INFLUENCE OF PARENTAL CONTEXTUAL FACTORS ON PARENTING PRACTICES AND STYLES AMONG PARENTS IN ELDORET, KENYA

BY

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DECLARATION

Declaration by the Candidate

This thesis is my original work and has not been presented for a degree in any other university. No part of this thesis may be reproduced without the prior permission of the author and Moi University.

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this thesis first to Almighty God my creator, my strong pillar, my source of inspiration, wisdom, knowledge and understanding. He has been the source of my strength throughout this work. I also dedicate it to my beloved husband Benard Otieno who really encouraged me all the way and whose encouragement has made sure that I give it my best to finish that which I started. Lastly, I dedicate to my lovely children Edith, Chantal and Alban who have been affected in every way possible by my busy schedule.

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ABSTRACT

Parenting is a lifelong commitment, and has a pervasive impact on children's development. Significant improvements in the health and well-being of children, including the level of child treatment, cannot be achieved without strengthening the skills, knowledge, and confidence of parents in parenting. The study investigated the influence of parental contextual factors such as parental age, parental gender, marital status, level of formal education and occupation on parenting practices and styles. It was guided by the following objectives: To establish how parental contextual factors such as parental age, parental gender, marital status, level of formal education and occupation influence parenting practices and to determine how parental contextual factors influence parenting styles. The study was guided by moral internalization, parenting styles approach and ecological theories. The study adopted ex post facto research design. Data for this study was collected with aid of questionnaire from 200 parents who had children aged below 18 years in two purposively selected sites using systematic random sampling techniques. Questionnaires were used to collect data in which the quantitative data from closed ended questions was analyzed descriptively and using inferential statistics while data resulting from open-ended questions were analyzed thematically. Inferential statistics applied in the testing of hypotheses were chi-square and The Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient which was done at the level of significance of $\alpha = 0.05$ using the Statistical Package of Social Sciences (SPSS). Based on descriptive analysis results, the study concluded that parental age, parental gender, level of formal education and occupation did not influence parenting practices. However, marital status was found to have an influence on parent-child relationship. In addition, on the hypothesis testing results in which the p value of the test statistics were greater than the level of significance ($p > \alpha$) for the independent variables parental age and marital status the study concluded that those variables had no significant relationship with parenting styles. However, parental gender was found to have a strong negative significant influence on parenting styles based on the hypothesis testing verdict based on the obtained result of $p < \alpha$ for that hypothesis. Further, the study found out that the level of formal education had a positive association with parenting styles. Occupation was also found to have significant influence on parenting styles. The study concludes that parent-child relationship is very crucial in child development and is influenced by marital status. Also the study findings proved that parenting styles are very important part of parenting as they are influenced by parental gender, level of formal education and occupation. The study recommends that parental contextual factors must be taken into account when coming up with policies or programs on parenting.

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ABBREVIATIONS

CPS   -   Canadian Pediatric Society

CU   -   Callous-Unemotional

IFS   -   The Institute for Fiscal Studies

NACOSTI-   National Council of Science and Technology and Innovation

NASP -   National Association School of Psychologists

OAU   -   Organization of African Union

SES   -   Social Economic Status

SPSS   -   Statistical Package for Social Sciences

UK   -   United Kingdom

USA   -   United States of America

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Introduction

This chapter discusses the background of the study, the statement of the problem, the purpose of the study, the objectives and research questions. It further presents the significance of the study and definition of key variables.

1.1 Background Information

Being a parent is the most important job parents will ever have. Parenting comes with many rewards and challenges. Parents have the opportunity to influence the type of a person their child becomes. Many parents love their children and want the best for them. However, children do not come with directions and do not always respond or behave the way as parents want them to. Parenting refers to carrying out the responsibilities of raising and relating to children in such a manner that the child is well prepared to realize his or her full potential as a human being. This means that parenting is the process of taking care or supporting a child from birth to adulthood involving the physical, emotional, social and intellectual capabilities (Cherry, 2012).

The importance of parenting has been documented in numerous studies. Barbieri (2005) notes that, the primary task of parenting is to raise healthy, happy, independent, and confident human beings who are capable of making responsible choices in a chaotic and complex cultural setting.

Smith and Marshall (2005) also observes that effective parenting is important in providing support to children's development from dependency and external control to internalization. This makes them to be socially responsible. This makes the children in

the family context to internalize social standards and expectations, which enables them to have greater control of their own behaviors.

According to Pecnic (2007), effective parenting helps in facilitating important parental activities, which facilitate positive parenting experiences which are referred to as parenting practices. These activities include nurturing behavior, which delineates activities that respond to the child's needs for emotional security, for instance, the provision of warmth and sensitivity within the relationship. Other important parenting activities include structure, recognition, and empowerment. Structure in this case implies setting boundaries and guiding the child's behavior through modeling of positive behavior, without physical and or psychological coercion. If the parent models effective behaviors, then parenting becomes easier as children learn through observation. Recognition refers to the child's need to be respected and acknowledged by parents and to foster the potential and mutual understanding and influence to develop. Parents should take time and understand why a child has done something rather than rushing to confront the child. This helps to foster positive regard, hence promoting conditions of worth. Lastly, empowerment means combining a sense of personal control with the ability to affect the behavior of others. Pecnic (2007) defines empowerment as a process that necessitates ongoing parental adjustment to the changing developmental tasks of children as they grow older. But modeling the best behavior is not always the case as parenting is interfered with different factors which put parents at a fix such that they cannot expedite their parenting responsibility effectively.

The National Association School of Psychologists (NASP, 2010) found that effective parenting helps in developing a trusting relationship between parents and children.

When children feel loved and respected by their parents, they have self-confidence in decision-making, and are more submissive and responsive to their parent's guidance. This fosters trust by protecting children from harm while holding them responsible for the consequences of their own behavior. By implication, children who feel safe to make mistakes can learn from them and make wiser decisions in the future as opposed to those corrected harshly through slapping and other violent ways.

As observed by Kennedy (2001), effective parenting is important in preventing risky behavior or problems before they arise. It is easy for parents to spot possible behavior problems in children and devise ways to prevent them before they occur. This underscores the need for parents to monitor their children closely and be actively involved in their lives. Effective parenting can also be achieved by creating healthy ways for children to express their emotions by being monitors, mentors, and models.

In their parenting model, Darling and Steinberg (1993) assert that parenting comprises of parenting goals, parenting practices and parenting styles. Parenting practice and parenting style are different because parents can have similar parenting styles but different parenting practices. For instance two parents can be both authoritative which is the recommended parenting style but differ on how they apply their rules to the children. For example, two mothers can be authoritative whereby one allows the child to play first before embarking on studying after school; on the other hand, another mother may demand her child to study immediately she comes from school. Therefore, even though these mothers have the same parenting style, performing different practices is different and changes a child's developmental process. In this example, explaining the logic behind a rule is an example of parenting style, while letting a child play before studying is an example of parenting practice. Darling and

Steinberg (1993) define parenting practices as observable behaviors of parents towards their children to make them socialize and achieve the goals parents have determined.

For example when socializing their children to become successful in life, parents may enact certain practices as having good inimate relationship with their children through playing with them or having storry telling moments with them. Another important practice is parents ensuring good communication with their children, parents involving their children in decision making and also considering children's needs while planning for the family. This helps children to be responsible adults in future. On the other hand, Darling and Steinberg (1993) define a parenting style as the emotional climate in which parents behavior towards their children is expressed.

Baumrind (1991) came up with three main parenting styles namely, authoritarian, authoritative, and permissive (indulgent). Authoritative parents establish rules and guidelines that their children are expected to follow. Parents with this style are responsive and ready to listen and cooperate. These parents are assertive but not intrusive and restrictive. According to Cherry (2012), authoritarian parents expect the child to follow or adhere to the strict rules established by the parents failure to which they are punished. Permissive parents have few demands to make for their children. They allow a lot of freedom for their children and they hardly punish or discipline their children. Other researchers, such as Stambler (2008) added a fourth one called detached or uninvolved or disengaged parenting. Parents with this style make few to no demands of their children and they are often indifferent, dismissive or even completely neglectful. These parenting styles can affect the caring relationships

between parents and their children and ways in which parents instill discipline on their children.

These parenting styles and practices are affected by different factors which poses a challenge in parenting hence affecting the development of children. Among these factors are parental contextual factors such as parental age, parental gender, marital status and SES. Contextual factors are factors that reflect a particular context. In other words they are characteristics of the environment that influence behaviour.

A global study conducted by Pinheiro (2006) has shown that effective parenting acts as the best way of instilling the desired behavior to children through use of effective parenting styles and parenting practices. This can be achieved through monitoring, mentoring, and modeling. However, many parents engage in physical abuse as a way of disciplining children. A research reported that approximately 53,000 children have died worldwide because of homicide. This was a result of violence mostly at the hands of parents while instilling discipline. This shows there is still a challenge of parenting due to the parenting styles and practices parents apply.

A lot of research has been done in Western countries to determine how parental factors influence parenting styles. According to Farley (2016), socio-economic status (SES) is a composite measure that typically incorporates economic status measured by level of income, social status measured by level of education, and work status measured by occupation. Accordingly, many parents experiencing low socio-economic status use authoritarian parenting style, while those from high economic status employ an authoritative style. This study concludes that SES influences the parenting style a parent uses.

Parental age has been investigated and Karen, Julie Burbidge, and Patricia, (2011) noted that older parents tend to exhibit and experience less stress in their parenting efforts, use better coping strategies, and engage in more positive reinforcement. This is old parenting practiced through authoritative parenting style and tends to yield the best results in domains, such as academic performance, mental stability, and social success of children. It also promotes good caring relationships and discipline among children.

A study by Myers-Walls(2006) found that the age of a child's parents has a significant effect on many of the important aspects of growing up. While the effects of raising a child at a later age tend to be positive, this does not mean older parents are necessarily better parents. The researcher argues that a good parent is one who utilizes a good parenting style regardless of age. Myers-Walls (2006) also observe that the overall connection is that older parents tend to raise children that are better in many aspects, from social functioning to educational attainment.

Parenting is also influenced by a parents' gender. Gender influences the level of care as well as how parents discipline their children. Studies reveal that mothers may not be able to relate well with their sons. Similarly, fathers may not relate well with their daughters. Mothers spend more time with their children than fathers do (Craig, 2006, Lerner & Castellino, 2002).

There is limited documentation on influence of parental contextual factors on parenting practices and parenting styles in Africa. Therefore there is need to investigate the influence of parental contextual factors on parenting practices and styles in African context. Nevertheless, Roman (2011) conducted a study in South Africa to compare children's perceptions of parenting styles of single and married

mothers. He found that there were no significant differences between parenting styles of single and married mothers. So this created a gap for further research whereby parents could be included as the target population.

Family pattern and structure has in recent times changed. Kenya just like any other developing country is faced with these changes and many parenting challenges. Various socio-economic changes such as education, occupation and level of family income have occurred to the Kenyan society and these have resulted disintegration of traditional patterns of child rearing (Wishstar, 2008). There is also increase in single parenting in which there are more single females than males. Parenting is more than giving but involves numerous activities performed by parents to influence child outcomes in growth and development. Many parenting challenges include scarcity of time between parents and children, failure to impart moral values, imbalanced life, lack of emotional bonding, and poor discipline strategies among others arise due to failure to use the required parenting practices and styles. It is important to investigate if the parenting practices and styles parents use have been influenced by parental contextual factors. In Kenya, the research done on parental contextual factors mainly focus on children academic performance.

Benard (2013) conducted a study to find out relationship between parenting styles and pre-school children's performance in curriculum activities in Kisauni District. The study indicated that there existed a significant relationship between parenting styles and children's performance in preschool activities.

Mwangi (2016) also did a research on the influence of parent's socio-economic status on their participation in children's pre-school education in Kayole Nairobi. The study results showed that parents with higher level of education have relative higher level of

parental participation in pre-schools. Other studies (Mwende, 2017, Mutinda, 2016, Nadenge, 2015) all focused on parental contextual factors and academic performance.

In Eldoret, very little is documented on parental contextual factors (Tubei 2012). She carried out a research on influence of single parenting on psychological well-being of Secondary school students within Eldoret Municipality. The study results showed that students from single parent families and those from two parent families do not differ in their emotional level.

Thus far, it is evident that little has been done on influence of parental contextual factors on parenting practices and styles. Especially very little if any has been documented on parental contextual factors and parenting practices. Hence this created the gap this study aimed to fill.

1.2 Problem Statement

Parenting is the process of promoting and supporting the physical, emotional, social, and intellectual development of a child from infancy to adulthood. The most common caretaker in parenting is biological parent(s). Parenting skills and styles differ from one parent to another due to difference in socio-economic contexts.

To protect children's rights during the process of parenting, the United Nations adopted the Convention on the Rights of Children in 1988, which protects the child from physical, emotional, and mental abuse, and emphasizes the child right to care and nurturing. This convention has been domesticated in various contexts. In Africa, the Organization of African Union (OAU) domesticated the convention of children rights into the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the children. This domestication was necessary because of differences in parenting between Western and sub-Saharan communities. In Kenya, this has been domesticated in form of the

Children's Act No.8 of 2001, which defines the role of parents in parenting. But despite these charters being put in place to protect children's rights, there are still parenting challenges arising from parenting practices and styles. So this created a gap to investigate if parental contextual factors influence parenting practices and styles applied by parents.

Although there are many studies on parenting practices and styles, (Bryan, 2003; Alfie, 2005; Baumrind, (2005); Baumrind, 1991; Craig, 2006), most of them have focused on Western societies, which are socially, culturally, and economically different from sub-Saharan Africa. There are very few studies (Benard, 2013, Mercy, 2012, Mwangi, 2016, Gabriel, 2015) on parental contextual factors which have been done in Kenya and many focuses on parenting and academic achievement of students. In addition, in Eldoret, very little (Tubei, 2012) is documented on parental contextual factors which focused on single parenting and psychological well-being of students. The documented work in Western societies showed that parental contextual factors influence parenting practices and parenting styles. Following on the few studies done in Kenya; this created a gap which the researcher aimed to investigate on influence of parental contextual factors on parenting practices and styles. Also the few researches done in Kenya, mostly, the target population is pupils and students. This study targeted the parents to find out their views on influence of parental contextual factors on parenting practices and styles hence aiming to fill the gap.

1.3 Purpose of the Study

The study investigated the influence of parental contextual factors on parenting practices and styles in an urban setting using the case of Eldoret Town, Uasin Gishu County.

1.4 Research Objectives

The study was guided by the following objectives:

1. To establish the influence of parental contextual factors such as age, gender, marital status, level of formal education and occupation on parenting practices.

2. To determine the influence of parental contextual factors on parenting styles.

1.5 Research Questions

The study attempted to answer the following questions:

1. What is the influence of parental contextual factors: parental age, parental gender, marital status, level of formal education and occupation on parenting practices?

