown that "authenticity" is a significant characteristic of an accepted substitute fathering figure, which confirms Steven's (2017) study on authenticity as a necessary "mediating factor that supports the insecure individual's affective functioning" (392). The findings showed that seven qualities describe an authentic person: 1) a promise keeper, 2) a man of action, 3) a transparent life (i.e., openly shares his life), 4) an encourager (i.e., an attentive listener to others' stories), 5) a secret keeper, 6) a transparent reminder (i.e., rebukes directly when one does wrong), and 7) a trusting friend (i.e., trusting someone to do important things). One could earn trust from fatherless youth when actions show consistent openness and a commitment to relate with those who have experienced past painful relationships with their fathers and families, in line with the "emotional supportive behaviours" concept (Feinberg 2015; Main et al. 2002).

**c) Authentic Brother**

In summary of two characteristics of an acceptable spiritual fathering approach above, this study confirms Counted (2016, 1) that youth need "attachment and authenticity" to support their identity and spiritual development. As supported by the other authors (Fletcher et al. 2013; Paquette and Freeman 2013), a reliable substitute fathering figure influences how the youth regulate their emotions and behaviours. An "authentic brother" who shows care would encourage the youth to "listen" and "accept" his spiritual leadership. The youth who spend time with an accepted substitute father learn to imitate, model, and become like him. This study proposes that the concept of an "authentic brother" can be a spiritual fathering approach to disciple the Lani youth, where a father figure is present and able to build a friendly companionship in an

authentic relationship with the fatherless youth, one who becomes a role model and brings spiritual influence to help them mature in Christ.

## 4. Practices of Spiritual Fathering Approach

The central issue raised by Lani youth is a severe lack of basic needs (e.g., maltreatment, daily hunger, nomadic living, and child labour for food and education) associated with the dysfunction of fathers, affecting their sense of worthiness (e.g., "Am I loved?" "Am I worthy?") and their "ability to trust others". The Lani youth were cautious of starting a new close relationship as they felt it was difficult to put their trust in someone and then be rejected and hurt again, especially from adult male figures. The cultural themes, "feeding as care" and "sacrifice to lead", provided the basis for two major practices of spiritual fathering in order to support Lani youth in rebuilding their trust and redeveloping a secure relationship, as described below.

**a) Feeding as Care**

"Feeding" others is a way to show care, and "feasting together" (e.g., sitting, spending time, chatting, and sharing food) is a sign of closeness and acceptance in a special personal relationship. A spiritual leader who opens his house and provides food for Lani youth significantly has a respectful and influential place in their hearts as 1) a motivator (e.g., encouraging them to pursue education, to serve God, live differently), 2) a trainer (e.g., stimulating a desire to learn and to try new things), 3) a builder of new trusting relationships, 4) an influencer to restore the ability to trust others, and 5) a life projector (e.g., helping them to see the future differently). Physical, emotional, and spiritual aspects are interconnected and affect one another, confirming Cooper (2012), that reminding youth ministers to be aware of "holistic needs" (e.g., relational, social, emotional, and physical as well as spiritual) for fatherless youth to thrive (138). Fatherless youth felt safer, stronger, more motivated, and accepted when invited to the table and included as family members. This study proposes that an invitation from a spiritual father to "feast together" changes the mindsets of fatherless youth, as they open their hearts, follow his direction, model his faith, and become eager to live as he lives.

**b) Sacrifice to Lead**

Self-sacrifice is an essential family leadership principle (Eph. 5:25, 29) and an influential element of a healthy family system (Bahr and Bahr 2001, 1231). A father

sacrifices himself to protect and provide for his family (Ware 2011, 6-8). However, as shown in this present study, the concept of self-sacrifice is uncommon in Lani culture. Lani male leadership has evolved to being "self-interested" (Haviland 1974; Sahlins 1963) by sacrificing people and things to gain more power to control and influence.

Fatherless Lani youth recognise that a substitute father figure who makes sacrifices for them could influence them. Sacrifice is related to the significant relational issue of "trustworthiness" and "attentiveness", as fatherless youth perceive a sacrificial spiritual father figure as one who could be trusted. They would follow his spiritual leadership and grow to be just like him. "Small actions" of a spiritual father (e.g., remembering names, celebrating a birthday, spending time together, availability to help, listening attentively, and even rebuking and disciplining) gradually leads to changed perspectives on relationships.

Fatherless youth who lack everything, treasure a spiritual father who sacrifices and places himself as a model of a "responsible life" and helps them view life through a different lens, which confirms the literature review (Brown et al. 2018; Wealth 2019; Wieja 2014). The perception of God, as he is seen by fatherless Lani youth, changed through the presence of a spiritual father who showed them a model of a "good and responsible father figure" as they follow his example of faith, submit to his spiritual direction, and follow God according to his example.

 "Feeding as care" and "sacrifice to lead" are two significant practices of spiritual fathering approach, which can be used to disciple fatherless Lani youth. The presence of a spiritual father who shows care consistently and sacrifices himself for fatherless youth gains profound power to support them in modifying their views of self and others. It helps them build relationships, heals their ability to trust, and finally develops a growing perspective of relationships, life and God. Spiritual fathering is an approach that can lead fatherless youth who are physically, emotionally, and spiritually hurting into a healing relationship with God in total trust and confidence in him, and the expectation that, as a newly earned-secure individual, they can live as Christ's disciples.

## B. Research Question

This ethnographic study aimed to answer the central research question: "How can spiritual fathering be used as an approach to disciple the Lani youth?" The researcher has sought to understand the fathering approaches and their influences that contribute to the problems of fatherlessness in Lani culture, and to understand a spiritual fathering approach that is accepted by the youth, and the practices of spiritual fathering approach to disciple the Lani youth.

This study found that fathering approaches in the Lani culture have evolved around the animistic worldview where father figures had have spiritual powers to control and influence the children. Three cultural approaches of fathering contribute to fatherlessness in Lani culture. Firstly, gender inequality, where mothers are abused, girls are used as means of transactions, while boys are practically neglected. Secondly, polygamy contributes to father absenteeism and domestic violence in Lani families and potentially makes the children fatherless and motherless at the same time. Thirdly, childhood maltreatment contributes significantly to the youth's physical hunger, which is transformed into emotional hunger as they feel alone, unwanted, and unworthy to be loved. Fatherless youth look for love, sense of belonging, and acceptance through their "attachment behaviours" that express their desire to connect with a significant father figure. This affects how they perceived their identity, trusted others, and viewed God as the Father.

Survival motivation was a significant factor in developing earned security (Pearson et al. 1994, 359) in the lives of fatherless youth. The presence of a spiritual fathering figure and the openness of youth to accept his presence, developed a survival motivation that supported them in regulating their emotional issues. Spiritual fathering provided emotional support through trusted and reliable relationships that mediate the emotional healing process for fatherless youth. Spiritual fathering should provide a brotherly attachment through the presence of an "authentic brother" who shows care and becomes a new role model of life, one who brings spiritual influence into their lives.

Showing care is an effective way for a discipleship process. For fatherless youth, feasting together has a significant meaning of closeness and acceptance in a personal relationship, one that motivates them to build new relationships and heals their trust in

others. They also recognised that a substitute father figure who showed selfless, sacrificial actions, have power to influence their lives. Small sacrificial actions, related to the relational issues of "trustworthiness" and "attentiveness", gradually changed their perspective on God, life, and relationships. Fatherless youth would model their spiritual father's faith, follow his example of life, and submit themselves to his spiritual leadership. Spiritual fathering is a practical approach to lead the physically, emotionally, and spiritually hurting youth into healing and growing relationships with self, others, and God in total trust and confidence, as newly earned-secure individuals who live as Christ-followers.

## C. Significance and Implication

The research finds that the attachment theory framework (Bowlby 1969; 1973; 1982), father activation relationship (Paquette and colleagues 2004; 2010; 2013; 2021), and earned-secure attachment (George, Kaplan, and Main 1985; Pearson et al. 1994) are all beneficial in guiding this study. An overarching theme that emerged across all cultural themes is the importance of a spiritual-fathering figure who provides emotional support and trusted-reliable relationships for fatherless youth. The discipleship of fatherless youth will not be effective without considering those needs. The quality of a spiritual father's brotherly, authentic relationship, caregiving, provision, and sacrificial life, strongly influences the fatherless youth's decision to listen, follow, and submit to his spiritual leadership.

The animistic worldview has triggered the problem of fatherlessness which may not be altered easily. However, Lani youth who suffered from fatherlessness can experience emotional and relational healing, empowering them to create a new cultural norm of fathering to stop the "cycle of fatherlessness" in the next generation. Although this study was drawn from the Lani cultural setting and may not be transferable to other cultures, its practical implications are likely to be broadly applicable, especially to understand the youth who are raised in cultural settings where fathering concepts and practices are highly influenced by an animistic worldview, patriarchal systems, and fatherlessness issues. This study may also empower fatherless youth to have hope and a choice to overcome their fatherlessness and develop a secure relationship with self, others, and God in the future.

This study has a personal meaning for the researcher. As a man who grew up in a fatherless home, he often found this journey of dissertation writing was a healing journey with God. The various readings, interviews, reflections, confusion, and writing drafts were God's healing process for him. This study encourages the researcher to continue ministering to the Lani people and enables him to serve more effectively as a spiritual "*Nogoba*" who provides emotional support and healing-reparative relationships to disciple fatherless youth in Christ.

At the ecclesial level, this ethnographic study has facilitated Lani youth to speak out about their unspoken issues and to raise the Lani church and Christian leaders' awareness of what has happened in the lives of their future generation. This study encourages the church to refocus their pastoral work, from not only developing the physical church buildings and content-based programs, but also facilitating Christians and faith community to reach out and disciple young people, by providing them with a fathering process, emotional support, and healing-reparative relationships.

The urgent Christian educational ministries (e.g., marital ministry, parenting education, orphan-care program, and young people discipleship) need to be prioritised to prepare the church to give "apologia" (i.e., faith defense) if they are to influence animistic and traditional worldviews. The study also encourages Christian male figures, namely biological fathers, pastors, missionaries, educators, social workers, and community leaders, to use their God-given male roles as spiritual fathering figures, those who become models, trainers, and catalysts of spiritual transformation among fatherless youth towards maturity as Christ's disciples.

This research finds its place within existing attachment theory at the data level, particularly paternal attachment in non-Western, rural, and animistic cultural contexts (cf. Keller 2013, 173). Only a few studies have been conducted in those cultural contexts, primarily focused on mother-child attachment. This study also attempts to demonstrate the applicability of paternal activation relationships and earned-secure attachment theory among fatherless youth, especially in the South Pacific, among secluded tribes, and in cultural contexts of poverty, which to the researcher's knowledge, has not been done before. The study also suggests the importance of considering the local cultural context to understand better father-child attachment

behaviours, something that needs to be emphasised more in future attachment theory research.

## D. Recommendations

This ethnographic research has examined several issues related to how spiritual fathering can be used to disciple youth in the Lani cultural setting. Many other issues have been raised and can be considered as a recommendation for practices and future research.

### 1. Recommendations for Practices

This study was motivated by the concern of Christian ministers (e.g., pastors, missionaries, and educators) to address the question, "Why is it so challenging to lead Lani youth into maturity in Christ?" This study emphasises that the problem of Lani youth - fatherlessness and their need for the presence of a spiritual fathering figure - must be taken seriously, especially by Lani church leaders and Christian workers.

Lani church leaders, youth ministers, and Christian educators need to facilitate Lani youth to speak out of their "unspoken voices" to understand them better and to serve and prepare them effectively as future spiritual leaders of the next generation. Developing a "culture of a fathering relationship" within the church, one that provides emotional support and trusted-reliable relationships, may be beneficial for creating secure spaces for dialogue by listening to and understanding one another.

Lani Christian men must be taught the impact of an animistic worldview that has created profound fatherlessness and has affected the physical, emotional, and spiritual development of their youth. Christian men must be informed about, and trained how to be an accepted spiritual fathering figure, and how to practice spiritual fathering approach in order to disciple the youth in Christ.

Lani church must address family issues boldly (e.g., marital and parenting, education) by teaching and training the Lani people to give "apologia" of how to live as Christian families surrounded by a highly animistic culture and patriarchal system. Youth discipleship can only be successful as they can find a model to follow as an example.

Senior brothers, male figures, church leaders, and mission workers must be prepared to fill the gap.

## 2. Recommendations for Future Research.

This study has sought to understand "fathering in the Lani culture" from a youth (ages 19-24) perspective. A further ethnographic study on paternal attachment in other cultural settings may include the influence of modernity, church theology (e.g., prosperity and spiritual forces theology), and socio-political problems (e.g., the issues of Papua independence, civil war, poverty, HIV/AIDS). Other topics include the importance of a more comprehensive understanding of fathering in cultural contexts from the perspective of paternal figures' (e.g., fathers, grandfathers, tribal leaders), which are not covered in this study.