2. What is the influence of parental contextual factors: parental age, parental gender, marital status, level of formal education and occupation on parenting styles?

1.6 Research Hypotheses

1. $H_{O1:}$ There is no statistical influence of parental age on parenting styles

2. $H_{02:}$ There is no statistical influence of parental gender on parenting styles

3. $H_{03:}$ There is no statistical influence of marital status on parenting styles

4. $H_{04:}$ There is no statistical influence of level of formal education on parenting styles

5. $H_{05:}$ There is no statistical influence of occupation on parenting styles

1.7 Justification and Significance of the Study

Parenting is a lifelong commitment, and has a pervasive impact on children's development. Significant improvements in the health and well-being of children, including the level of child treatment, cannot be achieved without strengthening the skills, knowledge, and confidence of parents in the task of raising their children at a population level. Ensuring a safe, engaging environment, creating a positive learning

environment, using assertive discipline, and having realistic expectations are important practices of parenting. Being a parent and a good parent for that matter is a concern of many. Parents need to learn new and effective parenting approaches that they can use to ensure full development of their children. However, many surrounding factors may influence parenting. This study is, therefore, important as it contributes on how parental contextual factors, such as parental age, gender, marital status, parental level of formal education, and occupation influence parenting practices and styles.

As a social action, parenting is influenced by parental contextual factors. Therefore, understanding how various contextual factors influence the practice of parenting is important in coming up with intervention strategies of aligning it with current global trends where children's rights are paramount in diverse contexts.

The study may be useful to policy makers in ensuring that children rights are protected after learning about the most effective parenting style. This will protect children from authoritarian parents who always physically punish the children. In addition, the study findings will help parents to know the different parenting practices and styles and how they can influence their parenting role. From the study findings parents will be able to gain knowledge on how their gender, level of formal education and occupation impact on the parenting style they use to bring up their children. The study findings also will compliment and add to the already existing body of knowledge on influence of parental contextual factors on parenting practices and styles. Now that there is little documentation on influence of parental contextual factors on parenting practices and styles in Kenya, the study findings may form a good basis for future researchers.

1.8 Scope of the Study

This study investigated parental contextual factors influencing parenting practices and styles. The participants of the study consisted of parents who had children both male and female under the age of 18 years in the urban setting of Eldoret town, Uasin Gishu County. It was conducted between September and December 2017. Eldoret town is a cosmopolitan town with parents of different cultural backgrounds, ages, gender, marital status, level of formal education and occupation hence ideal for this study.

1.9 Limitations of the Study

The study used questionnaires as the only research instrument. Results from the questionnaires were entered as the final results as the respondents did not have more opportunity to respond beyond this. To overcome this, the researcher ensured that the respondents understood the questions before answering by asking them to be free to consult where they did not understand.

1.10 Operational Definition of Key Variables

Age referred to chronological number of years lived since birth.

Contextual factors referred characteristics of the ecology/environment that are related to the effectiveness of collaboration. In this study they were parental age, parental gender, marital status, level of formal education and occupation.

Effective parenting in this study referred to parents' ability to interact and engage with children in such a way they learn and grow into remarkable adults. It meant parents daily effort to connect with children on a meaningful and personal level.

Gender refers to the socio-cultural construction of an individual as either male or female.

Level of formal Educational referred to the stage one reached in formal learning institution and it was indicated by primary, secondary, tertiary and post graduate.

Marital status referred to an individual's social relationship with significant other of the opposite sex by mutual agreement and recognized by traditions or civil laws with the sole purpose of having children and family. In this study, marital status was indicated as married, separated/ divorced, single, widowed /widower.

Parent in this study referred to an individual who fosters all facets of child's growth, that is, one who nourishes, protects, and guides new life through the course of child's development Jane (2004). Parents with children less than 18 years were the targeted population in this study.

Parenting referred to a series of actions and interactions on the part of the parent to promote the development of children socially, emotionally, and intellectually.

Parenting practices was used in the study to refer to behaviors parents produce in interactions with their children, the kinds of home environments parents create for children and the connections to the world outside the home that parents both enable and permit.

Parenting styles referred to ways a parent instills skills for social competence and behavior through social interaction with the child in everyday life. These parenting styles are authoritative, authoritarian, and permissive.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

This chapter reviews relevant literature on parental factors influencing parenting practices and parenting styles. This review is done while cognizant of the fact that systematic studies on parental contextual factors influencing parenting practices and parenting styles are context specific. This review is organized in the following themes namely: importance of parenting and the role of parents in parenting, parenting practices, parental contextual factors and parenting practices, parenting styles, parental contextual factors and parenting styles. In addition, this chapter discusses the theories, which guided this study namely: moral internalization theory, parenting styles approach and Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory.

2.1 Importance of Parenting and Role of Parents in Parenting

Parenting plays a very important role in the development of the children. This role transcends beyond childhood. Parenting support the development of the child through modeling the behavior and providing for the child needs. This helps the child to develop physically, emotionally, social and intellectually (Baumrind, 1991).

One of the parent's roles is to nurture and protect children, helping them grow into competent adults. They provide direct and personalized care for children on an ongoing basis throughout development. The society believes on parents as they are given primary authority to determine children's behavior because it assumes that parents have children's best interests at heart and that children are dependent and unable to make informed decisions (Baumrind & Thompson, 2002).

In addition, parents are the determinants of where children live, what religion they will practice, which methods of discipline will be used, and what kind of education will be pursued. The society intervenes in the process of parenting in cases of abandonment, neglect, physical harm or potential harm to the children.

Another core responsibility of parents is nurturing care giving whereby they are involved in meeting the biological, physical, and health requirements of children. Parents are responsible for promoting children's wellness and preventing their illness. Parents in virtually all higher species nurture their young, providing sustenance, routine care, protection, supervision, grooming, comfort, and the like. Nurturance is prerequisite to children's survival and well-being (Baumrind & Thompson, 2002).

It is parents' responsibility to provide material care giving which includes the ways in which parents provide, organize, and arrange the child's physical world, including home and local environments. Adults are responsible for the number and variety of inanimate objects like toys, books and tools available to the child, the level of ambient stimulation, the limits on physical freedom, and the overall safety and physical dimensions of children's experiences. The amount of time children spends interacting with their inanimate surroundings rivals or exceeds the time children spend in direct social interaction with parents or others (Bornstein & Bradleym, 2003),

Social care giving is another parental responsibility which includes the variety of visual, verbal, affective, and physical behaviors parents use to engage children emotionally and manage their interpersonal exchanges. Such interactions are illustrated through parent- child activities such as rocking; kissing, tactile comforting, smiling, vocalizing, and play. Through positive feedback, openness and negotiation, listening, and emotional closeness, parents can make their children feel valued,

accepted, and approved of. Social care giving includes helping children to regulate their own affect and emotions, and influencing the communicative styles and interpersonal repertoires which children bring to form meaningful and sustained relationships with others. When parents practice this effective parenting role then the children grow to be independent adults (Bornstein & Bradleym, 2003),

One of the overarching goals of effective parenting is to support children's development from dependency and external control to internalization, the ability to take initiative and to be socially responsible. This can be achieved within family contexts, whereby children gradually internalize social standards and expectations, a process that facilitates greater self-regulation skills and responsibility for their own behavior hence becoming independent and resourceful citizens (Smith & Marshall, 2005).

2.2 Parenting Practices

To concur with the research done by Pecnic (2007), there is no unique model for effective parenting that can be generalized to all societies. But parents can fulfill their role of parenting guided by three aspects of parenting which include the goals, parenting styles and parenting practices. Parenting practices include behaviors parents produce in interactions with their children, the kinds of home environments parents create for children and the connections to the outside world outside the home that parents both enable and permit.

Different studies have pointed out four parenting practices, which are associated with more positive outcomes in parenting. The first is nurturing behavior, which refers to, activities that respond to the child's needs for emotional security such as, provision of warmth and sensitivity within the relationship.

The second is structure which entails setting boundaries and guiding the child's behavior through modeling positive behaviors, without physical or psychological coercion. The third one is recognition, which focuses on the child's need to be respected and acknowledged by parents and to foster the potential for mutual understanding and influence to develop. The last one is empowerment which aims at combining a sense of personal control with the ability to affect the behavior of others; whereby this is conceptualized as process that necessitates ongoing parental adjustment to the changing developmental tasks of children as they grow (Pecnic, 2007).

According to Pecnic, (2007), parenting practices can be either general or domain-specific. When parenting practices are general, they refer to practices aggregated across situations and domains. When they are domain specific, they refer to parental behavior in a specific context like within family context. Examples of observable acts of parenting practices include praising the child, giving feedback, punishment, limit setting among others.

Interacting and being involved with their children' life on a daily basis is a way parents can socialize their children. Effective parenting practices consists activities like good parent-child relationship, better parent-child communication, allowing children to make decisions, considering child wishes while planning for the family among others. These practices initiated by parents represent their efforts to become directly involved in growth and development of children. These practices may not be successful due to different factors which interfere with parenting process. These factors can be context based and thus it is important to investigate some of these factors which influence parenting practices.

2.3 Parental Contextual Factors and Parenting Practices

The definition of parenting practices is wide and many parental actions related to children's daily healthy behaviors can be seen as a practice. Most studies have used items that reflect daily routines including parent-child relationship, parental encouragement, parent-child communication, permission to do something like making decisions among others to explain parenting practices (Kremers, 2010). A report on parenting in contemporary Europe highlights important key insights with regard to parenting. Firstly, parenting has a strong social component meaning that parenting is a private affair, which occurs in a specific family context, imbued with emotional ties that bind members together. Secondly, parenting is an activity that needs support, with some families having additional needs, as for example, parents bringing up children alone or in the context of coping with diversity. Thirdly, it is important to recognize that there is no standardized correct approach to parenting but rather a plural approach is advocated, given the increasing diversity in contemporary family experience. Finally, the value of recognizing that parenting involves both parents and children is underscored by pointing out the mutually reinforcing nature of child-parent relationships in which the benefits of positive parenting operate to the mutual advantage of both (Daly, 2007).

Parents bring a complex set of needs and personal qualities to their role as parent. As much as parents have different attitudes, behaviors, values which sum up different parenting practices, it is important to study how different parental contextual factors can influence these parenting practices. The parental contextual factors under the study are parental age, parental gender, marital status, level of formal education and occupation.

The parenting practices under this study were parent-child intimate relationship, parent-child communication, parental expression of child's bad behavior, child permission for decision making and considering child wishes while planning for the family.

Communication is the engine of social relationships and it is a very necessary component of parenting. Defined in the most practical way, communication is the natural process of transmitting ideas, information, emotions and feelings from one person to another in a certain amount of time (Patricia, Corneliu, Brigitta, & Dorin, 2012). They further assert that communication between parents and children involves more than just simple expression but more practical activities. Effective communication establishes and maintains relationships between parents and children. Through communication, parents can identify, know and satisfy the needs of the children. In addition, parent-child communication contributes significantly to openness and to the creation of ties in the parent and child interactions. In summary, effective daily communication with the child helps the relationship interaction between parent and child and the latter's harmonious and complex development. But some factors hinder this communication hence affecting child development.

Permission for child to make their own decision is an important practice for development of the child. It is crucial to note that the balance of parental authority and child independence in the choices that are made by children on their own activities is potentially important for child development outcomes. Parents need to understand that allowing children to make decisions helps them to develop self-confidence by taking independent actions and judgment by experiencing their own mistakes. (Shelly, Jennifer, & Kwok, 2007). Developmental psychologists traditionally consider decision making about children's and the transfer of decision power from parents to

children to be parts of the set of activities that comprise parenting. They refer this transition from parent control to child control as autonomy granting or independence giving assuming that parents hold the right and power to make decisions and that they transfer it to children via a parent-controlled process (Bumpus, Ann, & McHale, 2001). According to Shelly, Jennifer and Kwok (2007), many parents do not allow children to make decisions. In their research they found out that there was a lot of parent control in child decision making but they did not investigate the reasons behind. There is limited literature on why parents are resistant to allow children to make own decisions. So there is need to research more on this area.

Parent –child intimate relationship is also another important parenting practice. The parent-child relationship plays a critical role in a child's development. When children have dependable, reliable, consistent and stable relationships with their parents, they have a secure base from which they can explore and experience their world, leading to healthy growth and development. Also children also use their relationships with their parents as models for relationships with others. If they do not have a strong, positive relationship with their parents, it will be much more difficult for them to develop strong, positive relationships as they interact with others. However, Strohchein and Mathew (2015), point out that in order for children to refrain from taking part in deviant activities, their parents have to be physically present. This ensures parents keep an eye on what their children are doing thus monitoring.

Parents use different ways of expressing how they feel about their child's bad behavior. All these are ways of instilling behavior to their children. For that case, parental discipline is an important aspect of parenting and refers to strategies that parents use to discourage inappropriate behavior and to gain compliance from their

children.   Nieman and Shea, (2004) members of The Canadian Pediatric Society describe discipline as the structure that helps the child fit into the real world happily and effectively. It is the foundation for the development of the child's own self discipline. Effective and positive discipline is about teaching and guiding children, not just forcing them to obey. As with all other interventions aimed at pointing out unacceptable behavior, the child should always know that the parent loves and supports him/her. Trust between parent and child should be maintained and constantly build upon.

It is recommended that if parent feels that a child's behavior is out of control and they have done everything they can, then it is good to seek the help of a mental health professional. An important thing to remember is that generally behaviors whether positive or negative serve a purpose. The purpose or reason for the behavior is called the function. Therefore, parents are advised to conduct a functional behavior assessment to determine the function of problematic behavior and put strategies in place to prevent or alleviate the problem. Because children are often punished for their behavior without getting the tools to address their needs, punishment often leads to more behavior problems. The premise of positive behavior support is that, children are taught replacement skills and provided with a supportive environment to minimize the problematic behaviors rather than being punished as a way of deterring them (Nieman & Shea, 2004).

Erika, Laursen, and Tardif (1998), state that Social Economic Status (SES) provides a developmental niche for parent- child relations. According to them, SES is made up of parent's occupation, education, and level of income. Although income at or below the poverty level affects parenting, income above the poverty level appears less influential in shaping parenting than do education and occupational status. Parent's

occupation may change as a result of increase in education, or a family may find great success in some endeavor and their income may rise sharply. Conversely, income and social status may drop as a result of unemployment. Further parents change their ideas about parenting because of new information.

According to Erika, laursern, and Tardif, (1998), in their research they state that influence of SES on parenting practices are more likely than lower SES parents to have a child-centered orientation to parenting. Lower SES parents are more parent-centered than are higher status parents. They see themselves as authorities and want children to comply. When children do not obey, such parents are harsh and punitive. They have also commended that higher-status parents talk to their children and elicit more speech from them.