The study has found that polygamy is a significant factor in father absenteeism and domestic violence in the family, and potentially made the children fatherless and motherless at the same time. No attempt has been made in this study to address the "motherlessness" in Lani culture and its impact on the physical, emotional, and spiritual life of youth. The issue of "double orphans" (i.e., parentless) reveals the importance of further research on motherlessness issues, considering major social problems of Lani mothers, namely a runaway wife, the suicide and mortality rate, domestic violence (e.g., physical, emotional, and sexual abuse).

This study has shown that "survival motivation" was developed through the presence of a fathering figure who provides brotherly attachment, emotional support, and trusted-reliable relationships to gain an earned-secure attachment. A further study on the survival motivation of "double orphans" (i.e., parentless) young people, including gender, cultural values, community support, and child adoption, is needed to find a more effective discipleship approach, one which was not explored in this research.

The present study has suggested that spiritual fathering, which involves emotional support and a trusted-reliable relationship of a fathering figure, can be a constructive approach to the discipleship of fatherless youth. The present study serves as a basis for further longitudinal studies to measure its applicability, including emotional supportive figures, brotherly attachment, authenticity in relationships, caregiving, and self-

sacrificial actions. Further research also needs to consider developing a "culture of fathering relationships" within the church where adult male figures become the role models of faith and their caregiving actions as a significant discipleship process for fatherless youth in the church.

## E. Closing Summary

For various reasons, many young people today live in the fatherless homes. Divorce, unwed pregnancies, poverty, violence, and culture are still the leading causes of fatherlessness globally (Lamb 2015, 92). The cultural worldview (e.g., beliefs, values) is considered to be a significant factor in understanding paternal attachment in a culture. It is also likely to be a significant contributor to the emergence of fatherlessness among the youth, affecting them physically, emotionally, and spiritually. Content-based discipleship (e.g., bible study, prayer meeting, small group, etcetera) will not be effective without addressing the emotional process through the presence of a spiritual fathering figure, one who provides emotional support and trusted-reliable relationships. Spiritual fathering can be used as an approach to youth discipleship by empowering more adult Christian males to use their God-given roles as spiritual leaders, those who serve as emotional supportive figures through their brotherly attachment, authentic relationship, caregiving, and self-sacrifice. These fathering figures become the catalysts of spiritual transformation among fatherless youth and models of life whom the youth may follow and live daily as Christ's disciples.

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# APPENDIX A

## Pilot Test
## Participant Information Sheet

Dear participant,

Thank you very much for reading this information sheet.

My name is Rudy Tejalaksana. My family and I have been missionary teachers in the Central Highlands of Papua since 2013. This information sheet describes the research I am currently working on, called "My Father and My Spiritual Life", to complete my doctoral studies at the Asia Graduate School of Theology Alliance (Singapore/Malaysia) under the supervision of Dr Binsen Samuel Sidjabat.

My research aims to find an effective discipleship approach that will meet young people's needs (18-24 years) in Papua's Central Highlands. This research will examine whether discipleship through spiritual fathering practice can be applied to help Papuan youth grow holistically into maturity in Christ. One of the important research focuses is to study the relationship between father and child and the impacts of the father-child relationship on young people's lives in the Central Highlands. For data collection, I will conduct a survey and some interviews among the college students in Central Highland Papua. An effective and understandable survey and interview questions are needed to gain information for the research.

May I invite you to help me pilot test the survey and interview questions? I will ask you to read the survey and interview questions to reveal things that are not clear, difficult to understand, and so forth. We will further discuss preparing a more precise, unambiguous, and clear survey and interview questions to research in the field. This pilot test will take about 35-45 minutes to complete. The decision to participate (or not) in this pilot test is your own decision.

As an appreciation for your willingness to help in this pilot test, I will gladly share some "internet data credit" as a gift of love to support your study. I will also arrange a dinner together to celebrate our friendship together after this pilot test.

I hope this research will benefit the Lani youth in many ways. Firstly, I hope this research process will become part of God's healing process from our broken relationships, loneliness, painful childhood, and broken lives, and will give us insights to overcome our relational problems with families and communities. Secondly, I hope the research result will be used effectively to help more youth, churches, and educational institutions to determine an effective discipleship model that can lead Papuan youth into mature life and functioning youth in Christ.

Thank you for considering participating in this pilot test,

Rudy Tejalaksana

## APPENDIX B

## Pilot Test – Consent Form

**Project title:** My Father and My Spiritual Life

**Name of Researcher:** Rudy Tejalaksana

I have read the Participant Information Sheet. I understand the purpose of the pilot test, why I have been invited to participate, and what my participation will require. I have had the opportunity to ask questions and have had them answered to my satisfaction.

I agree to help the researcher pilot test the survey and interview questions for his research.

I understand my role in the pilot test is to:
1. read the survey and interview questions to reveal things that are not clear, difficult to understand, and so forth.
2. discuss with the researcher in order to prepare a more precise, unambiguous, and clear survey and interview questions to research in the field.

I understand that my participation in this pilot test is my own decision.


Name:

Signature:

Signature of researcher:

Date:

## APPENDIX C

### Letter of request to a Jayawijaya Christian College Papua President

Date: _____

To
Mr. _____
The President,
Jayawijaya Christian College Papua - Indonesia

Re: Permission to stay and research at JCC Papua.

Greetings and peace to you in Our Lord Jesus Christ,

This letter follows my verbal communication with you in July 2020 to request your permission to stay in the dormitory, invite Lani tribe students in your school to participate in a research project I am conducting, and use the college pastor as an assistant for aspects of my research.

I am a participant in the Doctor of Education in Child and Family Development program of AGST Alliance, under the supervision of Dr Binsen Samuel Sidjabat (President of Tyranus Bible Seminary Bandung). As part of my program, I am working on ethnographic research entitled "My Father and My Spiritual Life" This project requires Lani students' views about their relationships with their families, others, and God. Participants will be required to complete a survey (see a copy with this letter), and then I will request ten to fifteen respondents to be interviewed by me 2-3 times for 30-50 minutes each time.

Participation will be voluntary. At any time up until one month after students give their information, they may request that their survey and interview data not be used. The information participants give in this survey will be kept confidential. Their names and personal details will not be revealed in any of my research writing.

If you allow your students to participate in my research, I would appreciate an assurance that their participation or non-participation in my research will not affect their relationships and status as students in JCC Papua. I would also like an assurance from you that the participation of the college pastor as a research assistant will not affect his role and relationship with JCC Papua.

If you would like more information before you make your decision about whether to allow your members to participate, or you have questions about this request, please contact me at my phone or WhatsApp _____ or email _____. If you would like to discuss aspects of this research with someone not directly involved, please email the Chair, AGST Alliance Human Participants Ethics Panel (ethics@agstalliance.org), which is responsible for reviewing and approving my study. If you are interested in receiving a summary of the results of my research, I will send it to you at the conclusion of my research. I am grateful for your consideration of this request, and I look forward to your response.

In Christian Fellowship,

Rudy Tejalaksana

# APPENDIX D

## Confidentiality Agreement

**Project title:** My Father and My Spiritual Life

**Researcher:** Rudy Tejalaksana

This is a confidentiality agreement between Rudy Tejalaksana and (name) _____ as research assistant for the research in JCC Papua.

☐ I agree to support the researcher as a research assistant for this research project.

☐ I understand my role as a research assistant is to:
1. introduce the researcher to JCC's students.
2. assist the researcher with basic information about the students and research location.
3. assist the researcher in determining potential participants for the research.
4. give advice to the researcher to adapt smoothly to living with the students in the dormitory.

☐ I understand that all the research material that I have access to is confidential, and I must not discuss it with anyone other than the researcher and his supervisor.

☐ When I have completed my task, I will delete any copies I have made as part of the process.


Research Assistant                                                                Researcher


Full name/ Signature/ Date                                        Full name/ Signature/ Date

**APPENDIX E**

**Introduction Information**
(Read by Research Assistant)

Dear JCC Papua students and teachers,

Thank you for gathering here for this special prayer night. Today we have Mr Rudy Tejalaksana with us. I know some of you recognise him as he used to lead some relationship seminars in 2019 on the JCC campus.

As some of you know, Mr Rudy and his family have been serving in Papua as a missionary among the Lani people in Puncak Jaya for a couple of years. God has called him and his family to share God's love, especially among children and youth in the central highland of Papua.

We are glad that today he has come here with a slightly different role. Today Mr Rudy is here as a researcher. He is finishing his doctoral studies in child and family development at Asia Graduate School of Theology Alliance. You may ask him more about his school, and maybe some of you will also have the opportunity to continue your study there. I pray for that.

Mr Rudy has obtained permission from the JCC's president to stay with us in the dormitory for three months. He is here to listen and learn from some of you as part of his study at AGST Alliance.

Mr Rudy is writing his dissertation on "My father and My spiritual life". As a missionary around Central Highland for seven years, he is burdened to see that many young people have to live without their biological parents from a young age. He recognises that many young people he serves in the Central Highlands come from broken families and struggle with life and knowing God. It saddens his heart.

During this opportunity to continue his study, he is keen to find answers on how to help central highland youth live fulfilled lives. That is why he has come here as a researcher. He wants to learn from you and listen to your stories. He may also want to tell you his stories, especially his experiences in ministering to our Papuan brothers and sisters in the Puncak Jaya regency.

Not all of you will join the research as a participant. I (college pastor) will help Mr Rudy invite some participants (from the Lani tribe) to join the research as informants for his research. Mr Rudy and I (college pastor) will give a more detailed explanation later about the research.

However, Mr Rudy is here not just as a researcher. While he is here, he also wants to enjoy the presence of the rest of the students (non-participants; Lani and Non-Lani) who live together in the dormitory. He wants to respect and appreciate all of you. He told me that he was so excited to be with you all in the dormitory for three months. He also mentioned that he is willing to participate in some of our regular schedules (to know you more and you know him more) and to help the students when you need him. He is willing to give his helping hand if you need his help. You may also ask him about his role as a researcher; what is a researcher? What does the researcher do? Maybe some of you will be a researcher too someday.

As a researcher, he has some limitations. He will not always be available to join us on our dormitory occasions. He may need some time to write his reports or have a personal conversation with someone. We will give him space to do that. He may want to ask something about our habits or culture here in order to adapt swiftly to living in the dorm. I think it is good to help each other as fellow brothers and sisters in Christ. He is very keen to learn from you. If you need his help, you can come to him. Let us welcome him together.

**Procedures:**

1. This introduction aims to give brief information about the researcher, his research, and his presence in the student dormitory.
2. As a research assistant, the college pastor will read this introduction information in front of the students and teachers.
3. After the speech, the researcher will be asked to explain his willingness to learn and listen to them as a researcher. He will briefly inform them about the research's purpose and what he will do during the research. He will communicate his willingness to answer students' (informants or non-informants) questions about his work as a researcher. He will make sure that the students recognise his role as a researcher. However, he will gladly give a helping hand whenever the students need it that is not related to the research project. He realises the need to draw a clear line/boundary in his relationship with them as a researcher for the purpose of this research and data collection).
4. The college pastor will pray for all of us at the end of the meeting.

**APPENDIX F**

**Participant Information Sheet**

"My Father and My Spiritual Life"

Dear JCC Papua student,

Thank you very much for reading this information sheet.

My name is Rudy Tejalaksana. My family and I have been missionary-teachers in the Central Highlands of Papua since 2013. This information sheet describes the research I am currently working on to complete my doctoral studies at the Asia Graduate School of Theology Alliance (Singapore/Malaysia) under the supervision of Dr Binsen Samuel Sidjabat.

My research aims to find an effective discipleship approach that will meet young people's needs (ages 18-24 years) in Papua's Central Highlands. This research will examine whether discipleship through the practice of spiritual fathering can be applied to help Papuan youth grow holistically into maturity in Christ. One of the important research focuses is to study the relationship between father and child and the impacts of the father-child relationship on young people's lives in the Central Highlands.

May I invite you to contribute as a participant in my research? For three months, I will stay together with you in the dormitory to understand more about your daily life. I will ask you to complete a survey that will take about 10-15 minutes to complete. I may invite you to be interviewed by me to understand better your struggles as a young person in the Central Highlands. There will be 2-3 personal interviews for each person. The interview will take 30-40 minutes per interview. However, the number of interviews may be fewer or more according to your availability and convenience.

The decision to participate (or not) in my research is your own decision. I have received permission from the head of JCC Papua to do this research in the school, and he has assured me that your participation or non-participation will not affect your grades or status as a student.

Being in this study is entirely voluntary. You are not under any obligation to consent, and if you do consent, you can withdraw from the study at any time without telling me the reason. You do not have to complete and submit the survey. For the interview, you just have to say, "I do not want to be an informant any longer." You also have the right to withdraw the information you have given me up to one month after giving the information. You also may stop the interview at any time if you do not wish to continue, and the information you have provided will not be included in the study. When I interview you, with your permission, I will record the conversation. You can ask for the recorder to be stopped at any time. If you withdraw from the interview, the audio recording will be erased.