Parents who lack resources to care for their children experience increased stress in meeting the challenges of daily life. When experiencing economic hardships, parents become more irritable, depressed, and more easily frustrated and thus their psychological tension has a direct impact on their parenting and on their children (Rand & Conger, 1993; Rand & Conger, 1992). Such parents stimulate their children less, and they use less effective parenting practices. They do not communicate with children as openly or share power as much as they do in less stressful times. This tension affects children's behavior. Economic strain also has an indirect effect on children's behavior. When parents are upset and frustrated, they argue with each other and give each other less support, so parenting declines because parents are not working together (Simons, 1998).

Working parents particularly parents of young children, feel rushed and starved for time. Parents who both work identify lack of time with family as the greatest source

of stress in family life, (Mellman, Lazarus, & Rivlin, 1995). Studies have shown that the vast majority of children live in families where parenting figures are employed outside the home. In married couple families, 63% of mothers with children under six and 77% of mothers with children between six and seventeen are employed.

There is a contradiction between these studies because for example working parents with high level of education and stable occupation spend less time with their children. This reduces the time parents have with their children hence affecting the parenting process.

Parent-child intimate relationship is an important parenting practice and one of important aspect of this is the amount of time parents spend with their children. The studies do not bring out clear results on how level of formal education and occupation influence parenting practices. Because parents with lower level of education and experiencing poverty experience different stressful situation as they work to cater for the needs of the children. So they may spend a lot of time with the children but they are not there for them due to low SES. There is no clear evidence from studies regarding the role of increasing parental education in promoting effective parenting practices.

Different studies have been done on age and parenting practices. For instance, Lewin (2013) asserts that although many women wait until they are well into their 20s and beyond to have children, a large number of young women and teenage girls do get pregnant. Whether those pregnancies are intended or unintended, those that carried to term result in maternal ages that are well below the age of adulthood. Having a child at a young age not only puts stress on the mother, but also poses a risk for the child. It has been established that children born to adolescents are more likely to live in

poverty and to have developmental and psychological challenges that children born to adult mothers do not. Having children during adolescence presents many risks to parenting as well as pregnancy. Postponing parenthood until the twenties confers benefits on both parents and children (Lewin, Stephanie J. Mitchell, & Ronzio, 2013) Girls who become teenage mothers encounter more problems with fewer resources for meeting them than does the average parent. Birth to teenage mother becomes one factor in a chain of events that predict difficulties (Christine, Clifford, Clogg, & Karen, 1993). Babies of adolescent parents are born with more problems than those of older parents as they are psychologically immature and are less effective in relating or communicating well with their children.

The above studies on age and parenting practices are not clear whether it is the age factor which influences parenting practices or because the young teenage parents are going through poverty. Much emphasis have been put on that these young parents lack resources to cater for the needs of the children. The question is if the same young parents are above level of poverty, will they experience the same difficulties because of age?

Parental gender has also been considered as an important factor, which can influence parenting practices. Gender refers to the economic, social, political and cultural attributes and opportunities associated with being male and female. Gender is considered as the related social and psychological patterns of behavior and attitudes, (Woodhill & Samuels, 2003). Gender roles are beliefs about the ways in which individual, family, community and societal roles are defined. Traditional gender roles, which are common in traditional families in which the male is the breadwinner and

the female is in charge of childcare and housekeeping, define masculinity as being independent, assertive, and aggressive (Slavkin & Stright, 2007).

A study by Gerson (2002) found that both men and women often expressed strongly egalitarian attitudes toward parenting. However, even though most mothers from the 1980's to today work outside the home, there is still what is called the second shift of housework and childcare when the woman gets home from a full day of work. Naturally, mothers on average, spend more time taking care of children than fathers. Children feel more emotional closeness to their mothers than their fathers because they have spent more time with their mothers.

The results of a study conducted by Craig (2006) found that mothers were more likely than fathers to spend not only more time overall with their children, but also more time multitasking, more physical labor, a more rigid timetable, more time alone with children, and more overall responsibility for their care. The studies also found that these gender differences in the amount of time spent with children as well as the circumstances stated above are the same even when the mother works full time.

Parents engage in different activities with their children. Fathers were found to be more likely to spend time with their children by playing with them, talking with them, engaging in educational and recreational activities more than any other kinds of caring. One common view of mothers is that they are often over involved in their children's lives, while fathers have a much less involved approach, being mostly playmates for their children (Craig, 2006).

The reason for the gender difference in how much time mothers and fathers spend with their children is probably not due to the fact that fathers don't want to spend time

with their children. In fact, Milkie, Mattingly, Nomaguchi, Bianchi, and Robinson (2004) found that men said that they wanted to spend more time with their children.

Women are often perceived as more nurturing in our society, and many people think that women are better at taking care of children than men are (Craig, 2006). Men and women are often believed to have certain traits that make men more successful in the workplace, and women are better at taking care of children. Pohl, Bender, and Lachmann (2005) found that women tend to show more empathy than men, and men tend to be more assertive than women.

Therefore, society often tends to assume that all women should take care of children and all men should focus on work and leave the childrearing to the mother. It is also assumed that mothers should have a closer relationship to their children than the fathers should because mothers are supposed to be more focused on their children (Pohl, Bender, & Lachmann, 2005).

2.4 Parenting Styles

Parenting styles are a function of the parent's attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors, and, as Darling and Steinberg (1993) argue, they reflect the parents' socialization goals, as well as the emotional climate in which specific parenting practices are implemented. Parenting styles consists of the attitudes about children that parents communicate to their own children and the emotional climate in which these attitudes are expressed.

The most well known parenting styles include authoritative, authoritarian, and permissive first identified in the research done by Baumrind in the mid 1960s. These parenting styles describe parents as a function of the control they exert over their children. Control here means the willingness of parents to socialize their children and

the manner in which they attempt to integrate children into the family and society (Baumrind, 1967).

Parenting style captures two important elements of parenting: parental responsiveness and parental demandingness (Maccoby & Martin, 1983). Parental responsiveness also referred to as parental warmth or supportiveness refers to the extent to which parents intentionally foster individuality, self-regulation, and self-assertion by being attuned, supportive, and acquiescent to children's special needs and demands (Baumrind, 1991). Parental demandingness also referred to as behavioral control refers to the claims parents make on children to become integrated into the family whole, by their maturity demands, supervision, disciplinary efforts and willingness to confront the child who disobeys.

Authoritative parenting style is frequently associated with positive child outcomes for example emotional stability, adaptive patterns of coping and life satisfaction. This parenting style is characterized by high levels of parental warmth and responsiveness paired with high levels of parental demandingness and control. Parents practicing this parenting style provide their children with clear guidance and direction, but in the context of warm and loving relationship hence effective parenting (Berg, 2011)

Authoritarian parents are characterized by low responsiveness and high demandingness. These parents have high expectations for the child obedience in the context of an emotionally cold or distant parent child relationship and it is associated with poor academic achievement and depressive symptoms. In this style, parents engage in little mutual interaction with the children and expect them to accept adult's demands without any questions. They use power-assertive techniques of socialization such as threats, commands, physical force, love and withdrawal (Zupancic, Podlesek,

& Kavcic, 2004). Children raised with this type of parenting style may have less social competence as the parent generally tells the child what to do instead of allowing the child to choose by him or herself (Berg, 2011).

Permissive parents are highly responsive and low in demanding. These parents provide their children with very little guidance and direction and their children are more likely to show poor self-control, low self esteem and aggression. These parents are nurturing and accepting, but at the same time they avoid imposing demands and controls over child's behavior (Zupancic, Podlesek, & Kavcic, 2004). They have little or no expectations for their children and often view their children as friends and have few limits imposed.

Maccoby and Martin (1983) later added a fourth dimension to the parenting styles already defined by Diana Baumrind. Apparently, they did this so they could complete the picture of control and responsiveness. Thus, the uninvolved parenting style is characterized by low behavior control (demandingness) and low parental responsiveness (warmth). They found out that, an uninvolved parenting style is characterized by few demands, low responsiveness and little communication. While these parents fulfill the child's basic needs, they are generally detached from their child's life. In extreme cases, these parents may even reject or neglect the needs of their children.

Authoritative parenting style is identified as the best approach to parenting. Children raised by authoritative parents tend to be more capable, happy and successful. According to Baumrind, (1991), children of authoritative parents tend to have a happier disposition, have good emotional control and regulation, develop good social skills, and are self-confident about their abilities to learn new skills. The authoritative

parenting style, more than any other, aids in ensuring healthy development, because children are taught to follow rules, ask questions and have their own opinions.

2.5 Parental Contextual Factors Influencing Parenting Styles

According to Darling and Steinberg (1993), different parenting styles create different emotional climates in the home. They argued that parenting style varies as a function of SES.

Their Studies show that parents in lower socio-economic strata tend toward a more authoritarian or rigid style of parenting. The stressors that accompany lower economic status have been shown to negatively influence the emotional resources of the parent leading to less responsive, more punitive parenting. Children will be negatively affected hence poor relationship with their parents. For example, the working-class mothers interviewed ranked strict obedience as their most importance childrearing goal, whereas the group referred to as business class ranked independence as equal to obedience in importance (Kohn, 1963). Kohn (1997) proposed that SES associated differences in parent-child relationships stem from differences in parent's childrearing values and that in turn stem from differences in parent's occupational conditions. Kohn argued that blue-collar jobs fostered authoritarian childbearing because these jobs require obedience and conformity, whereas white-collar occupations fostered authoritative parenting because those occupations require initiative and independent thinking. On the other hand, the authoritative parenting style is more widely employed among parents with higher SES, resulting in a more responsive, more positive relationship with their children (Stambler, 2008).

Studies show that higher SES parents were consistently more likely to use psychological techniques of discipline, including reasoning and appeals to guilt, whereas lower-SES parents were more likely to use physical punishment. In addition,

higher-SES parents had relationships that are more equalitarian with their children than lower SES parents.

Analysis of a large, diverse sample of adolescents in California revealed that families with higher parental education tended to be lower in authoritarian and permissive parenting, and higher in authoritative parenting than families with lower parental education (Dombusch, Ritter, Leiderman, Roberts, & Fraleigh, 1987).

Cherry (2012) found that the authoritarian style is associated with low SES parents. He explains that because of poverty, parents become less supportive of their children. His study found that poor mothers are more severe when dealing with a child's behavior, expect more obedience from them, and when they are wrong physically punish them.

All the above researches were done in western society, so it is wise to find out if this is the same case in the African society specifically in Kenya.

It is also important to review parental gender as an important factor in parenting. In her study Baumrind (1991) notes that there is considerable convergence between mothers' and fathers' ratings. If authoritative parenting is the most desirable style, then it may be enough that one parent is displaying such behavior, in other words, the positive effects of one authoritative parent may buffer the child from the negative effects associated with one of the other parenting styles.

Past research has demonstrated that the outcomes for children vary largely by the style of parenting they receive. Thus, it is important to document whether having a permissive/authoritarian combination produces the same positive outcomes as having two authoritative parents. Alternatively, there may be some sort of complementary

process that operates. For example, if one of the parents is authoritarian, the other one may tend to be indulgent. It may be the case that there is simply not room for two authoritarian parents in one family, as both persons will want to be in control of family decision making. Similarly, if one parent is indulgent, the other may be more authoritarian or authoritative (Baumrind 1991). She further suggests one possibly common combination that she calls "traditional parenting". This refers to a family parenting style in which the mother and father enact sex-stereotyped roles. In such cases, the mother is significantly more responsive than demanding, whereas the father is significantly more demanding than responsive.

Research conducted by Betsy Garrison and colleagues for Louisiana State University on how parenting styles influence child development found authoritative parenting in both fathers and mothers to be positively correlated with cognitive development in children. Social development also benefits from this parenting style, because communication is welcomed and children feel more comfortable with peers and in other social situations (Baumrind 1991).

There is very limited literature on the relationship between parental age and parenting styles. Lewin (2013) carried out a study to find out if there is any relationship between the two. In order to understand the differences in maternal parenting styles and challenges based on the age of the mothers, he sought to examine mothers based on developmental maturity. Therefore, rather than looking at adolescent mothers and comparing them to adult mothers, Lewin looked at adolescent mothers under the age of 19, emerging mothers between age 19 and 25, and adult mothers over 25. She assessed all of the mothers when their children reached two years old and evaluated

their levels of maternal warmth, discipline techniques, sensitivity, socioeconomic factors, and co-parenting relationships (Lewin, Mitchell and Ronzio, 2013).

Lewin, Mitchell and Ronzio, (2013) found that there was a significant difference between all three groups of mothers. Even though the adolescent mothers had the highest rates of poverty and the lowest rates of maternal warmth and sensitivity, the emerging adult mothers had levels that were far lower than those of the adult mothers. This suggests that although the emerging adult mothers may be better equipped to handle the stresses of parenting than adolescent mothers do, they may still not be fully mature, financially or emotionally, to cope with the demands of mothering as well as older mothers. Surprisingly, they also discovered that the rates of depression and co-parenting conflict did not vary between age groups. This supports Lewin's belief that maternal age plays a unique and significant role in the way in which a mother parents and the parenting styles used. Lewin concluded by saying, "Overall, our findings indicate that the younger a mother is, the more she is at risk for maladaptive parenting, and this risk is not restricted to adolescence.

From these researches it can be concluded that it is not clear whether parental age influences parenting styles. Other factors like parental stress seem to have more weight than age alone; this contradiction encouraged the research to investigate this in African society.

Literature exists on influence of marital status on parenting styles. Roman (2011) investigated parenting styles of single and married mothers in South Africa. He found that there were no significant differences between parenting styles of single and married mothers in South Africa. However, Greitemeyer (2009), point out that compared with married mothers, single mothers are more likely to engage in

inconsistent, harsh, and unsupportive parenting behaviors. They state that single mothers are less likely to interact with their children in a more stimulating and nurturing manner. Literature reviewed show that most of the studies done to investigate the influence of marital status on parenting styles mainly involved mothers. A lot of literature reviewed shows that many researches focus more on mothers. This enabled this research to focus on both parents.

2.6 Theoretical Framework

The study of parental contextual factors and their influence on parenting practices and parenting styles can be considered within a variety of theoretical framework, including: the theory of moral internalization, the parenting styles approach, and ecological and systematic approaches.

2.6.1 Moral Internalization Theory

Grusec (2006) defined moral internalization as "taking over the values and attitudes of society as one's own so that socially acceptable behavior is motivated not by anticipation of external consequences but by intrinsic or internal factors" and it underlies the development of children's social and emotional competence.

A lot of research on parental discipline has been concerned with the long-term goal of how children acquire the motives, values and behavior of their parents and of society through the process of internalization. According Hoffman's (2001) theory of moral internalization attempts to address how societal norms and parental values, which are initially motivated by external forces eventually, come to acquire an internal motivational force. He argues that disciplinary encounters with parents are central to this process of moral internalization and what happens in a disciplinary encounter is

likely to influence whether or not children internalize norms and subsequently behave in a way that is consistent with these norms.

As children internalize norms of behavior the need for external control of behavior through mechanisms such as reward and punishment is lessened (Smith , 2005). Grusec and Goodnow (1994), suggest that the use of punishment or other power assertive techniques is less effective than the processes of reasoning or induction in promoting internalization.

According to Hoffman's, (2001), discipline is organized into three different types namely:

Power assertion – this includes physical force, deprivation of material objects and privileges, or the threats of these; This means that by use of this technique a parent seeks to control the child by capitalizing on his physical power or control over the child's material resources.

Love withdrawal – In this type, the parent gives direct but non-physical expression to his anger or disapproval of the child for engaging in some undesirable behavior. For example, ignoring the child, turning his back, refuse to speak or listen to the child among others.

Induction – this includes techniques in which the parent gives explanations or reasons for requiring the child to change his behavior, or directly appeals to conformity inducing agents that may already exist with the child. These techniques rely less on fear and more on the child's connecting their cognitive content with his own resources for comprehending the requirements of the situation and controlling his behavior accordingly. Inductions should therefore contribute to an awareness of the

social consequences of the child's actions; they should also enlist an important motivational resource that exists within the child and is applicable in situations involving the child's harming another person namely empathy, defined as the vicarious effective response to another person.

Application of the theory to the study

This theory is important because it places the parent as the integral part of the development of children which is the focus of this study. As noted from the theory parents are involved in the every day development of the children socializing them to expected values and behaviour.In achieving this, parents use different parenting systles.

2.6.2 The Parenting Styles Approach

In understanding parenting, we also need to focus on parenting styles paradigm by Baumrind (1971 & 1991) and (Maccoby & Martin, 1983). According to this paradigm, two dimensions of parenting behavior emerge: whether parents are high or low in control or demands, and whether parents are high or low in warmth or responsiveness. Depending on where parents lie along these dimensions, they can be categorized as:

1. Authoritative (high-control, high – responsive)

2. Authoritarian (high-control, low-responsive)

3. Permissive-indulgent (low-control, high responsive)

4. Permissive- neglectful (low-control, low responsive)

Studies on impact of parenting style have found out that authoritative parenting has most commonly been associated with positive outcomes (Teti & Candelaria, 2002). A later development of this approach teased apart parenting practices which can be

referred as content and parenting style viewed as context (Darling & Steinberg, 1993). Practices refer to specific parenting behaviors and goals for socialization such as slapping a child, requiring children to do their homework, taking an interest in children's activities. Style, on the other hand, refers to the emotional climate in which parenting practices take place such as tone of voice, bursts of anger, and displays of empathy. Thus, parenting practices such as specific disciplinary strategies can differ according to the style or emotional climate in which the message is transmitted to the child. Darling & Steinberg (1993) argue that parenting styles such as authoritative, authoritarian are best understood as a context that moderates the influence of specific parenting practices on the child.

Application of the theory to the study

This theory emphasizes various styles parents use in ensuring child development. It was used in the study to help understand how parents carry out their parenting role especially in instilling behavior to their children by use of different parenting styles

2.6.3 Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory

An ecological and systemic perspective on family represents an important theoretical framework within which parental discipline can be better understood (Lerner & Castellino, 2002).

Urie Bronfenbrenner (1917-2005) developed the ecological systems theory to explain how everything in a child and the child's environment affects how a child grows and develops. He labeled different aspects or levels of the environment that influence children's development, including the micro system, the mesosystem, the exosystem, the macrosystem and the chrono-system (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). In his bio-ecological model of human development, the individual, or child, is at the center.

Although most influence on development in this theory is said to be environmental, temperament and physical traits are both influenced by genetics, so both genetics and biology influence the developing person (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 1998).

In the **microsystem,** the environment influences development more so than in any other system. The child's family, peers, school, media and neighborhood are all a part of the microsystem. Parents and caregivers, the ones who spend the most time with the child, and their parenting style, influence personal development. How parents interact with the child will have an effect on how the child grows; the more encouraging and nurturing these relationships and places are, the better the child will be able to grow. Healthy human development is dependent on how effectively the elements of the microsystem work together.

The **mesosystem** is the connections and interaction between the components of the microsystem, in other words, the community. This level describes how the different parts of a child's micro system work together for the sake of the child.

Exosystem includes societal influences, such as the parent's jobs and access to programs such as health care. According to Bronfenbrenner & Morris, (1998), this can be applied for example, if a child's parent gets laid off from work. This may have negative effects on the child if her parents are unable to pay rent or to buy groceries; however, if her parent receives a promotion and a raise at work, this may have a positive effect on the child because her parents will be better able to give her physical needs.

The **macrosystem** is the largest and most remote set of people and things to a child but which still has a great influence over the child. The macrosystem is a child's culture and its influence on the child's development. This affects all other systems.

The macrosystem includes things such as the relative freedoms permitted by the national government, cultural values, the economy, wars, etc (Bronfenbrenner, 1979).

Application of the theory to the study

The application of this theory in the study implies that different ecological factors influence the parenting role of parents and their parenting styles. These ecological factors include parental age, parental gender, parent's level of formal education and occupation.

According to this theory, parental discipline is nested within a wider system of relationships in the family, as well as overarching systems of social and economic influences, which may impede or facilitate effective parenting (Smith & Marshall, 2005).

The parental contextual factors under the study make part of the environmental context on which parenting takes place and situations families are experiencing inclusive of the cultural, social, economic, and educational dynamics hence the theory helped in understanding the influence of these factors on parenting practices and parenting styles.

In Summary the three theories are used in a complimentary manner in that moral internalization theory places parents as key in their socialization role, parenting styles approach explain different parenting styles used by parents in their parenting role and ecological systems theory explain different ecological factors which influence parenting practices and parenting styles.

2.7 Chapter Summary

In summary, from the literature, the parents play a big role in the development of children. In doing so, they use various parenting styles which are mostly influenced by contextual factors. Therefore this study is justified in investigating the influence of parental contextual factors on parenting styles and practices away from those reported in existing literature review. This means there is no universal way of parenting as it depends on the context.

It is clear that the existing literature showed that there is a lot which has been documented on parenting practices and parenting styles. Many researchers have done studies on this area though many are from western countries such as Erika, laursern, & Tardif, (1998). The few done in Kenya concentrated on the influence of parenting practices or parenting styles on child academic performance. This created the gap which this study aimed to fill as it focused on the influence of parental contextual factors on parenting practices and styles. It aimed to find out if these factors influenced parenting practices and styles applied by parents. Also target population for many studies on this area are pupils or students hence this study studied the parents.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter discussed the research design, the target population, sampling procedure and sample size, research instruments, validity and reliability of data instruments, data collection procedures, data analysis procedures and research ethics that were used in the study.

3.1 Geographical Locale of the Study

This study was purposively done in Eldoret town in Uasin Gishu County. Eldoret is the headquarters of Uasin Gishu County and the largest urban Centre in the North Rift. It is a cosmopolitan town with many migrants from many parts of the country due to its economic opportunities, social amenities such as learning institutions and health facilities. Therefore, it accorded the researcher a good opportunity to get data from people from diversified socio-cultural and economical background.

According to Uasin Gishu Integrated Development Plan 2013-2018, Uasin Gishu County number 027 is situated in the mid-west of Kenya's Rift Valley, some 330 Km North West of Nairobi. Uasin Gishu is a cosmopolitan county covering an area of 3345.2 square kilometers. It borders Kericho County to the south, Nandi to the South West, Bungoma to the West and Trans Nzoia to the north. It also borders Elgeyo Marakwet to the East, Baringo to the South East and Kakamega to the North West. It lies between Longitudes 34^0 50' East and 35^0 37' West and Latitudes 0^0 03' South and 0^0 55' North. Eldoret is the largest city and the administrative capital of Uasin Gishu County and it is among the fastest growing cities in Kenya. According to the

2009 Population and Housing Census, the total population of Uasin Gishu County stood at 894,179 with a population growth rate of 3.8% (County, 2013).

3.2 Research Design

Kothari (2003) defines a research design as an arrangement of conditions for collection and analysis in a way that intends to combine relevance of the research purpose with economy in procedure. This study adopted ex post facto research design. Ex post facto design is ideal for conducting research when it is not possible to manipulate the characteristics of human participants. It is suitable for testing hypotheses about the cause and effect or correlation relationships. This was suitable for this study as it aimed at testing the relationship between parental contextual factors which included parental age, parental gender, marital status, level of formal education and occupation and parenting styles.

3.3 The Target Population

The target populations for this study were parents with children under the age of 18 years and who were living / staying together for at least two years by the time of this research. The rationale for this was because anyone under 18 years is a child according to Kenyan constitution. Further, most children below the age of 18 years are still depending on the parents for care and nurturing. According to 1999 population and Housing Census, Huruma estate had a population of 35,298 people and 4,438 households. In addition, Kapsoya estate had a population of 21,545 people with 4,200 households.

3.4 Sampling and Sample Size

Specifically, the study was carried out in two purposively selected estates in Eldoret town namely Kapsoya and Huruma. The rationale of selecting these two estates is

because of their perceived socio-economic status. For example, Kapsoya is perceived as a middle estate and is characterized by well-structured infrastructure while Huruma is a low income estate. These differences were taken as social representations of parents' socio-economic lived social indicators.

According to the Survey of Kenya 1999, there are 774 and 402 plots in Huruma and Kapsoya respectively with 4,438 and 4,200 households respectively. Using simple random sampling the researcher selected through a ballot, one plot for inclusion as a starting point of the study in each estate. Using the plot map of Huruma and Kapsoya, the researcher identified the selected plot in each estate after which all the households residing in it were enumerated meaning that all the households were listed down. Using simple random sampling, one household was selected for the study. Before administration of the questionnaire to an adult member of randomly selected household, oral screening interview was done to determine if the parent had been staying with the child for at least two years to qualify to be included in the sample. However, due to unforeseen circumstances such as absence of adult member in the selected household, another household was selected using simple random sampling. After getting information from the selected parent, the researcher went back to the ballot box and picked another plot randomly. This process was repeated continuously until the predetermined sample size of 220 was attained. It is important to note that this predetermined sample size was divided equally among purposively selected estates. The rationale for a predetermined sample size of 220 is because in a survey research the recommended minimal sample size is 100 respondents Kothari (2003). Thus, in this study a predetermine sample size of 220 respondents was taken as large enough to enable the researcher to test relationships between independent and dependent variables.

3.5 Methods of Primary Data Collection

3.5.1 Primary Data collection

Data collection questionnaire was developed after reviewing literature from social indicators of parenting practices and parenting styles which were identified after reviewing literature on parenting. These indicators were used to define various variables in the questionnaire. Through the self constructed questionnaire, the study collected data on the influence of parental contextual factors on parenting practices and styles. The questionnaire contained both open-ended and close- ended questions. The open-ended questions were meant to elicit details on the variables, which was being investigated while close-ended questions restricted the respondent to relevant issues. In addition, closed-ended and open-ended questions were used to generate quantitative and qualitative data respectively. The rationale of using questionnaire was to ensure conformity as each respondent was asked exactly the same question in the same order, thus ensuring comparability.

The questionnaire was administered to both parents if they were present during data collection. But if only one parent was present, then the questionnaire was administered to that one parent. Data collection was done during the weekends as many respondents were working or running their businesses during week days.

3.6 Validity and Reliability of Research Instruments

Validity and reliability in research ensure that the data collection instruments yield the data intended to be collected in the study.

3.6.1 Validity of research instruments

Validity refers to the extent to which an instrument measures a good example of behavior; skills and knowledge that it purports to measure (Kothari, 2003). There are

three types of validity in data: construct validity, content validity and criterion validity. This study focused on content validity to ensure validity of instruments. Content validity is a measure of the degree to which data collected using a particular instrument represents a specific domain of indicators or content of a particular concept (Mugenda & Mugenda, 1999). Content validity was preferred in this study as it showed to what extent the instruments reflected the parental contextual factors influencing parenting practices and styles. Content validity was used to specify the domain of that it should contain all the possible items that were used to measure parenting practices and parenting styles. To ensure that the research instrument covered adequate content on parenting practices and parenting styles, the Expert Judgement method was used. This involved consulting lecturers in the department of Sociology, Psychology and Anthropology to discuss the instrument to ascertain its validity. Also, a pilot study was done in Langas estate whereby 30 questionnaires were administered randomly to parents to ascertain if the respondents understood the questions. The results from the pilot study and suggestions from supervisors were used in formulating the final questionnaire.

3.6.2 Reliability of research instruments

According to Mugenda and Mugenda (1999), reliability is a measure of degree to which a research instrument yields consistent results or data after repeated trials. Reliability also refers to the consistency and stability of scores obtained by the same persons when re-examined with same test on different occasions, or with different sets of equivalent items, or under other variable examining conditions (Cohen & Manion, 1994). This study used test-re-test technique to ascertain reliability of research instruments. During piloting, the questionnaires were administered twice by the researcher to the same group after two weeks interval. This assisted the researcher to

establish whether the responses given were consistent. To determine the correlation coefficient of stability, Pearson's product moment formula was used. This established the extent to which the questionnaire elicits the same responses every time it is administered. A reliability coefficient between 0.5 and 1.0 if established was to be considered the desired index of reliability. The Pearson correlation of the two scores yielded a correlation coefficient of 0.73. This was a positive correlation giving the researcher confidence to use the instrument. The results obtained from the pilot study assisted the researcher in revising items in the questionnaire to make sure that it covered the objectives of the study.

3.7 Data Collection Procedures

According to Mugenda and Mugenda (2003), data collection procedures refer to the protocol followed to ensure that data collection tools are applied correctly and efficiently. The researcher obtained a permit from National Council of Science and Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI). On the day of delivery, the researcher introduced herself to the respondents and explained the objective of the study. The researcher also gave them the informed letter of consent to read. Questionnaires were administered by a direct method which involved the distribution of questionnaires directly to the respondents in their households and giving them time to complete. The procedure assured respondents of their confidentiality since they were not compelled to write their names. The administration of questionnaires was done by the researcher.

3.8 Scoring of Research Instruments

A biographic form was used to collect information about the respondents' age, gender, marital status, level of formal education and occupation. The responses of the

participants for the items in the biographical form were coded and entered into the SPSS computer data file.

A questionnaire was used to collect data on parenting practices and parenting styles. The completed questionnaires from the respondents were serialized that is numbered from 1 to 200. The scoring values were broken down as follows:

1. Parenting practices were determined by the respondent being asked if he/she practices the parenting practice by choosing either yes or no and explain the reason behind it. These responses were cross tabulated with parental contextual factors: age, gender, marital status, level of formal education and occupation.

2. Parenting styles had 17 questions. These catered for the three parenting styles that is: Authoritative, authoritarian and permissive. The scoring was either agree or disagree. Any parent who agreed with questions 1, 2 and3 was an authoritative parent, one who agreed with questions 4, 5, 6, and 7 was authoritarian parent and questions 8,9,10 and 11 was a permissive parent.