All the information you give me will be strictly confidential. Only my supervisor and I will have access to the information you give. In the reports of the study, none of the information you give will identify you in the report. All data I have obtained during this research will be stored in a safe place. All paper data will be stored carefully in a locked cabinet, and all software data will be stored on my personal computer, which is protected with a password. Only I can access that data. All data will be destroyed three years after the writing of this research ends.

I hope this research will benefit Lani youth in many ways. Firstly, I hope this research process will become God's healing process from our broken relationships, loneliness, painful childhood, and broken lives, and will give us insights to overcome our relational problems with families and communities. Secondly, I hope the research result will be used effectively to help more youth, churches, and educational institutions (like JCC Papua) to determine an effective

discipleship model that will lead Papuan youth into greater maturity and to function well as youth in Christ.

As an appreciation for your willingness to help in this research, I will gladly share some "internet data credit" as a gift of love to support your study here at JCC Papua. I will also arrange two dinners together with you to celebrate our friendship.

If you would like more information or to have questions answered before you make your decision whether or not to participate, please contact me directly, or via phone / SMS/ WhatsApp at _____ or via my email:_____ If you would like to discuss your participation in this research with someone not directly involved, please email the Chair of the AGST Alliance Human Participants Ethics Panel (ethics@agstalliance.org), the organisation that is responsible for reviewing and approving this study.

Thank you for considering participating in my research,

Rudy Tejalaksana

**APPENDIX G**

**Participant Consent Form**

**Project title:** My Father and My Spiritual Life

**Name of Researcher:** Rudy Tejalaksana

I have read the Participant Information Sheet. I understand the nature of the research, why I have been invited to participate, and what my participation will require. I have had the opportunity to ask questions and have had them answered to my satisfaction.

I agree to take part in this research.

I understand that my participation is completely voluntary and that I can stop being part of the project if I do not want to continue. I am free to withdraw at any time and to withdraw data that could identify me, up to one month after I give the information, without needing to give a reason.

I agree to audio recording of the interviews. I understand that I can stop the interview at any time if I do not wish to continue, the audio recording will be erased, and the information provided will not be included in the study.

I understand that the information I provide is confidential. The only people who will know what I have said will be the researcher and the supervisor.

I have been assured that in the reports of the study, none of the information I give will identify me.

I have been assured that participation or non-participation in the study will not affect my grades or status as a JCC Papua student.

I wish/ do not wish to receive a transcript of my interview for editing.

I wish/do not wish to receive a summary of the research.

My email address (for the interview transcript and/or summary of the research): _____

Name:

Signature:

Signature of researcher:

Date:

**APPENDIX H**

**Demographic Survey Form**

Dear JCC Papua student,

Thank you so much for your willingness to fill in this survey.

I am Rudy Tejalaksana. My family and I have been serving children and youth in Papua since 2013. Now, I am finishing my doctoral studies at Asia Graduate School of Theology Alliance. This survey is created to help understand the relationship between young people in the central highlands with their fathers and families. Your answers will help me find effective ways to help young Papuans.

Completing this survey is voluntary. You do not have to finish it and submit it. If you submit it, I will keep your answers confidential – only my supervisor and I will read your responses. If I refer to any of your ideas in my research reports, no one will know they are your ideas.

**Personal Identity**

- Full Name:
- Place of Birth/Date:
- Sex: Male / Female:
- Tribe/ Family Name:
- Phone number/ Whatsapp:

**Survey Questions**

1. **Have you ever met your father?**
   a. Often (when I return home)
   b. Rarely
   c. Once in a while
   d. Rarely meet
   e. Never met since my childhood

2. **How is your relationship with your father?**
   a. Very close
   b. Close
   c. Not close
   d. Very far
   e. I never met my father

3. **When I remember my father, I feel ...**
   a. Happy
   b. Sad
   c. Angry
   d. Disappointed
   e. Other (please describe)

   _____
   _____
   _____

4. **Tell me (in a little more detail) about your relationship with your father.**

   _____
   _____

**5. How is your relationship with your mother?**
   a. Very close
   b. Close
   c. Not close
   d. Very far
   e. I never met my mother

**6. When I remember my mother, I feel ...**
   a. Happy
   b. Sad
   c. Angry
   d. Disappointed
   e. Other (please describe)

   _____
   _____
   _____

7. **Tell me (in a little more detail) about your relationship with your mother.**

   _____
   _____
   _____

**8. How did your father treat your mother?**
   a. My father loved my mama
   b. My father and mother were not close
   c. My father was rude to my mama
   d. My father did not take care of my mother
   e. My father left my mother
   f. Other. (Please describe).

   _____
   _____
   _____

9. **Tell me more about how your father treated your mother.**

   _____
   _____
   _____

**10. My closest person is ...**
   a. My mother
   b. My father
   c. My grandfather
   d. My grandmother
   e. My aunty
   f. My uncle (om)
   g. My friend
   h. My pastor
   i. My teacher/lecturer
   j. Other. (Please describe)

   _____
   _____

11. **Tell me more about who you were close to from childhood until today.**

   _____
   _____
   _____

12. **What I remember most about my father in my childhood is ...**

_____
_____
_____

13. **For me, my father is** ...

_____
_____
_____

14. **My father often ... to me**

_____
_____
_____

15. **When I remember about my father, I feel God is** ...

_____
_____
_____

16. **I feel ... when people near me …**

_____
_____
_____

17. **What I remember most about my childhood is …**

_____
_____
_____

18. **What kind of man/woman do I want to be in the future?**

_____
_____
_____

Thank you so much for your views.

# APPENDIX I

## List of Hypothesised Domains

| Included Terms (X) | | Semantic Relationships | Possible Cover Terms (Y) | Structural Questions |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Biological father<br>2. All adult male<br>3. Male acts like father | 1. Powerful male figure<br>2. Close male figure<br>3. Well-known man<br>4. Male who feeds me. | Strict Inclusion (X is a kind of Y) | Father (Nogoba) | Who are any kinds of fathers in the culture? |
| 1. Violence<br>2. Polygamy as power<br>3. Preferred child gender<br>4. Distance relations<br>5. Dominance on women | 6. Disrespect to women<br>7. Sexual Abusive<br>8. Supernatural (Aiwa)<br>9. Abandon Marriage<br>10. Jobless | Strict Inclusion (X is a kind of Y) | Father's Power Relation | What are any other kinds of father's power relationships in the culture? |
| 1. Animistic power<br>2. Domination over child<br>3. Source of curse<br>4. Fear-based relationship<br>5. Girls as assets<br>6. Owner of child's life<br>7. Rejected by youth | 8. More power than father<br>9. Highly respected<br>10. Sacrifice to gain power<br>11. Ritual leader<br>12. Problem solver<br>13. Role as father (Nami Nogoba)<br>*14. Powerful words: "Nami says..."* | Strict Inclusion (X is a kind of Y) | Uncle's (Nami) Animistic Power | What are any other kinds of uncle's powers? |
| 1. Marital problem<br>2. Nomad - Live without family<br>3. Cycle of Violence (Violence witness)<br>4. Attitude problems (Free life, sex)<br>5. No model (Instructor + protector) | 6. Child maltreatment (hungry often)<br>7. Forgiveness problem<br>8. Communication problem<br>9. No future (Thought as stupid) | Strict Inclusion (X is a kind of Y) | Problem of Father's absence | What are any other kinds of problems from an absent father? |
| 1. Long term Sadness<br>2. Long term anger<br>3. Low self-esteem<br>4. Identity crisis<br>5. Abandoned: Left behind<br>6. Longing for father (dream)<br>7. Distrust<br>8. Fear of rejection<br>9. Distance relationship with others | 10. No toleration of mistakes<br>11. Trauma of violence<br>12. Dilemma: respect or hate?<br>13. Ambivalent fear-close Lonely<br>14. Blamed<br>15. Happy memory (Embrace me, spend time together, Share stories)<br>16. Secure (He provided what I need, father protected me)<br>17. Missing late father | Strict Inclusion (X is a kind of Y) | Feeling about father's absence | What are any kinds of responses to an absent father? |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. I turn my mind to God<br>2. I replace earthly father with heavenly father<br>3. Feeling close with God<br>4. God takes care of me<br>5. I am proud to have a father<br>6. I tell God my needs<br>7. I talk to God easily<br>8. Someone pays attention<br>9. I can ask God problem<br>10. Provider of life<br>11. God is not good | 12. God has an empty face<br>13. I know the purpose of life<br>14. I am the child God loves<br>15. Fear, Guilt,<br>16. Restless (I have to be a good person)<br>17. Feel the distance<br>18. Avoid church (Hate conflict in the church, Fighting about doctrine)<br>19. Difficult to understand God<br>20. Confused about Father God<br>21. God can curse – confuse me | Cause-Effect (X is a result of Y) | Influence of Father absence on the spiritual life | What are all the effects of father figures on spiritual life? |
| 1. Friends father<br>2. Big brother<br>3. Grandpa<br>4. Grandpa's friend, | 5. Adopted/stepfather<br>6. Christian leader<br>7. Uncle<br>8. Teacher | Strict Inclusion (X is a kind of Y) | Substitute father | Who are any substitute father figures? |
| 1. Violence<br>2. Insulting<br>3. Treated like animal<br>4. Asked to work all the time<br>5. Motivate to school,<br>6. Example of life (work hard)<br>7. Teach new skill<br>8. Speaking life - Prophetic projection<br>9. Explain about future<br>10. Teaching me to obey and Respect | 11. Feeling safe, stronger, motivated,<br>12. Financial support<br>13. Train me to be independent (financially),<br>14. Teach me to love church and God<br>15. Serious with life,<br>16. Trusting relationship,<br>17. Motivate to serve God, to try new things, work hard,<br>18. I want to serve God as a pastor. | Strict Inclusion (X is a kind of Y) | Relationship with a substitute father | What are all the kinds of relationships with substitute father figures? |
| 1. Good and patient<br>2. Sacrifice for others,<br>3. Share food<br>4. Good habits<br>5. Know me well<br>6. Listen to my story<br>7. Rebuke me when wrong, train me (not just ask to do)<br>8. Freely talk to him<br>9. Comfortable to talk to; responsible for family<br>10. Motivates me to do right<br>11. Entrusts me with responsibility<br>12. Share his life stories | 15. Discipline (talk = action), attention (remember my birthday)<br>16. Feeling close<br>17. Monitoring me<br>18. Remembering my name<br>19. Sit together<br>20. Trusts me<br>21. Protects me<br>22. Eats together with me<br>23. Motivates me to forgive my parents,<br>24. Accepts my unseen things<br>25. Not keeping promises, cannot be trusted, does not | Attribution (X is a characteristic of Y) | Characteristics of substitute father | What are all the characteristics needed of substitute father figures? |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 13. Accepts my weakness; motivate me to grow<br>14. Trustworthy: one I can call brother | rebuke me when I am wrong | | | |
| 1. It is not easy to believe<br>2. I want peace<br>3. I do not dare (afraid to accept)<br>4. I wait for his initiative<br>5. I want to know if he accepts me | 6. Reject father<br>7. I want to stay and play with him<br>8. I need to see action<br>9. Walks with me<br>10. Process my life.<br>11. (I just listen to one who cares for me) | Strict Inclusion (X is a kind of Y) | Response to spiritual father's presence | What are all responses to the spiritual father's presence? |
| 1. If he walks with me, I will be just like him (imitate him)<br>2. I will be influenced by his daily life (his daily life will impact my life)<br>3. Model of my life (just like him) | 4. Spending time together will make us just the same<br>5. Actions speak louder than words<br>6. I will do what he says<br>7. I want to be a father for the fatherless one day. | means-end (X is a way to do Y) | Ministry of Spiritual Fathering | What are any other ways to do the ministry of spiritual fathering? |
| Total: **149 included terms** in Eleven Folk Domains | | | | |