3.9 Data Analysis

This study utilized the statistical package for social science (SPSS Version 20.0) in the organization and analysis of quantitative data from closed ended questions. Data was cleaned to find out if all questionnaires were filled. Every variable was coded and the researcher came up with a coding sheet and then developed a coding analysis frame of SPSS. Then analyzed descriptively inform of frequencies and percentages. For inferential statistics, techniques such as chi-square and Pearson moment bivariate correlation were used to test the association that existed between various variables in testing of the hypotheses at the significant level of at $ά= 0.05$. In this study chi-square

was used to test if there was relationship between variables while Pearson bivariate correlation showed the direction of the relationship (positive or negative).

Responses from open ended questions were first written down, then read and re-read. Emerging themes were identified and combined to corresponding themes. Then these responses were thematically analyzed.

3.10 Ethical Considerations

Ethical considerations were upheld in this research. The participants were informed on the objectives of the study, the expected duration of participation and the procedure to be followed for the study before they responded to the items in the research. Respondents were also assured of confidentiality. They were also promised that their identity would be concealed and they were informed not to write their names on the questionnaires. The respondents were also informed that they were free to withdraw from the study at any time they felt comfortable.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSES, PRESENTATION OF RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the results of the study. In particular the chapter presents and discusses how the parental contextual factors namely parental age, parental gender, marital status, level of formal education and occupation influences parenting practices and parenting styles.

4.1 Response Rate

The response rate for this study was 90.9% meaning out of 220 questionnaires issued out, 200 were returned. According to Mugenda and Mugenda (1999) a response rate of 60% is good but 70% is really good for social science researches. Therefore the response rate for respondents met the standard recommended.

4.2 Socio-Demographic Data

4.2.1 Age of the respondents

As shown in Figure 4.1, of the 200 respondents data collected from, 26.5% were aged 26-35, 46% 36-45, 19% 46-55 years and 8.5% 56-65. From these results, it is clear that after the age 36-45 most parents do not have young children. This can be attributed to the social belief among mothers that giving birth after the age of 35 may result to health complications to both the mother and the child. This is clearly captured by Maggy 45 years old housewife:

> *…. I do not have young children now. I started having children immediately I turned 20 years. I did so because I knew if I cannot have the desired number of children before age 35 it would be difficult. I say difficult because after age 35 you are likely to develop complications especially when giving birth…. Also, I am told you are likely to get abnormal children.*

Age
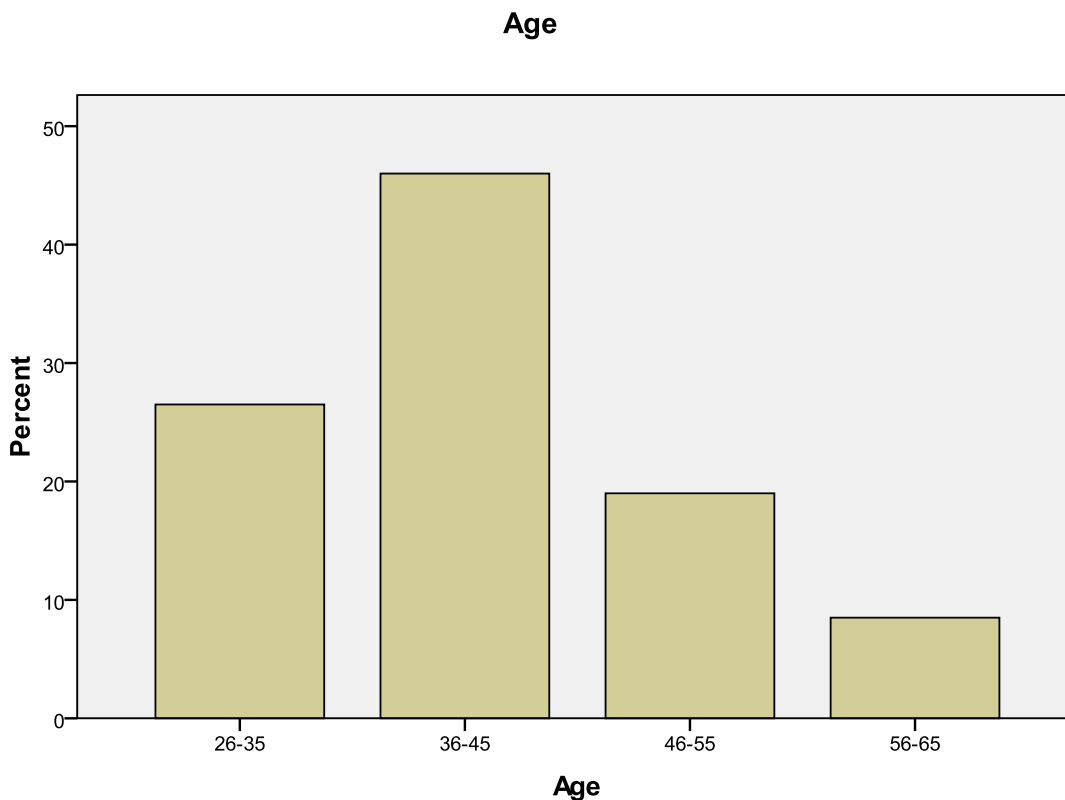
Figure 4.1: Age of the respondents

4.2.2 Gender of the respondents

In this study, 62% of the respondents were female while 38% were male as shown in figure 4.2. These findings can be attributed to cultural gender roles in most African communities. In this division of roles, women are tasked with care giving in the family. Therefore, women were more likely to be with children. The findings also suggest that majority of mothers remain at home while fathers go to work and that is why many mothers were available for the study.
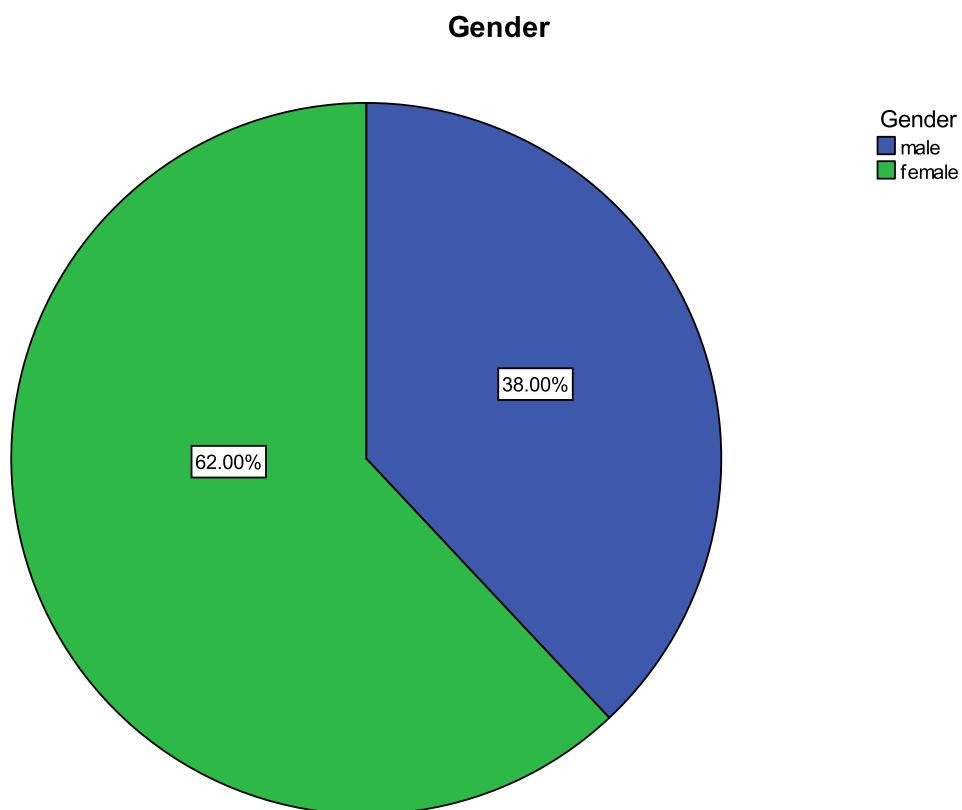
Gender

Figure 4.2: Gender of the respondents

4.2.3 Marital status of the respondents

As shown in Figure 4.3, 80% of the respondents were married, 18% single and 2.0% were either separated or divorced. This shows that most people prefer to have children in a marriage relationship. This is because those who get children out of wedlock are stigmatized as immoral and their children labeled as illegitimate in most African communities.
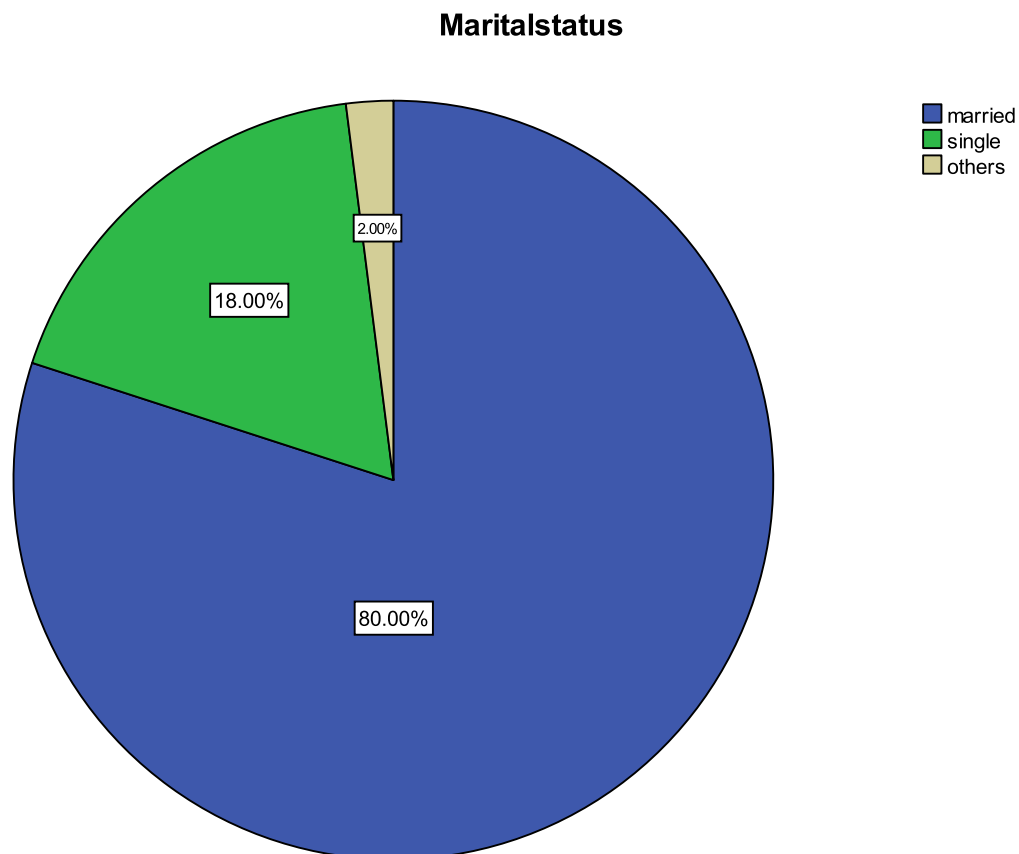
Maritalstatus

Figure 4.3: Marital status of the respondents

4.2.4 Level of formal education of the respondents

As shown in Figure 4.4**,** 16.0% of the respondents had primary level of education, 35.5% secondary, 41.5% tertiary and 7.0 % postgraduate. These findings can be attributed to the nature of the study site, which was within the urban set up. Urban areas are believed to offer more economic opportunities for those with various levels of formal education. Consequently, most people with formal education migrate from rural to urban areas in search of economic opportunities. This conforms to a study done by Walker, (2017) who found out that many people with tertiary level of education cluster in cities in search for jobs more than other levels.
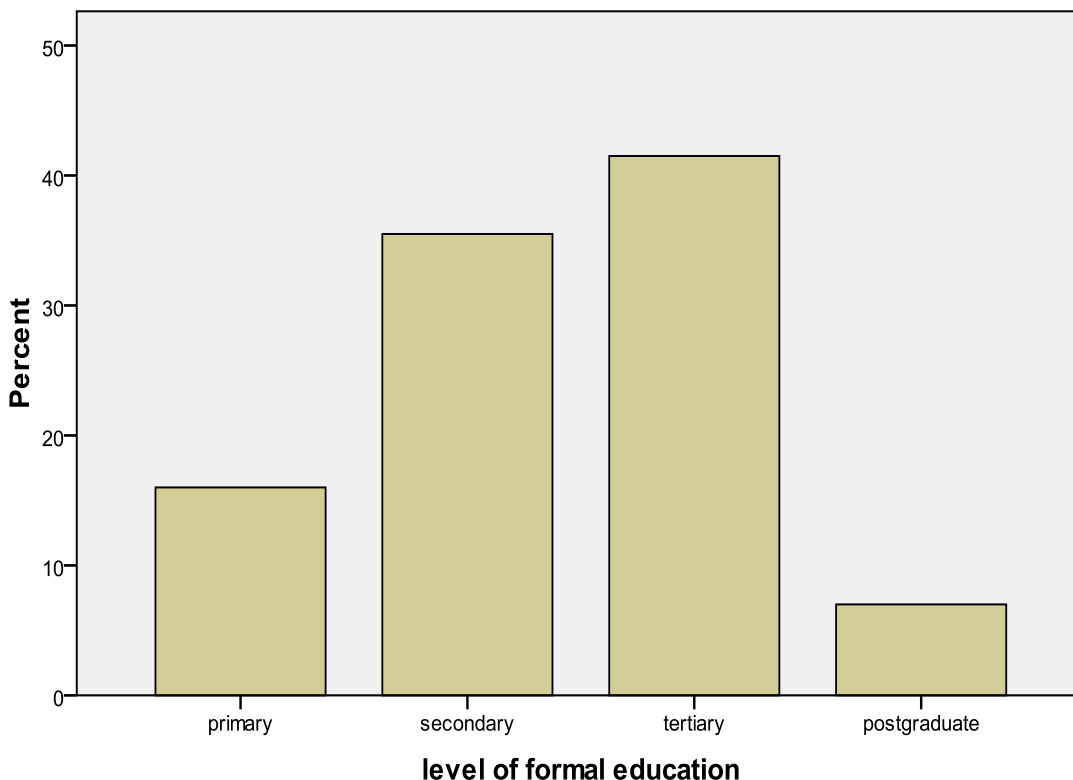
Figure 4.4: Level of formal education of the respondents

4.2.5 Occupation of the respondents

As shown in Figure 4.5, 43.5% of parents were formally employed while 54.5% of parents were informally employed. 2% of parents did not respond to this question. This was a clear indication that many parents were engaged in informal occupation such as small business like selling of vegetables. This concurred with a study done by Geofrey (2015) which showed that informal sector employed 77.9% of total population in Kenya.
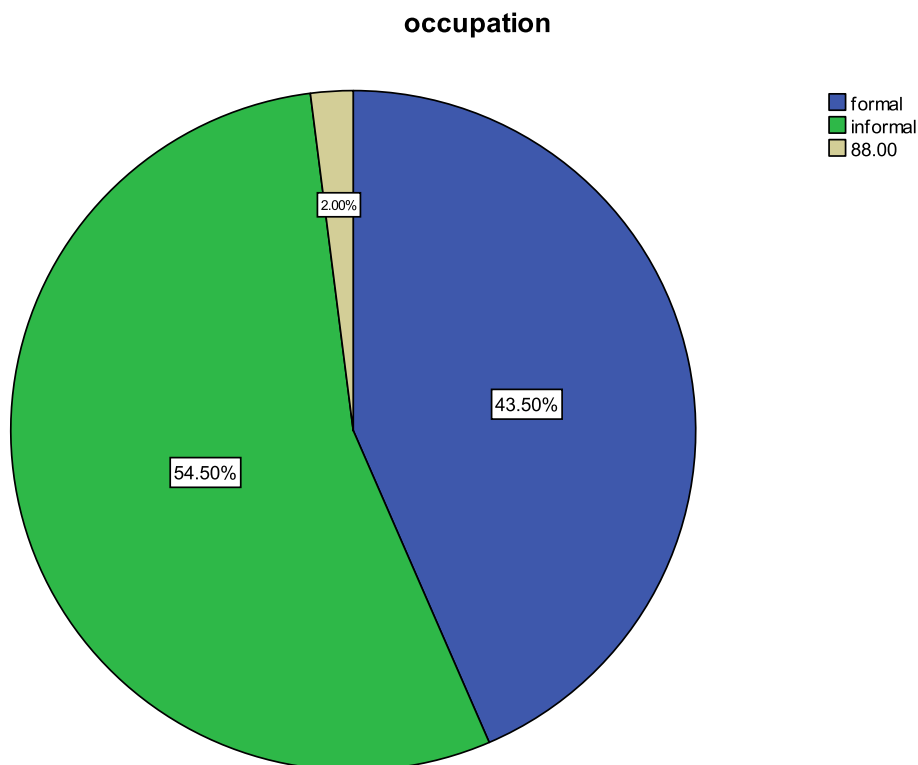
occupation

Figure 4.5: Occupation of the respondents

4.3 Parental Contextual Factors and Parenting Practices

Parenting practices are the specific behaviors that parents use to socialize their children or different activities parents engage in while trying to model children's behavior. The parenting practices covered in the study included: parent-child intimate relationship, parent-child communication, ways parent express child's bad behavior, parental permission for child to make own decision and Parental consideration of child's wishes.

4.3.1 Parental contextual factors and Parent- child intimate relationship

Parent –child intimate relationship has different components within itself that include parental attachment, monitoring, communication and involvement. According to Strohchein and Mathew (2015), children who receive parental support and encouragement are less likely to rebel against their parents. This type of interaction

between parents and their children creates an attachment that allows their children to feel that their parents care about them. Higgins, Jennings, and Mahoney (2009) acknowledged that when parental attachment decreases, there is high probability of children committing delinquent acts. However, Strohchein and Mathew (2015), point out that in order for children to refrain from taking part in deviant activities, their parents have to be physically present. This ensures parents keep an eye on what their children are doing thus monitoring.

As shown in Table 4.1, 71.5% of parents had an intimate relationship with their children while 28.5% did not. Among those who had intimate relationship, 21.5% did so through attention giving by talking with them, storytelling and assisting them in doing their homework. 20.5% did so through bonding by engaging in activities such as playing with them, taking them out, singing for them and doing house chores together. Lastly, 29.5% provided guidance to their children through sharing ideas, praying together and giving them advice. 28.5% of the parents who said they were not intimately related with their children said they were busy and did not have time for their children.

Table 4.1: Parent-child intimate relationship

Intimate	Frequency	Percent
Yes	143	71.5
No	57	28.5
Total	200	100.0

In this study parental age, gender, level of formal education and occupation had no influence on parent- child intimate relationship as shown in Table 4.2. However, marital status was found to have some influences. As noted, those who were single 13

(36.1%) reported to have parent -child intimate relationship and 23 (69.9%) did not. This shows that marital status in the family is important in cultivating parent-child intimate relationship. The study results showed that a big percentage of the single parents did not have parent-child relationship. This can be attributed to the fact that a single parent is entitled to all mother-father responsibility and creating good time for the children might be a challenge. This study concurs with study done by Pappa (2013) who found out that there was less parent-child intimate relationship between single and divorced parents in Greece. This has been realized in an African context as this study has reported.

Table 4.2: Parental contextual factors and parent-child intimate relationship

Variable	Category	RESPONSES		
		YES	NO	TOTAL
Parental Age	26-35	36(67.9%)	17(32.1%)	53 (100.0%)
	36-45	57(62.0%)	35(38.0%)	92(100%)
	46-55	33(86.8%)	5(13.2%)	38(100%)
	56-65	17(100%)	0(0%)	17(100%)
Parental gender	Male	51(67.1%)	25(32.9%)	76(100.0%)
	Female	92(74.2%)	32(25.8%)	124(100.0%)
Marital status	Married	126(78.8%)	34(21.3%)	160(100.0%)
	Single	13(36.1%)	23(63.9%)	36(100.0%)
	Others	4(100%)	0(0.0%)	4(100.0%)
Level of formal education	Primary	22(68.8%)	10(31.2%)	31(100.0%)
	Secondary	46(64.8%)	25(35.2%)	71(100.0%)
	Tertiary	63(75.9%)	20(24.1%)	83(100.0%)
	Post graduate	12(85.7%)	2(14.3%)	14(100.0%)
Occupation	Formal	68(78.2%)	19(21.8%)	97(100.0%)
	Informal	73(67.0%)	36(33.0%)	109(100.0%)

4.3.2 Parental contextual factors and Parent-child communication

According to Fiona (2014), parent and children communication is very important in influencing children behavior. For example, children who have poor communication patterns with their parents are more likely to become deviants or develop behavior problems. In this study, as shown in Table 4.3 93.5% of the parents said they were free to communicate with their children while only 6.5% were not. Those who were free to communicate with their children 56 % did so through face-to-face communication, use of mobile phone and holding informal discussions and 37.5% by engaging in fun exercises such as playing together, storytelling among others. Lastly, 6.5% of parents said they were not free to communicate with their children as they saw it not necessary.

Table 4.3: Parental Freedom of communication with children

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	187	93.5
No	13	6.5
Total	200	100.0

The study findings showed that parental contextual factors did not influence parent child communication as shown in table 4.4 below. This showed that parents communicate differently with their children and they understand the importance of such communication. What matters are the useful different ways parents can employ in communicating with their children.

Table 4.4: Parental contextual factors and parent-child communication

		Responses		
Variable	**Category**	**Yes**	**No**	**Total**
Parental Age	26-35	49(92.5%)	4(7.5%)	53(100.0%)
	36-45	84(91.3%)	8(8.7%)	92(100.0%)
	46-55	37(97.4%)	1(2.6%)	38(100.0%)
	56-65	17(100.0%)	0(0%)	17(100.0%)
Parental gender	Male	64(84.2%)	12(15.8%)	76(100.0%)
	Female	123(99.2%)	1(.8%)	124(100.0%)
Marital status	Married	149(93.1%)	11(6.9%)	160(100.0%)
	Single	34(94.4%)	2(5.6%)	36(100.0%)
	Others	4(100.0%)	0(0%)	4(100.0%)
Level of formal education	Primary	32(100.0%)	0(.0%)	32(100.0%)
	Secondary	62(87.3%)	9(12.7%)	71(100.0%)
	Tertiary	80(96.4%)	3(3.6%)	83(100.0%)
	Post graduate	13(92.9%)	1(9.1%)	14(100.0%)
Occupation	Formal	82(94.3%)	5(5.7%)	87(100.0%)
	Informal	101(92.7%)	8(7.3%)	109(100.0%)

4.3.3 Parental contextual factors and parental expression about child's bad behavior

Parental discipline is an important aspect of parenting and refers to strategies that parents use to discourage inappropriate behavior and to gain compliance from their children. Rachel (2016) asserts that many children have challenging behavior no matter what strategies you use. However, most children respond well to positive

behavior strategies and these needs to be the first step for parents in trying to help children. It is recommended that if parent feels that a child's behavior is out of control and they have done everything they can, then it is good to seek the help of a mental health professional. An important thing to remember is that generally behaviors whether positive or negative serve a purpose. The purpose or reason for the behavior is called the function. Therefore, parents are advised to conduct a functional behavior assessment to determine the function of problematic behavior and put strategies in place to prevent or alleviate the problem. Because children are often punished for their behavior without getting the tools to address their needs, punishment often leads to more behavior problems. The premise of positive behavior support is that, children are taught replacement skills and provided with a supportive environment to minimize the problematic behaviors rather than being punished as a way of deterring them.

Researchers found that parental cognitive ability to parent was the most significant factor in children's development than parental contextual factors (Allisa, 2011). This cognitive ability is the one which guides a parent to choose whether to express his/her feelings about child's behavior through physical punishment or through better ways like guiding and advising the child. This was in agreement with the current study which found out that there was no association between parental contextual factors and parental expression of child's bad behavior

As shown in Tables 4.5 97.5% of the parents communicated to children on their bad behaviors while only 2.5% did not. In communicating with their children about bad behavior 43% of the parents advised their children them, 38% physically punished their children, 7% used threats, and 9.5% gave warnings to the children. This showed

physical punishment was still high and many parents used punishment as a discipline strategy.

Table 4.5: Parental expression about child's bad behavior

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	195	97.5
No	5	2.5
Total	200	100.0

The cross tab results between parental contextual factors and parental expression about child's bad behavior revealed that there was no influence as per table 4.6. Many parents agreed to have expressed how they felt about child's bad behavior. The main concern is the ways they used for their expression. The study results showed that just a parent accepting on expressing their feelings was not enough but the ways he/she expressed is what matters. The study results showed that many parents still use unproductive ways like physical punishment, threats among others. This cut across all the parental contextual factors.

Table 4.6: Parental contextual factors and parental expression about child's bad behavior

Variable	Category	Responses Yes	No	Total
Parental Age	26-35	53(100.0%)	0(.0%)	53(100.0%)
	36-45	88(95.7%)	4(4.3%)	92(100.0%)
	46-55	37(97.4%)	1(2.6%)	38(100.0%)
	56-65	17(100.0%)	0(.0%)	17(100.0%)
Parental gender	Male	71(93.4%)	5(6.6%)	76(100.0%)
	Female	124(100.0%)	0(.0%)	124(100.0%)
Marital status	Married	155(96.9%)	5(3.1%)	160(100.0%)
	Single	36(100.0%)	0(.0%)	36(100.0%)
	Others	4(100.0%)	0(.0%)	4(100.0%)
Level of formal education	Primary	32(100.0%)	0(.0%)	32(100.0%)
	Secondary	71(100.0%)	0(.0%)	71(100.0%)
	Tertiary	78(94.0%)	5(6.0%)	83(100.0%)
	Post graduate	14(100.0%)	0(.0%)	14(100.0%)
Occupation	Formal	87(100.0%)	0(.0%)	87(100.0%)
	Informal	104(95.4%)	5(4.6%)	109(100.0%)

4.3.4 Parental contextual factors and parental permission for child to make own life decisions

Decision-making is one of the most important skills children need to develop to become healthy and mature adults. Decision-making is crucial because the decision children make dictate the path that their lives take. Imelda and Ireland (2011) assert that children and young people should be engaged in participatory decision-making processes throughout all stages of their development. Children's participation includes the opportunity for children to express their points of view and opinions and thus to influence decisions which may affect their lives. Engaging children in decision-making helps them in self-discovery, teaching responsibility and builds confidence.

When children make a good decision, they can gain the greatest amount of satisfaction and fulfillment because they chose it. When children make bad decisions, they may suffer for it, but they can learn from the experience and make better decisions in the future. Parent's responsibility is to guide them to make health decisions that enhance their psychological, social and physical wellbeing.

As shown in Table 4.7, 41% of the parents allowed children to make their own decisions while 59% could not allow them to do so. The reasons given by parents who could not allow their children to make their own decisions included; 46% said that they feared the children could make wrong decisions and 13% said they had the right to make decisions for their children thus they are the leaders of their children lives.

Table 4.7: Parental permission for child to make own decision

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	82	41.0
No	118	59.0
Total	**200**	**100.0**

The study results revealed that parental contextual factors did not influence parental permission for child to make own decision as shown in table 4.10. So this means allowing children to make decisions is not dependent on any parental contextual factors. This can be attributed to African culture whereby the parent is seen to have the final say about child's life. This is opposed to western culture whereby the parents understands the importance of allowing children to make their own decisions as they guide them. A study done by Imelda and Ireland (2011) showed that developed countries allow children to make decisions even pertaining to their health care and welfare. The parental contextual factors are not important in allowing children in

making decisions but the culture as noted it is hard for Africans to allow children to make their own decisions.

Table 4.8: Parental contextual factors and parental permission for child to make own decision

Variable	Category	Responses Yes	No	Total
Parental Age	26-35	23(43.4%)	30(56.6%)	5(100.0%)
	36-45	33(35.9%)	59(64.1%)	92(100.0%)
	46-55	15(39.5%)	23(60.5%)	38(100.0%)
	56-65	11(64.7%)	6(35.3%)	17(100.0%)
Parental gender	Male	22(28.9%)	54(71.1%)	76(100.0%)
	Female	60(48.4%)	64(51.6%)	124(100.0%)
Marital status	Married	59(36.9%)	101(63.1)	100.0%)
	Single	21(58.3%)	15(41.7%)	36(100.0%)
	Others	2(50.0%)	2(50.0%)	4(100.0%)
Level of formal education	Primary	11(34.4%)	21(65.6%)	32(100.0%)
	Secondary	23(32.4%)	48(67.6%)	71(100.0%)
	Tertiary	41(49.4%)	42(50.6%)	83(100.0%)
	Post graduate	7(50.0%)	7(50.0%)	14(100.0%)
Occupation	Formal	36(414%)	51(58.6%)	87(100.0%)
	Informal	44(40.4%)	65(59.6%)	109(100.0%)

4.3.5 Parental contextual factors and parental consideration of child's wishes

One of the most important parts of parenting is to discover true wishes of children and how to grant them such wishes. Although a child may be influenced by others on what choices to make, it is onus of the parent to guide them. This guidance must, however, be participatory. As shown in the table 4.9 below, 52.5% of the parents said they would consider child wishes while 47.5% did not. Those who considered the wishes of the children, 18% did so by allowing children to make their own choices while 28% guided children in making their wishes. The parents who could not allow their

children to make their wishes, 21% said they were the parents and they have the right to dictate what the child needs while 24% said they could not consider children wishes as the resources they had were scarce.