# APPENDIX J

## Completed Taxonomic

### A. Taxonomy of Domain "Father"
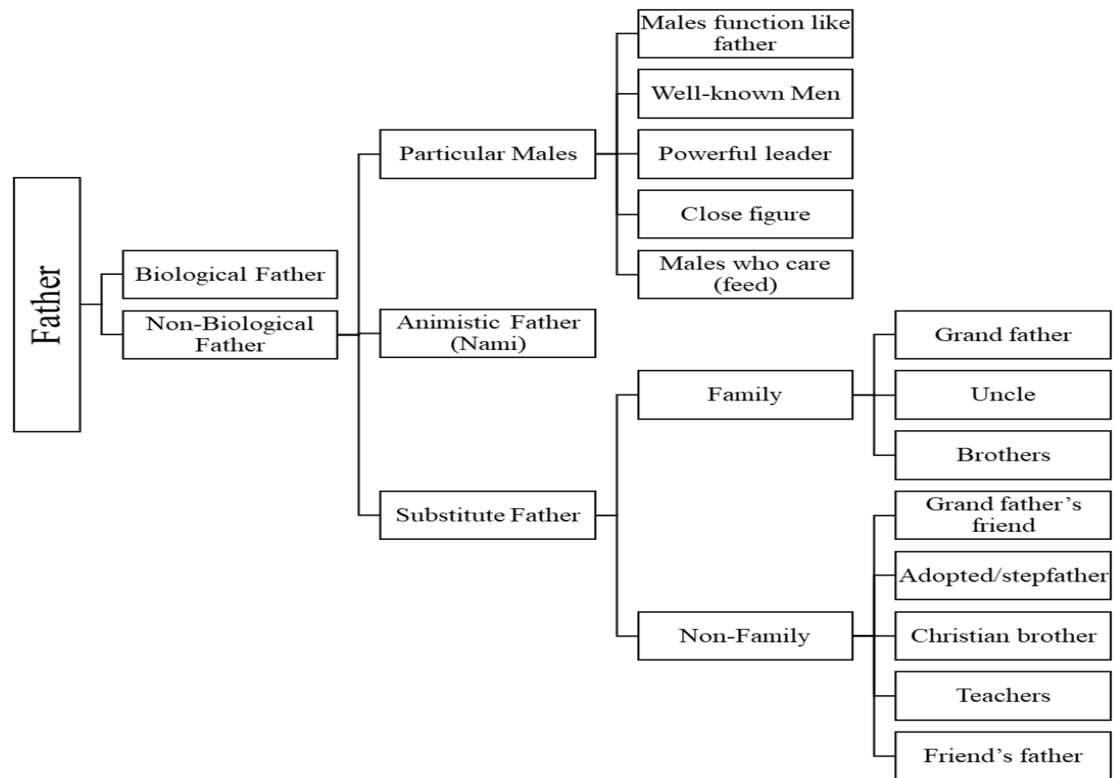


### B. Taxonomy of Domain "Power"

1. Taxonomy of Father's (Nogoba) Power Relations
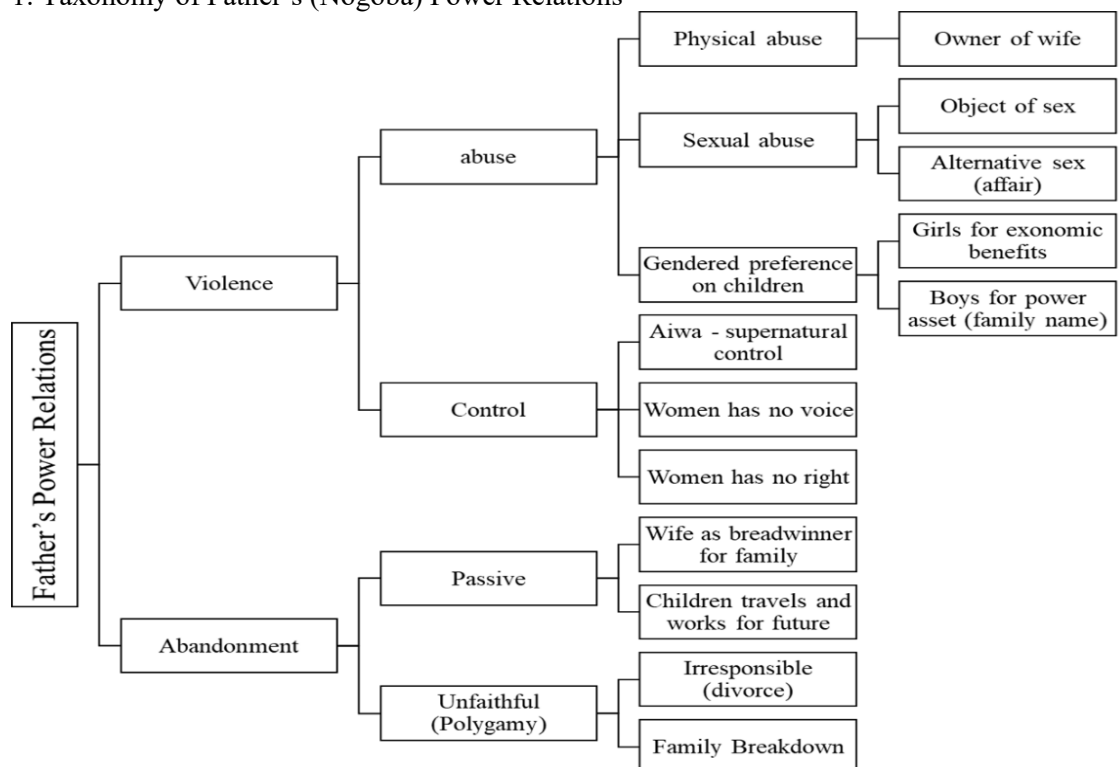
## 2. Taxonomy of Animistic Father's (Nami) Power

**ANIMISTIC FATHER POWER**

- Animistic Father's Power
  - Competitor
    - Sacrifice
      - Provide care to gain power
      - Nogoba dysfunction, Nami influence
  - Problem solver
    - Negotiate
      - Bride payments
  - Owner
    - Rule
      - Obedience
      - Respect
      - Provide Gifts
    - Curse
      - Curse determines future
      - Motivation for action: Fear of curse
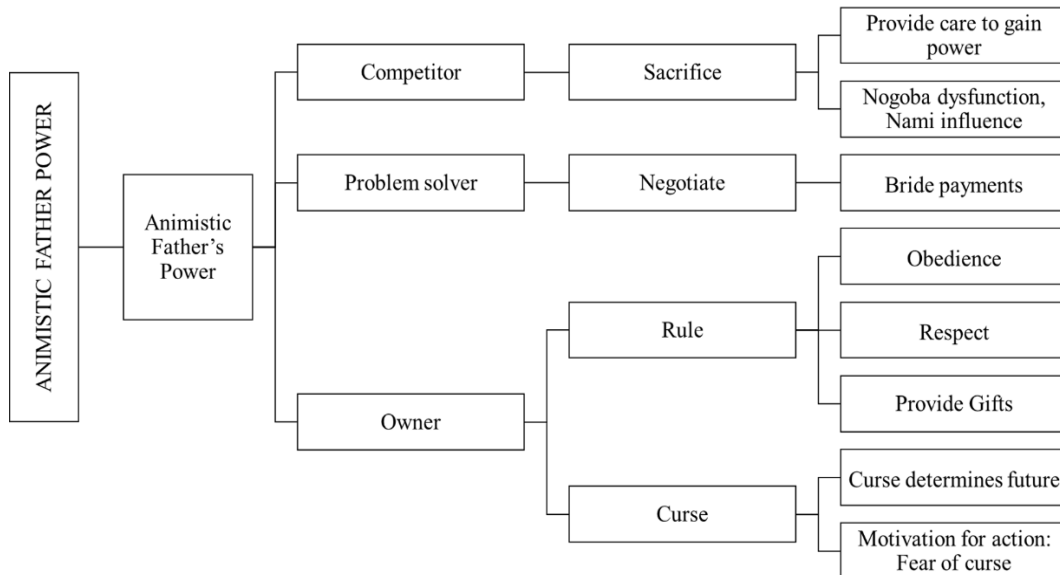
## C. Taxonomy of Domain "Influence"

## 1. Taxonomy of Influence of Father Absence on Physical and Attitude

**INFLUENCE OF FATHER ABSENCE**

- Influence on Physical and attitude
  - Maltreatment
    - Hungry often
    - Nomad
    - Absent model of life
    - No future
  - Gender Relation
    - Witness of marital violence
    - Cycle of Violence
      - Boys violence over girls *"you are only girl..."*
        - Sexual violence
        - Domination over girl
  - Attitude Problem
    - Acting out
      - Free choice of life
        - Free sex
        - Rule breaker
        - Disrespect to authority
    - Acting in
      - Forgiveness problem
        - Grudge
        - Equal payment
      - Communication problem
        - Avoid authority figure
        - Intense conflict with authority figure

2. Taxonomy of Influence of Father Absence on Emotions/Feeling
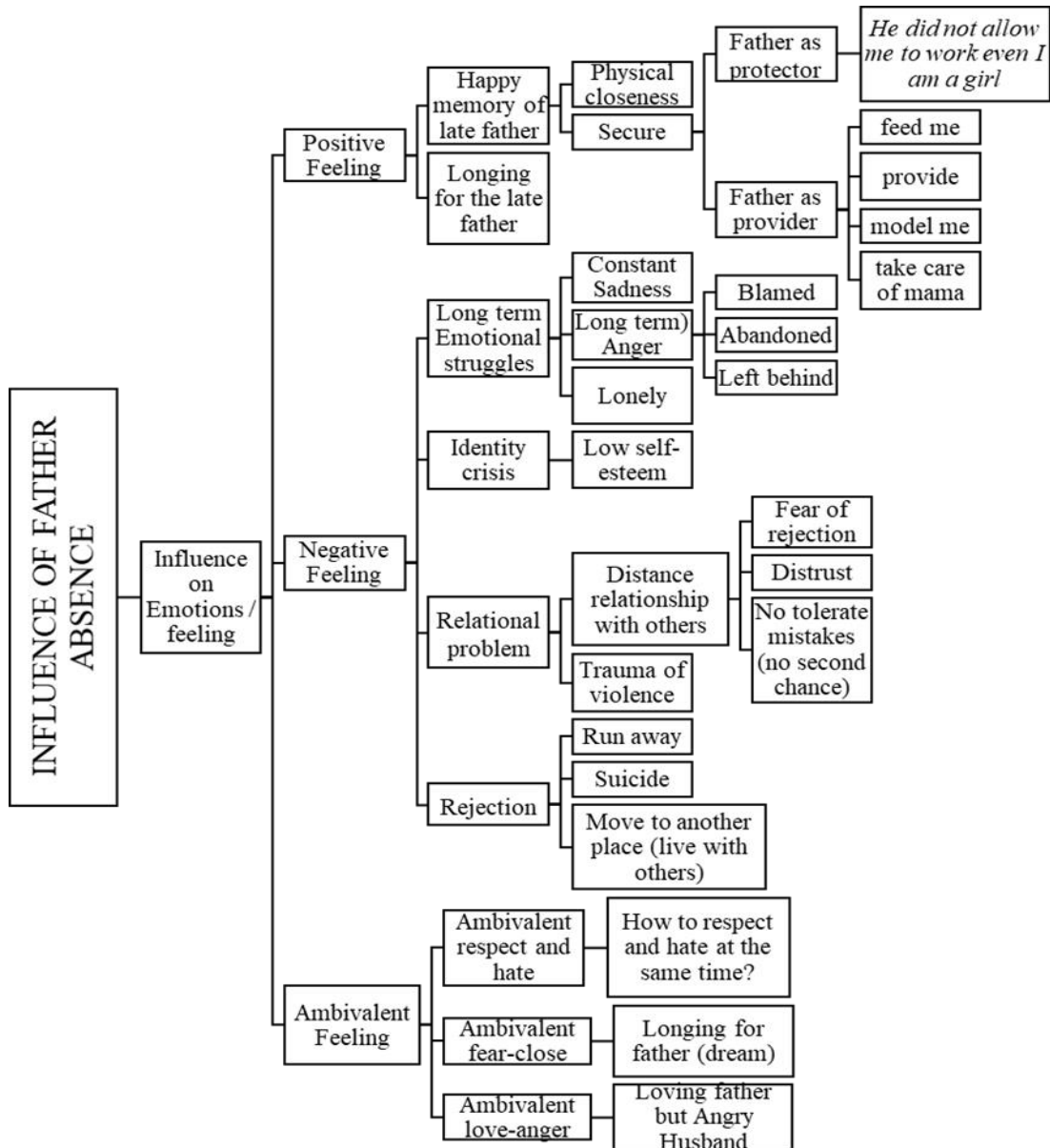
3. Taxonomy of Influence of Father Absence on Spiritual life (Perception of God)
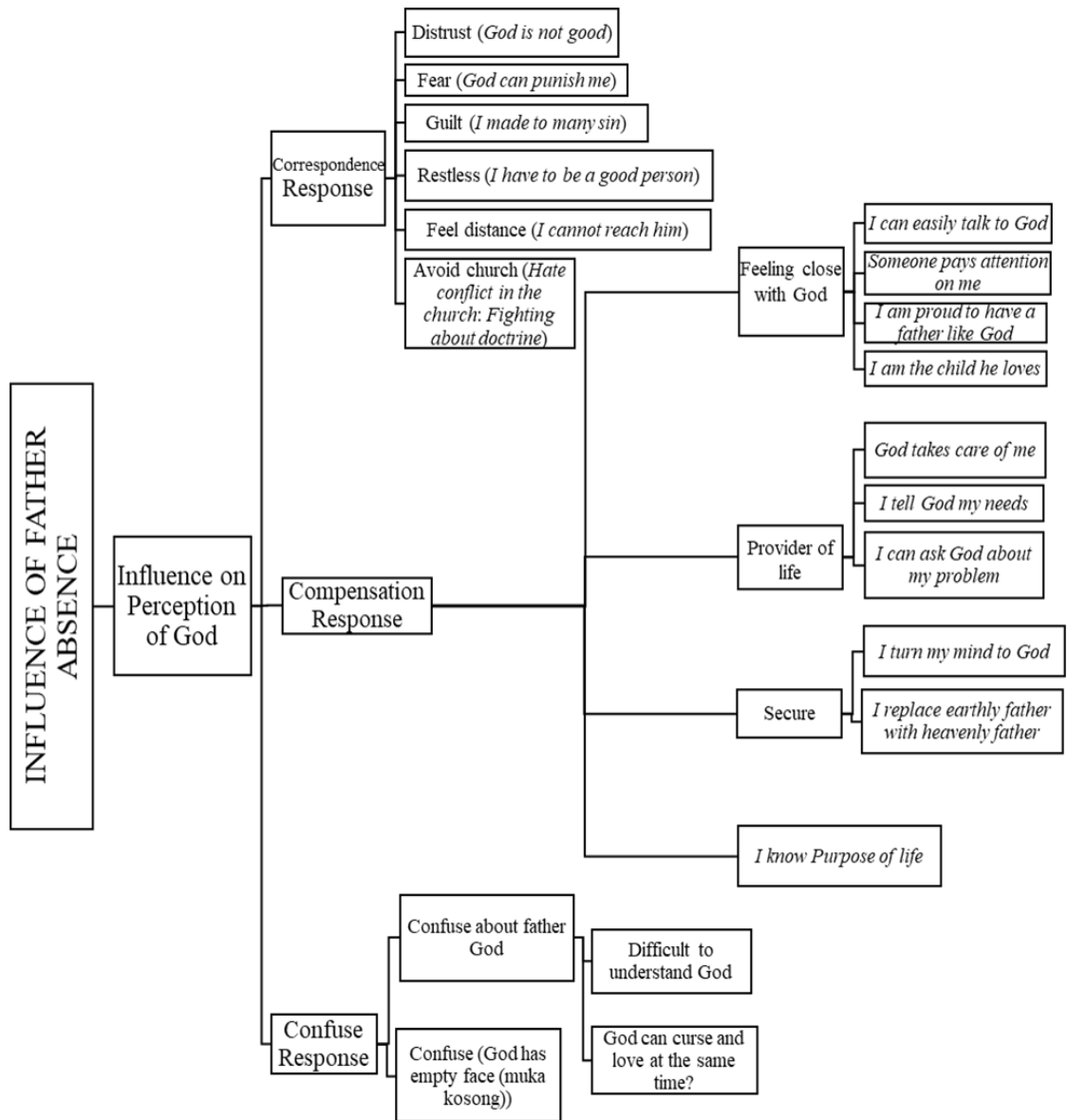
4. Taxonomy of Substitute Father figure's Influence