Table 4.9: Parent considering child wishes

Response	Frequency	Percentage
yes	105	52.5
No	95	47.5
Total	200	100.0

From the descriptive analysis in table 4.10, parental contextual factors did not have influence on parental consideration of child wishes. This can be due to the fact that in African culture, a parent is seen to be overall in child's life. Many parents irrespective of the contextual factors do not see the need to engage children while considering for their wishes. Getting children views on their wishes makes them to learn skills of independence at a tender age and this helps in solving many adult challenges. This is opposed to Western culture whereby a parent considers a child's wishes as planning for the family as reported by Imelda and Ireland, (2011) in their research.

Table 4.10: Parental Factors and Parental Consideration of Child Wishes

Variable	Category	Responses Yes	No	Total
Parental Age	26-35	23(43.4%)	30(56.6%)	53(100.0%)
	36-45	33(35.9%)	59(64.1%)	92(100.0%)
	46-55	15(39.5%)	23(60.5%)	38(100.0%)
	56-65	11(64.7%)	6(35.3%)	17(100.0%)
Parental gender	Male	37(48.7%)	39(51.3%)	76(100.0%)
	Female	68(54.8%)	56(45.2%)	124(100.0%)
Marital status	Married	88(55.0%)	72(45.0%)	160(100.0%)
	Single	16(44.4%)	20(55.6%)	36(100.0%)
	Others	1(25.0%)	3(75.0%)	4(100.0%)
Level of formal education	Primary	14(43.8%)	18(56.2%)	32(100.0%)
	Secondary	31(43.7%)	40(56.3%)	71(100.0%)
	Tertiary	53(63.9%)	30(36.1%)	83(100.0%)
	Post graduate	7(50.0%)	7(50.0%)	17(100.0%)
Occupation	Formal	48(55.2%)	39(44.8%)	87(100.0%)
	Informal	55(50.5%)	54(49.5%)	109((100.0%)

4.4 Contextual Factors and Parenting Styles

Parents often question whether or not they are raising their children in the best way possible and how to most effectively ensure their children turn out to have all of the tools to be successful in life. The different parenting styles employed by parents in their role of parenting include, authoritarian, authoritative, permissive, and neglectful. Authoritarian parenting puts more pressure on the child and presents the parents in a way that does not allow compromise, showing that their way is the only way possible. They engage in little mutual interaction with the children and expect them to accept adult's demands without any questions. They use power-assertive techniques of socialization such as threats, commands, physical force, love withdrawal which

restrain children's self-expression and independence (Zupancic, Podlesek, & Kavcic, 2004). Authoritarian parents are inclined to set high standards and guidelines and obedience is required. Authoritarian parents connect love with success and are not as nurturing as the other two styles of parenting (Berg, 2011) .Consequently, authoritative parenting focuses on developing a relationship with the child and one that is high in communication between both parties. They make logical demands, set limits and insist on children's compliance, whereas at the same time, they are warm, accept the children's points of view, and encourage the children's participation in decision-making and often seek their children's views in family considerations and decisions (Berg, 2011, Zupancic, Podlesek, & Kavcic, 2004).

Permissive parenting gives children free range and the parents give the child little guidance. A study showed that Parents have great influence in a child's life. They mould and shape their children into adults through their world of influence. This can be explained in terms of two components such as parental responsiveness and demandingness (Fletcher, Cook, Madison, & Bridges, 2008). They give children a high level of freedom and do not restrain their behaviors unless physical harm is involved. Permissive parenting exposes an overly tolerant approach for socialization with responsive and undemanding parenting behavior. They have little or no expectations for their children and often view their children as friends and have few limits imposed (Berg, 2011). Parental demandingness is the extent to which parents set guidelines for their children, and how their discipline is based on these guidelines. Parental responsiveness is the emotional characteristic of parenting. Responsiveness passes on to the degree to which parents support their children and attend their children's needs.

As shown in table 4.11 below, 49.5% of the parents were authoritative, 36.5% were authoritarian and 14% were permissive. The results showed that all these parenting styles cut across. As much as the most recommended parenting style is authoritative style, many parents are still practicing authoritarian and permissive style.

Table 4.11: Parenting Styles

Parenting style	Frequency	Percentage
Authoritative parent	99	49.5
Authoritarian parent	73	36.5
Permissive parent	28	14.0
Total	200	100.0

4.4.1 Parental age and parenting styles

The hypothesis tested here was stated as follows;

$H_{01:}$ **There is no statistical significant influence of parental age on parenting styles**

Lewin, Mitchell and Ronzio, (2013) carried out a study to find out if there is any relationship between the parenting styles and parental age. In order to understand the differences in maternal parenting styles and challenges based on the age of the mothers, they sought to examine mothers based on developmental maturity and found that there was a significant difference between all three groups of mothers. Even though the adolescent mothers had the highest rates of poverty and the lowest rates of maternal warmth and sensitivity, the emerging adult mothers had levels that were far lower than those of the adult mothers were. From his study, he concluded that age alone might not have a big influence on parenting styles unless when other factors like poverty are considered.

This was also realized in this study which showed there was no influence of parental age on parenting styles. This was confirmed by the study findings presented in table 4.12. From the results, between the ages of 26-35 years, 47.2% of parents practiced authoritative parenting styles, 37.7% and 15.1% authoritarian and permissive parenting style respectively. At the age of 36-45 years, 47.8% were authoritative parents, 41.3% authoritarian and 10.9% permissive. Between the ages of 46-55 years, 47.4% were authoritative parents, 34.2% authoritarian and 18.4% permissive. Lastly, between the ages of 56-65 years, 70.6% of parents practiced authoritative parenting style, 11.8% were authoritarian parents and 17.6% permissive parents. From these frequencies it can be deduced that there is no parental age which is more authoritative or authoritarian or permissive than the other. The three parenting styles cut across. This was also confirmed by Chi-square test (X^2 value 6.562 df6 significance .363) and Pearson's correlation (n=200; r=-.042; p=.559) as shown in table 4.13 and table 4.14 therefore the null hypothesis was accepted as there was no statistical significant influence of parental age on parenting styles.

Table 4.12: Parental Age and parenting styles

		Parenting styles			
Variable	**Category**	**Authoritative**	**Authoritarian**	**Permissive**	**Total**
Parental Age	26-35	25(47.2%)	20(37.7%)	8(15.1%)	53(100.0%)
	36-45	44(47.8%)	38(41.3%)	10(10.9%)	92(100.0%)
	46-55	18(47.4%)	13(34.2%)	7(18.4%)	38(100.0%)
	56-65	12(70.6%)	2(11.8%)	3(17.6%)	17(100%)

Table 4.13: Influence of parental age on parenting styles (Chi-square test)

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	6.562[a]	6	.363
Likelihood Ratio	7.385	6	.287
Linear-by-Linear Association	.343	1	.558
N of Valid Cases	**200**		

Table 4.14: Correlation between parental gender and parenting styles (Pearson's Moment correlation)

		Age	Parenting styles
Age	Pearson Correlation	1	-.042
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.559
	N	200	200
Parenting styles	Pearson Correlation	-.042	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.559	
	N	200	200

4.4.2 Parental gender and parenting styles

The hypothesis tested here was:

H$_{02}$: There is no statistical significant influence of parental gender on parenting styles

Uji, Sakamoto, Adachi, and Kitamura, (2014) asserts that there is less research available that investigates differences in perceptions of maternal and paternal parenting on the association between certain parenting styles and parental gender. This encouraged the researcher to investigate on this in Kenyan society. These researchers said that maternal parenting styles can differ from paternal parenting styles. Parents are often associated as being functional unit in which children are

raised, but both parents will often play different roles in child's life. In addition, studies done by Davis, Carlo, and Knight, (2014) in Japan showed that mothers were more authoritative than fathers who were authoritarian. Some mothers were also found to be permissive. They found that there was significant influence of parental gender on parenting styles. Baumrind (1991) simply notes that there is considerable convergence between mothers and fathers' ratings. Past research has demonstrated that the outcomes for children vary largely by the style of parenting they receive. Baumrind suggests that there may be a combination or complimentary of parenting styles for both parents. There can be an authoritative mother and authoritarian father. If the combination can be of two authoritarian parents then both persons will want to be in control of family decision-making. Similarly, if one parent is indulgent, the other may be more authoritarian or authoritative (Baumrind, 1991). In such cases, the mother is significantly more responsive than demanding, whereas the father is significantly more demanding than responsive.

The descriptive analysis in the table 4.15 shows that authoritative fathers were 34.2% (26) and mothers were 58.9% (73), fathers with authoritarian parenting style are 44.7% (34) and mothers 31.5% (39). Permissive fathers are 21.1% (16), mothers 9.7% (12). According to these findings, there is gender differences between parenting styles, specifically mothers, appear to be more authoritative versus fathers who have a high percentage of authoritarian style. There were high Percentages of permissive fathers than mothers.

As shown in tables 4.16 of chi-square test results (X^2 value 12.423[a] df2 significance .002)   and table 4.17 of Pearson Moment of correlation (n=200; r= -.245**; p=000). These results revealed that there was a strong negative relationship between gender and parenting styles. This is because male parents are significantly authoritarian

compared to female parents who are significantly authoritative. It conforms to the study done by Uji, Sakamoto, Adachi, and Kitamura, (2014) which also showed that maternal and paternal parenting styles are different as mothers are more authoritative and fathers authoritarian. The study revealed that gender influences parenting styles both in Western and African countries. Therefore, the null hypothesis which stated that there was no statistical significant influence of parental gender on parenting styles was rejected.

Table 4.15: Parental Gender and Parenting Styles

		Parenting styles			
Variable	**Category**	**Authoritative**	**Authoritarian**	**Permissive**	**Total**
Parental gender	Male	26(34.2%)	34(44.7%)	16(21.1%)	76(100.0%)
	Female	73(58.9%)	39(31.5%)	12(9.7%)	124(100.0%)

Table 4.16: Influence of parental gender on parenting styles (Chi-square test)

	Value	**df**	**Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)**
Pearson Chi-Square	12.423[a]	2	.002
Likelihood Ratio	12.520	2	.002
Linear-by-Linear Association	11.962	1	.001
N of Valid Cases	200		

Table 4.17: Pearson correlation of parental gender and parenting styles

		Gender	**Parenting styles**
Gender	Pearson Correlation	1	-.245[**]
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	200	200
Parenting styles	Pearson Correlation	-.245[**]	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	200	200

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

4.4.3 Parental marital status and parenting styles

The hypothesis tested in this part was stated as follows:

H03: There is no statistical significant influence of marital status on parenting styles

Benard and Teresa, (2015) investigated parenting styles of single and married mothers in Nairobi. They found that there were no significant differences between parenting styles of single and married mothers. Likewise, Roman, (2011) and Greitemeyer, (2009) found no significant differences parenting practices between single and married mothers in South Africa.

The findings from the current study showed that from the married parents, 51.9% were authoritative, 35% were authoritarian and 13.1% permissive. Results also revealed that of the single parents, 36.1% were authoritative, 47.2% were authoritarian and 16.7% permissive. Lastly of either separated or divorced 75% was authoritative and 25% permissive as shown in table 4.18.

This finding suggests that marital status of parents does not influence their parenting styles. This was also confirmed by chi-square (X^2 5.320 df4 significance .256) and Pearson's correlation n=200; r= .070; p< .05) in tables 4.19 and 4.20 respectively. This finding suggests that marital status of parents does not statistically influence their parenting styles and this led to acceptance of the null hypothesis.

Table 4.18: Parental Marital Status And Parenting Styles

		Parenting styles			
Variable	**Category**	**Authoritative**	**Authoritarian**	**Permissive**	**Total**
Marital status	Married	83(51.9%)	56(35.0%)	21(13.1%)	160(100.0%)
	Single	13(36.1%)	17(47.2%)	6(16.7%)	36(100.0%)
	Others	3(75.0%)	0(.0%)	1(25.0%)	4(100.0%)

Table 4.19: Influence of marital status on parenting styles (Chi-Square test)

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	5.320[a]	4	.256
Likelihood Ratio	6.671	4	.154
Linear-by-Linear Association	.986	1	.321
N of Valid Cases	200		

Table 4.20: Marital status and parenting styles Pearson's Moment of correlation

		Parenting styles	Marital status
Parenting styles	Pearson Correlation	1	.070
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.322
	N	200	200
Marital status	Pearson Correlation	.070	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.322	
	N	200	200

4.4.4 Parental Level of formal education and Parenting styles

The hypothesis tested in this part was stated:

H_{04}: **There is no statistical significant influence of level of formal education on parenting styles**

Recently, a growing number of studies looking at the relationship between the levels of education of parents and parenting styles have been done. Studies show that higher educated parents show more authoritative parenting style in comparison to the authoritarian and permissive parenting styles (Kiadarbandsari, Madon, & Hamson, 2016). They suggested that parents with higher education showed a positive authoritative style because the perceived self efficacy was expected to positively influence their parenting. These studies have been done in developed countries. This study sought to find out if it was the same case in African countries specifically in Kenya.

The study findings showed that parents with primary level education, 15.6% (5) were authoritative while 71.9% (23) were authoritarian and 12.5% (4) were permissive. Those with secondary level of education, 47.9% (34) were authoritative, 36.6% (26) authoritarian and 15.5% (11) were permissive. At tertiary level, 56.6% (47) were authoritative, 27.7% (23) authoritarian and 15.7% (13) were permissive. At postgraduate level, 92.7% (13) were authoritative, 7.1 % (1) authoritarian and no parent was permissive. This shows that the level of education had influence on parental styles. According to Cherry (2012), the most recommended parenting style is authoritative. The above percentages show that the higher the level of education the higher the percentage of authoritative parenting style. On the other hand, for the authoritarian parenting style, parents with primary level of education have the highest percentage compared to other levels. This shows that the higher the level of education the less percentage scores in authoritarian style as shown in table 4.21.

This was also further confirmed by chi-square results (X^2 value 31.946 df6 significance .000) in table 4.22 and Pearson's correlation (n=200; r=. -259**; p<=.000) in table 4.23. Therefore, null hypothesis was rejected.