## D. Taxonomy of Domain "Presence"

1. Taxonomy of Characteristics of Spiritual Father

2. Taxonomy of Response to Spiritual Father



3. Taxonomy of Ministry of Spiritual Fathering

**APPENDIX K**

**Element of Contrast (Level of Subsets)**

| DOMAIN #1: FATHER |
|---|

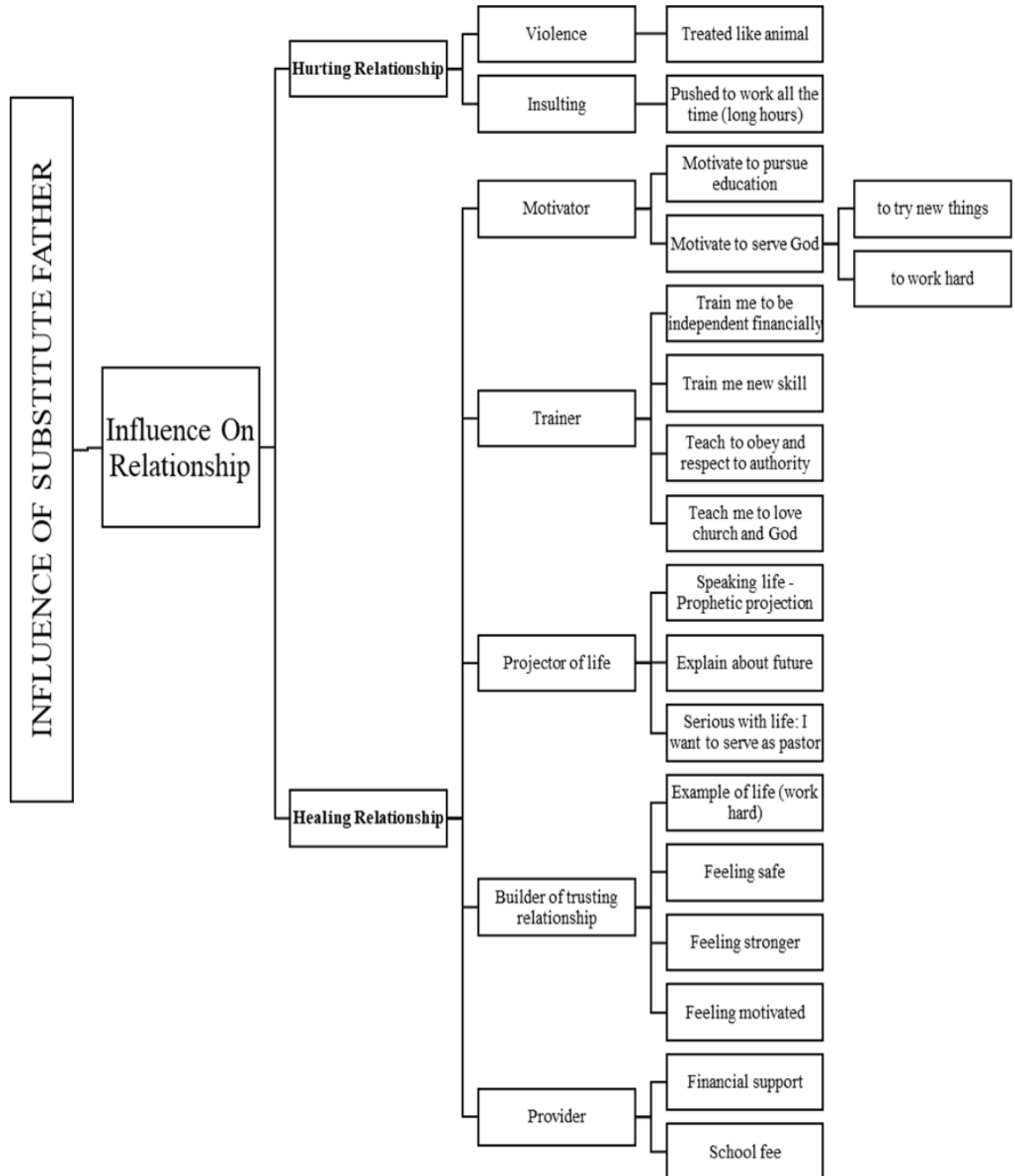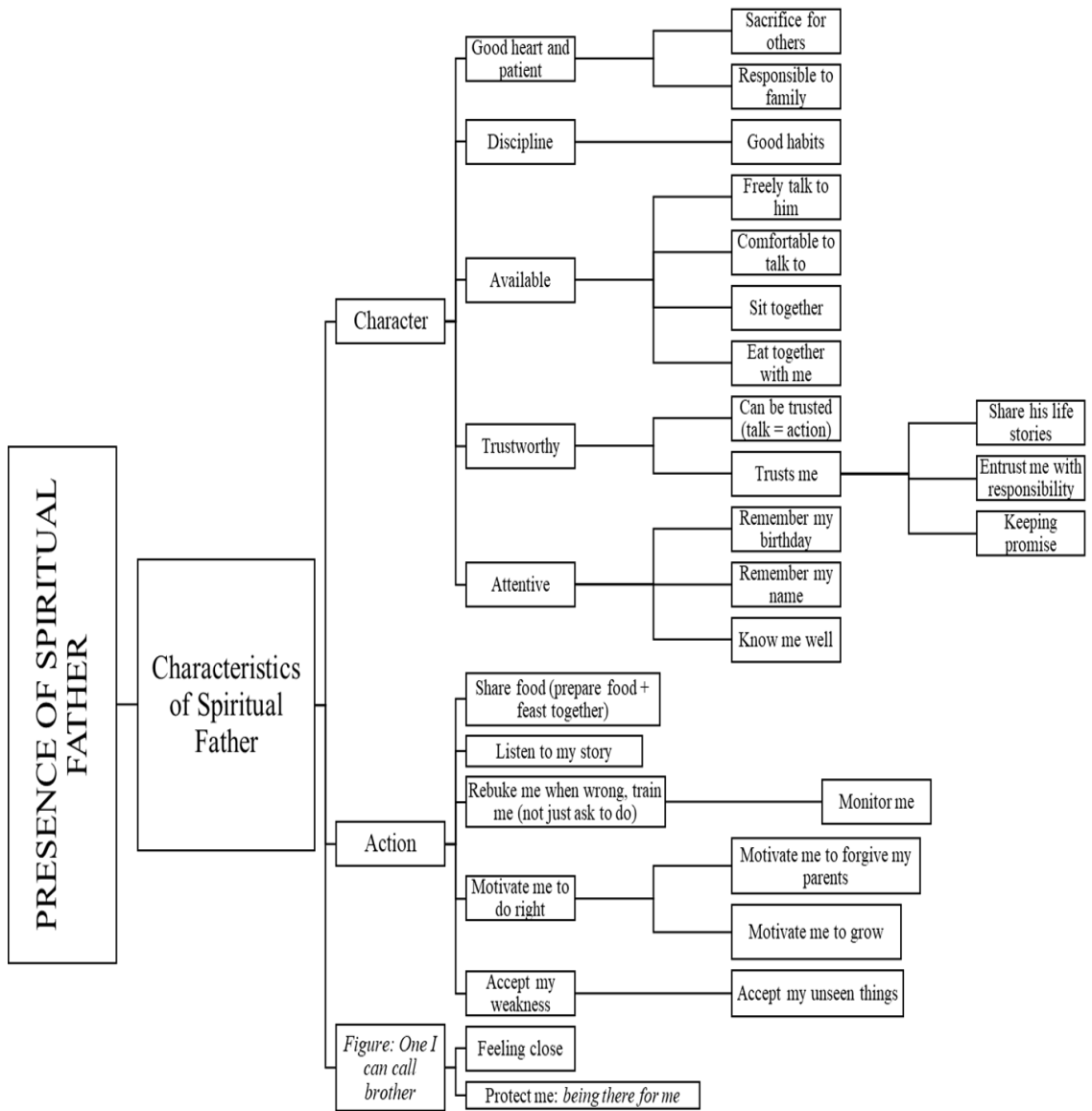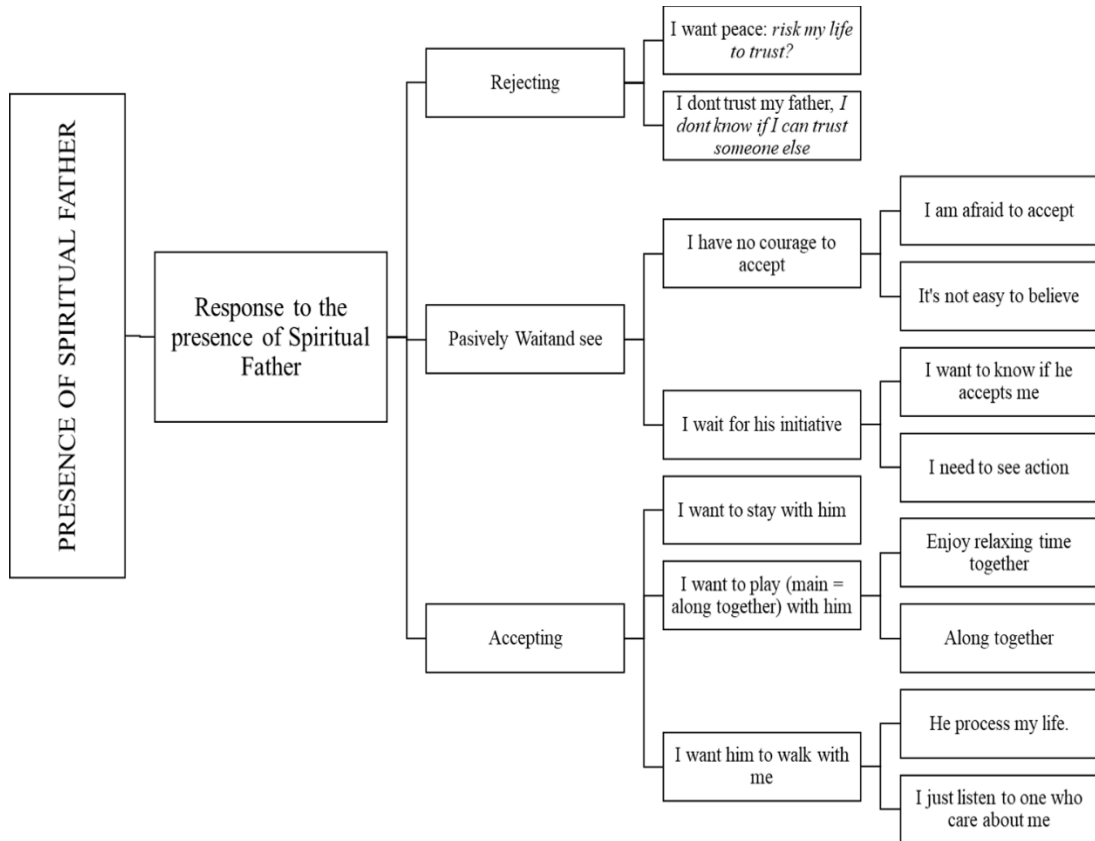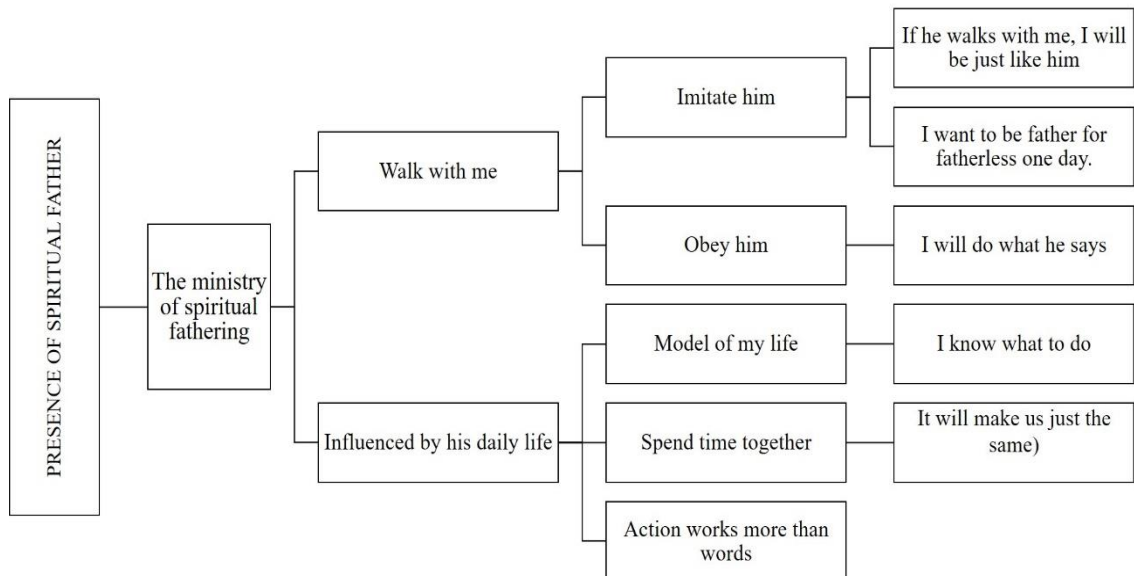| Level 1 | Level 2 | Level 3 | Level 4 |
|---|---|---|---|
| Biological father | Particular adult males | A male who acts (functions) like father | Grandfather |
| Non-Biological father | Animistic father (Nami) | Powerful male figure (leader) | Uncle (father's brother) |
| | Substitute Father | Close male figure | Older brother |
| | | Well-known male | Grandfather's friend |
| | | Male who cares/feeds | Adopted/step father |
| | | Family member | Christian Brother |
| | | Non-Family Member | Teachers at school |
| | | | Friend's father |

**Explanation of Domain #1: Father**

**Level 1:** A male who acts like a father is similar to a male who feeds me: one important function of a father: he "**feeds**" me. This "feeding" action is crucial for youth in order to explain a father's central role in their life. A caring father feeds his children.

**Level 2:** Powerful male, close male, and well-known male are different from each other. They give perspective on how "particular adult males" can be recognised as Nogoba for Lani youth.

**Level 3:** Particular adult males are different from animistic-belief fathers. While particular adult males are chosen according to some conditions to be called *Nogoba*, the animistic-belief father is culturally determined and automatically placed as an authority figure without any criteria.

**Level 4:** Substitute Father is "a kind of" father who fills in the dysfunctional father's position. He can be a family or non-family member.

| DOMAIN #2: POWER |
|---|

**1. Father's Power Relationship**

| Level 1 | Level 2 | Level 3 | Level 4 |
|---|---|---|---|
| Violence | Abuse | Physical abuse | Husband has right to do anything: kick, punch, kill |
| Abandonment | Control | Sexual abuse | An object of sex*; he slept with me only to control me* |
| | Passive (father) | Favourite Gender | Alternative sex (*affair*): Aiwa power |
| | Unfaithful (Polygamy) | *Aiwa* | Girls for economic benefits |
| | | Voiceless | Boys for power assets (*family name*) |
| | | Defend-less | |
| | | Breadwinner | |
| | | Child working | |

| | | Divorce (*lepas istri*) | |
| | | Broken Family (*Keluarga pecah*) | |

## Explanation of Nogoba's (Father) Power Relationship:

**Level 1:** Violence and abandonment are the father's typical relationships in the family.
  a)   Violence focused on the activities in the family (abuse and control).
  b)   Abandonment focused on the passivity of a father figure who gains more power through polygamy.

**Level 2:** Abuse, Control, Passive (father), Unfaithful (Polygamy).
  a)   Abuse is a kind of control, and polygamy is a "kind of" passive father who wants to gain more power and control.
  b)   Passive father gains power through more wives, more hands to work on the land, and more children as economic benefits for the family.

**Level 3:** *Aiwa*, physical abuse, sexual abuse, breadwinner, child working, divorce (*lepas istri*), broken home (*Keluarga pecah*), favourite gender, voiceless, defenceless.
  a)   Many times, the marriage problem started with the practice of Aiwa, as a spiritism practice to control a man's or woman's mind. Marriage through spiritual magic to gain sexual benefit (abuse).
  b)   Physical abuse often happens when a new wife comes into the family and pushes the father to divorce the old wife (*lepas istri*). Father becomes more passive and controlled by the "Aiwa-used" women. Wives are pushed to work as the breadwinner for the whole family, and the physical abuse continues. Children work for their own future.
  c)   Divorce leads to a broken home (*keluarga pecah*). Old wives and children are pushed to move out of the family land to find another shelter to stay.
  d)   Women and children are voiceless and defenceless before the father. Most children are close to their mother, and when the mother dies, they have nobody to take care of them. The function of a substitute father/family is mentioned in most of the informants' stories.

## 2. Animistic Father's (Nami) Power

| Level 1 | Level 2 | Level 3 |
|---|---|---|
| Competitor (*to influence*) | Sacrifice (to gain power) | Provide care (feed) to gain power |
| Problem solver (*of the family*) | Negotiate (to gain the benefit) | Nogoba dysfunction, Nami influence |
| Owner (*of child's life*) | Rule ("Nami says...") | Obedience |
| | Curse (Source of curse) | Respect |
| | | Gifts |
| | | Curse about future and relationships |
| | | Fear of curse as a motivation of actions |
| | | Bride payment – *uang mahar* |

**Explanation of Nami's (Animistic Father or Uncle) Power Relationship**

**Level 1:** Competitor, Problem solver, Owner
   a) Competitor and owner of child's life has a similar purpose: to control children's lives.
   b) Nami is believed to have more authority and more power than a biological father.
   c) Problem solver aims to gain benefits from the children; bride price (*mahar*) or customary fine (*denda adat*).

**Level 2:** Emic language: Sacrifice, Negotiate, Rule, Curse
   a) Sacrifice is the way to rule over the children.
   b) Curse as the way to negotiate power and rule over children.

**Level 3:** Explanation of emic language
   a) Nami provides and cares for children in order to gain power and influence over them. This power will have more influence when the biological father is not functioning well. Nami has the power to require obedience, respect, and gifts from the children.
   b) The fear of bad curses about future life and relationships are the children's motivation for action and obedience. The bride payment (*uang mahar*) focuses on a girl's service (*pengabdian*) to Nami and brings happiness to the community.

---

## DOMAIN #3: INFLUENCE

### 1. Influence of Absent-Father On Physical and Attitude

| Level 1 | Level 2 | Level 3 | Level 4 |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| Maltreatment (*tidak urus*) | Hungry (often) | Move constantly (mostly with mother) | Sexual violence |
| Marital problem (*lepas istri*) | No home (always moving) | work (with other families) | Domination over girls |
| Attitude Problem (*hidup kacau*) | No model (of life) | Confuse (where is "home"?) | Free sex |
| | No future (*you are stupid*) | Absence of Instructor | Rulebreaker |
| | Witness of marital violence | Absence of protector | Disrespect for authority |
| | Cycle of Violence | Boys' violence over girls "*you are only a girl...*" | *Dendam* (grudge): *I want revenge* |
| | Acting out | Free choice of life | *Gigi ganti gigi* (equal payment) |
| | Acting in | Forgiveness problem | Avoid authority figures |
| | | Communication problem | Intense conflict with an authority figure |

**Explanation of Influence of Absent-Father On Physical and Attitude**

**Level 1:** Maltreatment (*tidak urus*), Marital problem (*lepas istri*), Attitude Problem (*hidup kacau*)
   a) The marital problem is ussually the first problem that arises before the father is absent from their family.

b) The maltreatment and attitude problems are two direct problems arising from the father who is absent from their family.

**Level 2:** Hungry (often) Nomad (no home), No model of life, No future (*you are stupid*) Witness of marital violence, Cycle of Violence, Acting out and in.

a) The passive effect of father-absence is **hunger**, no home, no model, no future and witness of violence.
b) Tthe active effect arises when children continue the cycle of violence and the problem of acting in and out.

**Level 3:** Emic language: **Survive**, move constantly (mostly with mother), work (with other families), confusion (where is "home"?), absence of instructor, absence of protector, boys violence over girls ("*you are only a girl...*"), free choice of life, forgiveness problems, communication problems.

a) Moving constantly makes them confused.
b) The absence of an instructor encourages boys to treat girls with violence.
c) The problem they want to solve: forgiveness and communicating it to their father.
d) Free choice is the consequence of the absence of an instructor and protector in life.

## 2. Influence of Absent-Father On Emotions/Feelings

| Level 1 | Level 2 | Level 3 | Level 4 |
|---|---|---|---|
| Positive Feeling | Happy (of late father) | Physical closeness (Long term) Anger | Father as a provider (what I need) |
| Negative Feelings | Longing (missing) for the late father | Secure | Father as protector |
| Ambivalent feeling | The long-term Emotional struggles | Constant Sadness | Blamed |
| | Identity crisis | Lonely | Left behind |
| | Relational problem | Low self-esteem | Abandoned |
| | Rejection | Distant relationship with others | Fear of rejection |
| | Ambivalent respect and hate | Trauma from violence | Distrust |
| | Ambivalent fear-close | Runaway | Not tolerate mistakes (no second chance) |
| | Ambivalent love-anger | Suicide | |
| | | Move to another place (live with others) | |
| | | Confused: (How to respect and hate at the same time?) | |
| | | Longing for father (dream) | |
| | | Loving father but Angry Husband | |

**Explanation of Influence of Absent-Father On Emotions/Feelings**

**Level 1:** Positive, Negative, Ambivalent **feelings/emotions**
   a) The ambivalent feeling confuses the youth regarding how to "really" feel about their situation.

**Level 2:** Happy (of late father), longing (missing) for the late father, long-term emotional struggles, identity crisis, relational problems, rejection, ambivalent respect-hate, ambivalent fear-close, ambivalent love-anger.
   a) The happy, missing, and mixed feeling when remembering the late father
   b) **Identity** crisis and ambivalent feeling are two internal problems, while the relational problem is an "external problem".

**Level 3:** Physical closeness, security, anger, constant sadness, lonely, low self-esteem, distant relationship with others, the trauma of violence, run away, suicide, moving to another place (live with others), confusion (how to respect and hate at the same time?), longing for father (dream), loving father but an angry husband.
   a) When the physical closeness presents, the secure feeling arises
   b) Anger, confusion, sadness, loneliness, low self-esteem are internal emotional struggles
   c) Suicide and running away are the ways to overcome trauma.

## 3. Influence of Absent-Father on Spiritual life (Perceiving God)

| Level 1 | Level 2 | Level 3 |
|---|---|---|
| Correspondence Response | Distrust (*God is not good*) | Difficult to understand God |
| Compensation Response | Confusion (*God has an empty face (muka kosong)*) | *Can God curse and love at the same time?* |
| Confused Response | Fear (*God can punish me*) | *I turn my mind to God* |
| | Guilt (*I commit too many sins*) | *I replace earthly father with heavenly father* |
| | Restless (*I have to be a good person*) | *I can easily talk to God* |
| | Feel distance (*I cannot reach him*) | *Someone pays attention to me* |
| | Avoid church (*Hate conflict in the church*: *Fighting about doctrine*) | *I am proud to have a father like God* |
| | Confused about God the Father | *I am the child he loves* |
| | Secure with God | *God takes care of me* |
| | Feeling close | *I tell God my needs* |
| | Provider of life | *I can ask God about my problem* |
| | *I know the Purpose of life* | |

**Explanation of Influence of Absent-Father On Spiritual life (Perceiving God)**

**Level 1:** Correspondence, compensation, and confusion response to **God's face**.
   a) "Correspondence" refers to a negative experience with father and a negative response to God.
   b) "Compensation" refers to a negative experience with father and a positive response to God.
   c) "Confusion" refers to being unsure what to feel, think, or do as a response to God.

**Level 2:**
   a) Correspondence response: distrust (*God is not good*), fear (*God can punish me*), guilt (*I commit many sins*), restless (*I have to be a good person*), feel distance (*I cannot reach him*), avoid church (*Hate conflict in the church: Fighting about doctrine*).
   b) Compensation response: secure with God, feeling close, the provider of life, knowing the purpose of life.
   c) Confused response: confused (*God has an empty face*), confused about Father God.

**Level 3:** *Emic* Language after the presence of Substitute Fathering Figure
   a) Compensation response: I turn my mind to God, I replace earthly father with heavenly father, I can easily talk to God, Someone pays attention to me, I am proud to have a father like God, I am the child he loves, God takes care of me, I tell God my needs, I can ask God about my problem.
   b) Confused response: Still difficult to understand God. Can God curse and love at the same time?

## 4. Influence of Substitute Father Figure

| Level 1 | Level 2 | Level 3 |
|---|---|---|
| Hurting Relationship | Violence relationship | Treated like animal |
| Healing Relationship | Insulting | Pushed to work all the time (long hours) |
| | Motivator | Motivated to pursue education |
| | Trainer | Motivated to serve God |
| | Projector of life | Trains me to be independent financially |
| | Builder of trusting relationship | Trains me in a new skill |
| | Provider | Teaches to obey and respect authority |
| | | Teaches me to love church and God |
| | | Speaking life - Prophetic projection |
| | | Explains about future |
| | | Serious with life: I want to serve as a pastor |
| | | Example of life (work hard) |
| | | Feeling safe |
| | | Feeling stronger |
| | | Feeling motivated |
| | | Financial support School fee |

**Explanation of Influence of Substitute Father Figure**

**Level 1:** Hurting Relationship, Healing Relationship
   a) A hurting relationship refers to a violent and insulting relationship.
   b) A healing relationship refers to one who motivates, trains, builds a trusting relationship, and provides and makes a projection about future life.

**Level 2:** Motivator, Trainer, Projector of life, Builder of trusting relationship, Provider
   a) One who provides, motivates and trains heals the relationship.
   b) One who builds a trusting relationship heals the relationship.
   c) One who makes a projection of the future heals the relationship.

**Level 3:** *Emic* Language: *The presence of a Substitute Fathering figure*
   a) Hurting Figure: Treated me/my mother like an animal
   b) Healing Figure:
      (1) Motivator: Motivates to pursue education.
      (2) Trainer: Motivates to serve God.
      (3) Projector of life: Trains me to be independent financially.
      (4) Builder of trusting relationships, teaches to obey and respect for authority, teaches me to love church and God, speaking life
      (5) Prophetic projection, explain about the future, serious with life (I want to serve as pastor), an example of life, (work hard), feeling safe, feeling stronger, feeling motivated, financial support, school fees.

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### DOMAIN #4: PRESENCE

**1. The Characteristics of Spiritual Father**

| Level 1 | Level 2 | Level 3 | Level 4 |
|---|---|---|---|
| Character | Good heart and patient | Sacrifice for others | Share his life stories |
| Action | Discipline | Responsible to family | Entrust me with responsibility |
| Figure (One I can call as a brother) | Available | Good habits | Keeping promises |
| | Trustworthy | Freely talk to him | |
| | Attentive | Comfortable to talk to | |
| | Shares food (preparing food and feast together) | Sit together | |
| | Listens to my story | Eats together with me | |
| | Rebuke me when wrong, | Can be trusted (talk = action) | |
| | trains me (not just ask to do) | Trusts me | |
| | Motivates me to do right | Remembers my birthday | |
| | Accepts my weakness | Remembers my name | |
| | Feeling close | Knows me well | |
| | Protects me: *being there for me* | Monitors me | |
| | | Motivates me to forgive my parents | |
| | | Motivates me to grow | |

| | | Accepts my unseen things | |
|---|---|---|---|

## Explanation of the Characteristics of a Spiritual Father

**Level 1:** The presence of a spiritual father is shown in three aspects: his character and actions in his "**brotherly figure**".
  a)    When character and action go together, youth can accept.
  b)    The "brother" figure is the youth who can accept.

**Level 2:** Characteristics of a spiritual father accepted by the youth: one's "**authenticity**": character = actions in a brotherly figure.
  a)    In practices, these three characteristics are shown in: a good heart and being patient, disciplined, being available, trustworthy, attentive, sharing food (prepare food + feast together), listening to my story, rebuking me when wrong, training me (not just asking me to do), motivating me to do right, accepting my weakness, feeling close, protecting me: being there for me.

**Level 3:** *Emic* Language: actions of a spiritual father**.**
  a)    The combination of character, actions, and a brotherly figure: all "little actions" are marked as "**self-sacrifice**": responsible for family, good habits, freely talking to him, comfortable to talk to, sitting together, eating together with me, can be trusted (talk = action), trusts me, remembers my birthday, remembers my name, knows me well, monitors me, motivates me to forgive my parents, motivates me to grow, accepts my unseen things.
  b)    A spiritual father's small actions are really important to help youth build their trust, comfort, and motivation to fight for their lives.

## 2. The Response of the Spiritual Father's Presence

| Level 1 | Level 2 | Level 3 |
|---|---|---|
| **Rejecting** | *I want peace: risk my life to trust?* | *I am afraid to accept* |
| **Passively waiting and seeing** | *I don't trust my father; I do not know if I can trust someone else* | *It is not easy to believe* |
| **Accepting** | *I have no courage to accept* | *I want to know if he accepts me* |
| | *I wait for his initiative* | *I need to see action* |
| | *I want to stay with him* | *Enjoy relaxing time together* |
| | *I want to play (main = along together) with him* | *Along together* |
| | *I want him to walk with me* | *He processes my life.* |
| | | *I just listen to one who cares about me* |

## Explanation of the Response of the Spiritual Father's Presence

**Level 1:** Rejecting, passively waiting and seeing, accepting.
  a)    Rejecting and accepting are active responses.
  b)    Waiting is a passive response.

**Level 2:** *Emic* Language: peace, difficult to trust, no courage, waiting, staying, playing, walking with me.
  a)    When one has no peace, trust, or courage, one will find it difficult to accept.

b) When one sees someone actively staying, playing, walking with him/her, he/she learns to accept.

**Level 3:** *Emic* language. Youth need to ensure that a spiritual father accepts them, and motivates them to accept him, enjoy him, and submit to him. The youth are actually eager to accept a spiritual father, but they need to be assured they are safe and accepted.
   a) Rejecting: afraid to accept – do not want to be hurt again/distrust.
   b) Waiting: I want to know if he accepts me, needs to see action.
   c) Accepting: easy to believe, enjoy relaxing time together, getting along together, processing my life, listening to one who cares about me.

### 3. The Ministry of Spiritual Fathering

| Level 1 | Level 2 | Level 3 |
|---|---|---|
| Walks with me | Imitate him | *If he walks with me, I will be just like him* |
| Influenced by his daily life | Obey him: Model (*of my life - I know what to do*) | *I want to be a father for fatherless one day.* |
| | Spend time together (*It will make us just the same*) | *I will do what he says* |
| | Action speaks louder than words | |

### Explanation of the Ministry of Spiritual Fathering

**Level 1:** a spiritual father's influence: Walks with me, his daily life influences me.
   a) If a spiritual father walks with me, he will influence my life.

**Level 2:** Imitate, Obey, Model, Spend time together, Action.
   a) I imitate and obey him as a model.
   b) One becomes a model by spending time together and taking action.

**Level 3:** Emic language: a spiritual father who is present (walk together) will influence a youth's life.
   a) The youth will follow his words and life and become like him. *If a spiritual father walks with me, I will be just like him; I want to be a father for the fatherless one day; I will do what he says.*
   b) A spiritual father disciples youth by his presence in their lives.

# APPENDIX L

## Contrast Inventory (Similarity and Contrast)

| **Domain 1: Father** |
| --- |
| Key terms: biological father, animistic father, particular figure, the substitute father |
| 1.   A male who acts like a father is similar to a male who feeds me. One important function of a father is the one who feeds as care for me. |
| 2.   Powerful males, close males, and well-known males are different from each other. They give perspective on how particular adult males can also be recognised as Nogoba for Lani youth. |
| 3.   Particular adult males are different from animistic-belief fathers. When particular adult males are chosen, according to certain conditions, to be called *Nogoba*, the animistic-belief father is culturally determined and automatically placed as an authority figure without any criteria. |
| 4.   A biological father is automatically called Nogoba, but an animistic father is called Nami. |
| 5.   Nami has more power than Nogoba in the culture. |
| 6.   Nami and nogoba automatically have power over the children, but a substitute father is chosen by the youth because of their personal need for a father figure. |
| 7.   Strong Nogoba can defend his children before Nami. Nogoba and Nami compete to influence the children. A substitute father comes to fill in the missing link. |
| 8.   Nogoba has supernatural power as long as he functions as a father, but Nami always has supernatural power to determine the life and death of a child. |

| **Domain 2: Power** |
| --- |
| Key terms: competitor, problem solver, owner, sacrifice, negotiate, rule |
| 1.   Violence and abandonment are typical of the father's relationships in the family. Violence focused on active actions in the family, abuse, and control, but abandonment focused on the passivity of a father figure, who gains more power through polygamy. |
| 2.   Abuse is a kind of control, and polygamy is typical of a passive father who wants to gain more power and control. |
| 3.   A passive father gains power through more wives, and he has more hands to work on the land, and having more children has economic benefits for the family. |
| 4.   Many times, marriage problems start with the practice of Aiwa, a spiritism practice to control a man's or woman's mind. Marriage through spiritual magic aims to gain sexual benefit (abuse). |
| 5.   Physical abuse often happens when a new wife comes into the family and pushes the father to divorce (*lepas istri*) the old wife. The father becomes more passive and |

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|  | controlled by the Aiwa-used women. Wives are pushed to work as breadwinners for the whole family, and physical abuse continues. Children work for their own future. |
| 6. | Divorce leads to a broken home (*keluarga pecah*). Old wives and children are pushed to move away from the family land to find another shelter to stay. |
| 7. | Women and children are voiceless and defenceless before the father. Most children are close to their mothers, and when the mother dies, they have nobody to take care of them. The substitute father/family function is mentioned in most of the informants' stories. |
| 8. | A competitor and owner of a child's life has a similar purpose: to control the child's life, which is different from "problem solver", whose purpose is gaining financial benefit from the children through bride price (*mahar*) and customary payment (*denda adat*). |
| 9. | "Sacrifice" is a way to "rule" over children, and "curse" is a way to "negotiate" power with children. |
| 10. | *Gained power versus given power.* Nami provide care to gain power and influence over children by feeding them. However, Nami are also *given* animistic-belief authority to require obedience, respect, and to expect gifts from the children. |
| 11. | *Weak Nogoba versus strong Nami.* Nami's power would become more influential when Nogoba does not function well a (dysfunctional father). The weaker Nogoba, the stronger is Nami's influence over children. |
| 12. | *Fear of Nami versus dedication for family.* The fear of Nami's curse of *bad luck* in future life and relationships, is the motivation behind every child's action and submission. However, the bride payment (*mahar*) is a girl's personal dedication to bring happiness and wealth to her family |
| 13. | Nami are believed to have more authority and more power than a biological father. A problem solver has a purpose of gaining benefit from the children; bride price (*mahar*) or customary fine (*denda adat*). |
| 14. | Sacrifice is the way to rule over the children, but a curse is how to negotiate power and rule over children. |
| 15. | Nami provides and cares for children in order to gain power and influence over them. This power will become more influential when a biological father does not function well. Nami has the power to require obedience, respect, and gifts from the children. The fear of bad curses affecting future life and relationships are the children's motivation for action and obedience. The bride payment (uang mahar) focuses on a girl's service (pengabdian) to Nami and brings happiness to the community. |

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|  | **Domain 3: Influence**<br>Key terms: problem, feeling, perception of God as father. |
| 1. | The marital problems usually arise before the father is absent from their family, but the maltreatment and attitude problems arise directly from the father who is already absent from their family. |

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| 2. The passive effect of father-absence is hunger, no home, no model, no future and being a witness of violence. But the active effect arises when children continue the cycle of violence and the problem of acting it out. |
| 3. Moving constantly makes children confused, and the absence of an instructor encourages boys to treat girls with violence. |
| 4. The problem they want to address is forgiveness and communicating that to the father. Free choice is the consequence of the absence of an instructor and protector in life. |
| 5. Ambivalent feelings confuse youth about how to really feel regarding their situation. Happy, missing, and mixed feeling occur when remembering their late father. |
| 6. An identity crisis and ambivalent feelings/emotions are two internal problems, while relational problems are external. |
| 7. When physical closeness is present, secure feeling arise. |
| 8. Anger, confusion, sadness, loneliness, low self-esteem lead to internal emotional struggles. Suicide and running away are the ways to overcome trauma. |
| 9. Correspondence refers to a negative experience with father and also a negative response to God (Distrust, confusion, fear, guilt, restlessness, distance). Compensation refers to a negative experience with father and a positive response to God (Secure, close, having purpose, provision). |

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| **Domain 4: Presence**<br>Key terms: healing, character, action, acceptance |
| 1. A father who is violent hurts the relationship, but one who is present, provides, motivates and heals the relationship. |
| 2. A father who insults (or belittles) hurts the relationship, but one who builds a trusting relationship and makes a "projection about the future" will heal the relationship. |
| 3. When character and action go together, youth can accept. But the "brother" figure is the one most accepted by the youth. |
| 4. A good heart, patience, trustworthiness, attentiveness, and acceptance are important internal qualities. But discipline, availability, sharing food, listening, rebuking, training, motivating, and protecting are the external actions that youth need. |
| 5. Rejecting and accepting are active responses, but waiting is a passive response |
| 6. A person will be difficult to accept when they have no peace, trust, or courage. But when they see someone who is actively eager to stay, play, and walk with him/her, they learn to accept their presence. |
| 7. If a person walks with me, I will be influenced by them. I will imitate and obey himthem as a model if they spend time together and do things with them. |

**APPENDIX M**

**Relationship of Selected Domains, Cultural Themes and Meanings**

| Cultural Themes | Meaning of Cultural Themes (Summarised based on the informants' words) |
|---|---|
| Competition for Influence | 1. Nogoba and Nami are two terms used to address **fathers** in the Lani culture. Nogoba has a broad perspective covering both biological father and non-biological father functioning as a **father**. Nami is an animistic concept of the **father**, who has ultimate supernatural **power** over the children.<br>2. Nogoba's **power** relations (violence and abandonment) and Nami's supernatural **power** (rule and curse) compete to gain more **power** and **influence** over the children. As the Nogoba becomes weaker, the Nami becomes more **power**ful to **influence** the children.<br>3. Nogoba and Nami can only **influence** the children by taking care of and feeding the children. A **father** figure, functioning as a **father** who cares and provides for the children, will be accepted as a **father** who has the **power** to **influence** them.<br>4. Lani youth only listen and obey the person who takes care by raising and feeding him/her. Nogoba and Nami can only compete with each other, but actually, the children will be the ones that decide who will finally be a "**father**" who have the **power** to **influence** them. |
| Relationship as Investment | 1. Nogoba's and Nami's relationship in the family was seen as an investment to gain more **power**, wealth and **influence** in the family and community.<br>2. Gender inequality towards wives and girls is the main issue in Lani family relationships. Husbands are seen as more **power**ful in forcing women to work for the family. **Father**s prepare the girls to gain economic benefits through bride payments in the future. The boys were usually left behind, as the **father** values his daughter more highly than his son.<br>3. Nami has full authority and control over the children's lives. Nami provides care to gain the **power** to **influence** the children. Children have to make Nami happy through their obedience, respect, and gifts. Nami's curse determines the children's future. The *fear of a curse* has become the primary motivation for action in the Nami-children relationship in the family.<br>4. Nami's relationship with the children is seen as an investment for future economic benefit (e.g., bride payment, customary payment, etcetera).<br>5. For Lani youth, a close relationship between **father**, mother, and children is a treasure that will bring happiness, trust, and joy for the whole family. It should start with a **father** who loves his family. Family relationships are a priceless investment that brings a legacy to the next generations. |
| Hunger and Survival | 1. A youth's relational problems with their **father** who is absent, uninvolved, or violent, **influences** them physically and emotionally. Their relational problems with **father**s are the source of physical hunger and maltreatment, which then turn into an emotional hunger for love, a sense of belonging and acceptance.<br>2. Hunger can also transform into a survival strength by changing a youth's mindset and perspective of life. Their openness to the |

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|---|---|
| | **presence** of God and other **father** figures can be a survival strength that brings transformation in their life. |
| Emotions and Identity | 1. In the Lani culture, people do not express their emotional reactions openly before certain persons, events, or situations. The youth want to tell their stories without embarrassing their **father**s or families because they were taught to strengthen the family's good name.<br>2. Emotional expressions can be challenging, especially for young people, as they confuse or feel ambivalent about which emotional reactions should be expressed appropriately in certain situations. The issue of trust needs to be overcome first before they can connect comfortably with their genuine emotions. A willingness to listen, with attentiveness and acceptance, helps trust grow. Youth, who feel listened to and understood, become more connected to themselves and their stories. They learn more about themselves, feel better about themselves and are motivated to fight for their future.<br>3. The expression of emotions is one of the God-given tools to explore themselves. It can eventually help them expose knowledge about themselves and to embrace their identities. The **presence** of someone who listens attentively, being there with them, and accepts their stories makes a difference. |
| Face of God | 1. In traditional Lani culture, God is perceived as a masculine sacred spirit. The youth who experience **father**s who are absent, uninvolved, or distant express their perception of God using the phrase "face of God". The face of masculine figures **influence**s their perception and knowledge of the "face of God".<br>2. The youth view God according to their mental picture of God's face, which is formed by their personal experiences. The youth's perception of God the **Father** is **influence**d by their experience with their **father**s or **father** figures' facial expressions. Lani youth who have negative experiences with their **father**s, express three responses about the "face of God".<br>   a. The **compensation** group perceives God's face positively as the **Father** who is "*secure, close, gives purpose, and provide*" for them. This first group perceived God's face as happy, loving, helpful, and accepting.<br>   b. The **correspondence** group perceives God's face negatively like the **Father**, who they "*distrust, one who confuses them, creates fear, guilt, restlessness, and is distant from them*. This second group perceived God's face as angry, and resentful, an irritated, displeased, and dissatisfied God.<br>   c. The **confused** group perceives God's face as "empty, having no face, or a blank face, with no expression" and feels confused and distant from God. This third group perceived God's face as showing no emotions or feelings towards them.<br>3. The **presence** of a substitute figure who presents a different face of a **father** figure changes the youth's perception of the "face of God." God becomes real, and the **presence** of a figure who represents God **influence**s the youth's relationship with God. |
| Feeding as Care | 1. Feasting together has a significant meaning for relationships in Lani culture. Close people spend time eating or chatting together. Eating together has a profound meaning of "acceptance for a special relationship" and a sign of care.<br>2. "Feeding as care" has the **power** to generate other **influence**s over a Lani youth's life and motivates them to live differently, such as |

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| | pursuing education, serving God, trying new things, and working hard for their future.<br>3.  "Feeding as care" not only provides for the youth's basic need of food but also heals the youth's ability to trust and to build a trusting relationship with others. A man who opens his house and feeds showing care, can be a motivator, trainer, projector of life, and builder of new trusting relationships in the lives of Lani youth. "Feeding as care" makes a difference in young people's ability to trust and build new meaningful relationships. |
| Sacrifice to Lead | 1.  "Sacrifice" is an uncommon concept in Lani leadership. The concept of "**power** and **influence**" has been a central principle of male leadership in the family and community. Selfish leadership breaks the family relationship and makes the children suffer. A substitute **father** figure who makes personal sacrifices changes the youth's perspective on life, as they recognise that the one who sacrifices for them has a significant **power** to **influence** them.<br>2.  "Sacrifice to lead" is also related to the issue of "trustworthiness" and "attentiveness". Those who sacrifice for the youth help them heal their trust, to better understand themselves and to follow eagerly the leader who makes sacrifices for them.<br>3.  "Sacrifice" also is a way to lead Lani youth to view God differently. The youth's perception of God changes after the **presence** of one who sacrifices for them.<br>4.  "Sacrifice to lead" **influences** the informants' lives profoundly. A person's sacrifice has changed their perspective on their relationship, healed their trust, led them to a better understanding of themselves, and led them to perceive God differently. |
| Authentic Brother | 1.  The concept of "authentic brother" expresses a *tacit* concept of a substitute **father** figure who is accepted by the informants. Lani youth can only accept a substitute **father** figure who demonstrates two qualities: they should be experienced both as brotherly figures and also as those who are authentic (have a true heart) relationships if they are to build a close relationship with them.<br>2.  The concept of authenticity is an essential quality in one who can be trusted, and his actions showed openness and seriousness to help others consistently. A brotherly figure is the safest relationship the Lani youth can have. They feel comfortable and confident to build a close relationship with an elder brother figure more than with an adult **father** figure.<br>3.  As a **father** figure, an "authentic brother" will be imitated and modelled by the youth when the youth can "spend time together" with him, "learning to imitate and model" him, and finally "become" like him. Lani youth listen to an elder brother who cares about them and can "stay, play, walk, and talk with" them, to bring spiritual **influence** into their lives.<br>4.  An "authentic brother" can be a pattern for presenting a spiritual **father** figure to Lani youth, where the brotherly figure's presence builds an authentic relationship with the youth as they become a role model whose life can be imitated, one that **influences** the Lani youth's life. |

# APPENDIX N

**List of Research Resources**
**Impact of Father Absence on Youth Behaviours**

1. **Sexual problems:** early sexual activity, becoming mothers as teens, and risky sexual behaviour (Deardroff et al. 2012; Delpriore et al. 2017; Ellis et al. 2003; Hix 2018; Mendle et al. 2009; Metzler 1994; Ryan, 2015) and become Victims of child sexual abuse (Ditson and Shay 1984; Schwartz et al. 1998).

2. **Substances-use problems:** Drugs and alcohol abuse (Berman 1995; Duncan 1994; Harris et al. 1998; Hemovich and Crano, 2009).

3. **Psychiatric problems/mental illness** (Block 1988; Elstain 1993): confused identities (Adams et al. 1984; Mott et al. 1997; Ellis and Garber, 2000), and stronger predictor of suicide among youth (Brent 1995; Galston and Kamarck 1993; Mendle et al. 2009; McCall and Land 1994).

4. **Emotional problems** (Cox et al. 1992; Markowrtiz and Ryan 2016): feeling guilty (Smith and Sipchen 1990), struggle with anger (Ahrons and Miller 1993), lower self-esteem, and higher anxiety (Gobbi et al. 2015; Lou 2011; Vitz 1999), never satisfy in life (Koch and Lowery 1984) and sleep disturbances (Messer 1989).

5. **Social problems** (Biller 1994; Hemovich and Crano 2009; Rodney and Mupier 1999): risk of becoming rapist (Cornell 1990; Hill and O'Neill 1993; Rucker 1989), risk of involving in crime and poverty (Smith and Jarjoura 1988); risk of incarceration for delinquent offences (Beck 1988; Matlock 1994; Kamarck and Galston 1990; Pirog-Good 1992), committing homicide (Gramm 1995).

6. **Behaviour problems** (Luster and McAdoo 1994), violent behaviour (Sheline 1994; Sigle-Rushton and McLanahan 2002), involve in hostile friendships/ gangsters (Zill and Nord 1994), rebellious kids (Duncan et al. 1994), aggressive and run away from home (Kierman et al. 1995), and a weaker sense of right and wrong (Hetherington and Martin 1979; Lee and Hankin 2009).

7. **Academic problems**: Drop out of school (Dawson 1991; Stedman 1988; Qureshi and Ahmad 2014), lower intellectual ability (McAdoo 1994; McNeal 1995), low ability to continue study at university (Wallerstein 1986), lower education (McLanahan 1991).

8. **Economic problems**: poverty, malnutrition, underpaid, and less economic success (Kittering 1990; Sandefur 1992; Snarey 1995; Statista Research 2021; Wilson 1993).

9. **Family problems**: higher marriage problems (Wisconsin SS 1994; Markowrtiz and Ryan 2016), poor relationships (Zill et al. 1993; Allen and Daly 2002), and repeat the past family's behaviours to the next generation (Dawson 1991).