Table 4.21: Parental Level of Formal Education and Parenting Styles

		Parenting styles			
Variable	**Category**	**Authoritative**	**Authoritarian**	**Permissive**	**Total**
Level of formal education	Primary	5(15.6%)	23(12.5%)	4(12.5%)	32(100.0%)
	Secondary	34(47.9%)	26(36.6%)	11(15.5%)	71(100.0%)
	Tertiary	47(56.6%)	23(27.7%)	13(15.7%)	83(100.0%)
	Post graduate	13(92.9%)	1(7.1%)	0(.0%)	14(100.0%)

Table 4.22: Influence of level of formal education on parenting styles (Chi-square test)

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	31.946[a]	6	.000
Likelihood Ratio	34.863	6	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	13.400	1	.000
N of Valid Cases	200		

Table 4.23: Pearson's moment of correlation of level of formal education and parenting styles

		Parenting styles	Level of formal education
Parenting styles	Pearson Correlation	1	-.259[**]
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	200	200
Level of formal education	Pearson Correlation	-.259[**]	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	200	200

4.4.5 Parental occupation and parenting styles

This part aimed to test the hypothesis stated below:

H$_{05}$: There is no statistical significant influence of occupation on parenting styles

Descriptive results shown in table 4.24 found out that 67.8% (59) parents in formal occupation practiced authoritative style, 23% (23) authoritarian and 5.8% (5) permissive. 33.9% (37) of parents in informal occupation were authoritative, 45% (49) authoritarian while 21.1% (23) permissive. Parents in formal employment have

stable income because they are assured of payment by the end of the month but those in informal occupation are not assured of their pay hence they might be facing poverty and lack enough resources and leads them to be harsh and set high rules for their children to follow hence being authoritarian.

This was a clear indication that occupation determines the kind of parenting style a parent employs in parenting process. This was further confirmed by chi-square (X^2 value 25.161 df4 significance .000) and Pearson correlation n=200; r=-.065**; p= .000 as shown in table 4.25 and 4.26 respectively. This was a strong negative relationship meaning that parents in formal occupation are more authoritative than parents in informal occupation and vice versa. This conforms to a study done by Ledia, Gezim and Fatbardha (2014) who found that parental occupation has influence on parenting styles. There study was done in Albania. Therefore the null hypothesis was rejected

Table 4.24: Parental Occupation and Parenting Styles

		Parenting styles			
Variable	**Category**	**Authoritative**	**Authoritarian**	**Permissive**	**Total**
Occupation	Formal	59(67.8%)	23(26.4%)	5(5.8%)	87(100.0%)
	Informal	37(33.9%)	49(45.0%)	23(21.1%)	109(100.0%)

Table 4.25 Influence of parental occupation on parenting styles (Chi-square test)

	Value	**df**	**Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)**
Pearson Chi-Square	25.161[a]	4	.000
Likelihood Ratio	26.518	4	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	.847	1	.357
N of Valid Cases	200		

Table 4.26: Pearson's correlation of parental occupation and parenting styles

		Parenting styles	occupation
Parenting styles	Pearson Correlation	1	-.065**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.359
	N	200	200
occupation	Pearson Correlation	-.065	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.359	
	N	200	200

4.5 Chapter Summary

This chapter presented data analysis for independent and dependent variables. It presented the results for the four tested hypotheses and the objectives for the study. Description for socio-demographic data such as parental age, parental gender, marital status, level of formal education and occupation was presented in frequency tables and charts. The study hypotheses were tested using chi-square to show the influence of parental contextual factors on parenting styles while Pearson correlation was also calculated to show the direction. The results for the study findings were all analyzed.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Introduction

This chapter summarizes the research findings and draws conclusion. In addition, it gives recommendations and suggestions for future study.

5.1 Summary of Major Findings and Discussions

This study investigated how parental contextual factors influenced parenting practices and styles. In particular, the study investigated the influence of parental age, gender, marital status, level of formal education and occupation on parenting practices. In addition, the study determined the relationship between parental age, gender, marital status, level of formal education and occupation and parenting styles.

5.1.1 Socio-demographic factors of the parents

From the study findings, the parents aged 26-35 years were 53 and 36-45 years were 92 with 26.5% and 46% respectively. Between the ages of 46-55 there were 38 parents and 56-65 years 17 parents with 19% and 8.5% respectively. This was an indication that many parents who are in town are aged between 36-45 years as we know this is the working age hence many people come to town to search for income. On gender there were 124 females and 76 males represented by 62% and 38% respectively. This can be attributed to the fact that females are the ones commonly staying with children as per the African culture when fathers go to work. On marital status, 80% (160) were married, 18% (36) single and 2 % (4) either separated or divorced. This showed that many people like to become parents while within the marriage institution. Level of formal education was the other factor. Primary level parents were 16% (32), secondary level 35.5% (71), tertiary level 41.5% (83) and

post-graduate 7 % (14). This was interpreted that many people found in towns were those with secondary and tertiary education. For the analysis of occupation, 43.5% (87) were formally employed while 54.5% (109) in informal employment. This showed that there is still a big challenge of formal employment in our country.

5.1.2 Contextual factors and parenting practices

The first objective aimed to establish if parental contextual factors influenced parenting practices. The parenting practices studied were: parent-child intimate relationship, parent-child communication, and parent expression of child's bad behavior, parental permission for child to make decisions and parent consideration of child wishes. The main parental contextual factors investigated were: parental age, parental gender, marital status, level of formal education and occupation. The summary of discussions was as follows;

5.1.2.1 Parental contextual factors and parent parent-child intimate relationship

The study findings showed that parental age, parental gender, parental level of formal education and parental occupation did not influence parenting. Parental marital status was found to influence parent child intimate relationship. Married parents had a good intimate relationship compared to single and either divorced or separated parents. This can be attributed to the fact that single parents have little time to spend with their children as they play both the role of a father and mother for their children. So they spend most of the time out.

5.1.2.2 Parental contextual factors and parent- child communication

Parent and children communication is very important in influencing children behavior. For example, children who have poor communication patterns with their parents are more likely to become deviants or develop behavior problems. The

study findings showed that parental age, parental gender, parental level of formal education and occupation did not influence parent-child communication. This can be due to the fact that parents use different ways of communicating to their children. There are those who bond with their children by playing together, going out with their children while others communicate directly to their children and others have story telling time with their children. The study realized that parental contextual factors had no association with parent-child communication.

5.1.2.3 Parental contextual factors and parental expression of child's bad behavior

A parent is a parent irrespective of the marital status, age, gender, level of formal education or occupation. Parental contextual factors appeared to have little or no impact on parental expression of child's bad behavior. Parental discipline is an important aspect of parenting and refers to strategies that parents use to discourage inappropriate behavior and to gain compliance from their children. However, most children respond well to positive behavior strategies and these needs to be the first step for parents in trying to help children. This study found out that there was no association between parental contextual factors and parental expression of child's bad behavior. This means that what matter most is whether a parent is equipped with the right skills and knowledge on better ways to express how one feels about the child's bad behavior or not.

5.1.2.4 Parental contextual factors and parental permission for child to make own decision

There is a growing trend towards acknowledging children's right to participate in matters that affect them and be involved in decision making. Many researches have

confirmed that many parents do not allow children to make their own decisions about life irrespective of the contextual factors. This was confirmed by this study which found out that a big percentage of the parents did not allow children to make own decisions. Thus the study results showed that parental contextual factors did not play a role in parents allowing children to make their own decisions. This can be attributed to the fact that parents irrespective of their age, gender, marital status, level of formal education and occupation do not understand the importance of allowing children to learn the skill of decisions making. Also they don't know that allowing children and guiding them in decision making helps them to learn to be independent at a tender age. Many parents are bound by African culture whereby children are viewed to be depended on their parents and parents have the final say about their lives.

5.1.2.5 Parental contextual factors and parental consideration of child wishes

Social policies have highlighted the need to listen to children about their wishes when decisions are being made about their care and welfare. The research aimed to look at if parental contextual factors have any influence on parents consideration of child's wishes especially while planning for the family. The results showed that all the parental contextual factors under study did not influence parental consideration of child's wishes. This can be due to the fact that parents feel they have the final say about a child's life irrespective of the parent's age, gender, marital status, level of formal education and occupation. Also it can be due to African culture which considers parents as active instruments in whole family and children as passive beings who needs to go by everything that a parent wants.

5.2.2 Contextual Factors and Parenting Styles

The second objective investigated in this study was aimed to find out if contextual factors influenced parenting styles. The contextual factors investigated were parental age, parental gender, marital status, level of formal education and occupation. The main discussions were as follows;

5.2.2.1 Parental age and parenting styles

The study found out that there was no relationship between parental age and parenting styles. The study showed that parents could employ any kind of parenting style irrespective of their ages. This can be concluded that what matters is if parents are knowledgeable on parenting styles. The result cut across all age brackets thus no age was more authoritative, authoritarian or permissive than the other.

5.2.2.2 Parental gender and parenting styles

The study results confirmed that parental gender influenced parenting styles. This showed that as one parent tends to be more authoritative, the other is authoritarian. Mothers were significantly more responsive than demanding whereas fathers were significantly more demanding than responsive.

5.2.2.3 Marital status and parenting styles

The study findings found out that marital status had no influence on parenting styles. There was no difference between married and unmarried parents and the parenting styles they applied in bringing up the children. It is therefore important that awareness to be made on different parenting styles and their impact on parenting.

5.2.2.4 Level of formal education and parenting styles

The study findings implied that there was an association between level of formal education and parenting styles. Parents with high education showed positive

authoritative style and those with lower education showed authoritarian style of parenting. The findings for this study showed that the higher the level of education the more authoritative a parent was and the lower the level of education the more authoritarian a parent was.

5.2.2.5 Occupation and Parenting Styles

The study findings showed that there was association between occupation and parenting styles. Parents in formal occupation tended to be more authoritative than parents in informal occupations who turned out to be more authoritarian. This could be due to the fact that formal occupation has stable income and thus parents in this occupation experience less stress as they are assured of pay by the end of the month hence low levels of poverty. Poverty is mostly associated with authoritarian parenting style. Parents in informal occupation are not assured of pay by the end of the month and also many run small businesses which might not produce enough for the family hence high levels of poverty rendering them to be less authoritative.

5.2 Conclusions

In conclusion, parenting which constitute of parenting practices and styles plays a very important role in development of children. Parenting practices which constitute of parent-child intimate relationship, parent child communication, parent's expression of child's bad behavior, parental permission for child to make their own decisions and considering children wishes were not influenced by parental contextual factors (age, level of formal education, and occupation) except parent- child intimate relationship which was influenced by marital status. However, parenting styles namely authoritative, authoritarian and permissive were influenced by parental contextual factors namely parental gender, level of formal education and occupation. Parental age and marital status did not have any influence. Therefore the study

concludes that, parental gender, level of formal education and occupation are important ingredients in facilitating adoption of the best parenting style that enhance good parenting and positive child development.

5.3 Recommendations

Based on study findings, the following recommendations were made:

1. Parents should be educated by professionals in parenting such as professional counselors, policy makers, and child rights experts among others on effective parenting practices and how parental contextual factors such as their age, gender, marital status and socio-economic status can affect their parenting roles.

2. There is need to integrate parental contextual factors with parenting styles for effective parenting.

3. The study also recommends that the government to put in place different institutions where all parents can be educated in order to gain knowledge on effective parenting even before one becomes a parent as this will help one to understand what is required of him/ her as a parent.

5.4 Recommendations for Further Research

Finally, the researcher investigated the influence of parental contextual factors on parenting practices and parenting styles and acknowledges that this research is not the end to parental contextual factors influencing parenting practices and parenting styles. It is recommended that further researcher should be undertaken for the betterment of the education of all parents.

A future research can be done under the following areas:

1. To include children in the study as this study only concentrated on parents

2. To investigate relationship between parenting practices and parenting styles.

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APPENDICES

Appendix I: Informed Consent Letter

School of Arts & Social Sciences

Department of sociology & Psychology

Moi University,

Box 3900,

ELDORET, KENYA.

Dear Respondent,

RE: <u>INFORMED CONSENT LETTER</u>

I am a student at Moi University, currently pursuing a Master of Science degree in counseling psychology. I am conducting a research titled **"Influence of Parental Contextual Factors on Parenting Practices and Styles among Parents in Eldoret, Kenya".** You have been identified as a respondent in this study. Kindly provide the information that has been requested. Any information given will be used for this study only and will be treated with utmost confidentiality. Please provide accurate and sincere information. You are free to contact the researcher in case of any challenges

Yours Sincerely

Cecilia Seba
0729976560
(Researcher)

Appendix II: Biographical Form

In this form you are requested to provide personal information. Please respond to the items in this form by putting a tick (✔) in the appropriate box and by filling in the spaces provided.

How old are you? 15-25 years ☐ 26-35 years ☐ 36-45 years ☐

46-55 years ☐ 56-65 years ☐ over 65 years ☐

What is your gender? Male ☐ Female ☐

Please state your marital status: married ☐   single ☐

Others specify _____

State your level of formal education: i. primary ☐

ii. Secondary ☐

iii. Tertiary ☐

iv. Postgraduate ☐

State your form of Occupation: _____

Appendix III: Parenting Practices Parents Questionnaire

<u>**SECTION A: ANSWER ALL THE QUESTIONS**</u>

1.   Do you spend warm and intimate times together with your child/children?
Yes ☐ No ☐

If yes how?

If no, why?

Are you free to communicate with your child? Yes ☐   No ☐

If yes, through which means?

If no why?

2. Do you take your child's wishes into considerations before you ask him/her to do something? Yes ☐ No ☐

If yes how?

If no why?

3.   Do you allow your child to make his own decisions? Yes ☐ No ☐

If yes, what kind of decisions?

If no why?

4.   Do you make your child understand how you feel about his/her bad behavior?
        Yes ☐ No ☐

If yes how?

If no why?

Appendix IV: Parenting Styles Parents Questionnaire

Respond to the items in this questionnaire by ticking (✔) in the bracket according to how you feel the statement applies to you.

Agree (A) – if it does apply to you.

Disagree (D) – if it does not apply to you

ITEMS	Agree	Disagree
1. I criticize my child in order for him/her to improve his/her behavior		
2. I praise my child when he/she does well		
3. I consider my child's preferences when planning for the family		
4. I use threats as form of punishment with little or no justification		
5. I find myself struggling to try to change how my child thinks or feels		
6. I discipline my child by pointing out his/her past behavioral problems to make sure he/she will not do them again		
7. I keep on reminding my child that I am his/her parent and all things I am doing are for him/her		
8. I find it difficult to discipline my child		
9. I ignore my child's behavior		
10. I side with my child when he/she is in wrong		
11. I threaten to punish my child and then do not punish him/her		

Appendix V: Research Permit

THIS IS TO CERTIFY THAT:
MS. CECILIA NGUNYA SEBA
of MOI UNIVERSITY, 4244-30100
ELDORET,has been permitted to conduct
research in *Uasin-Gishu County*

on the topic: *CONTEXTUAL FACTORS
AFFECTING PARENTING AND CARINF
RELATIONSHIPS*

for the period ending:
21st September,2018

Permit No : NACOSTI/P/17/47316/19167
Date Of Issue : 21st September,2017
Fee Recieved :Ksh 1000

....
**Applicant's
Signature**

....
**Director General
National Commission for Science,
Technology & Innovation**

Appendix VI: A Map of Eldoret Showing Kapsoya and Huruma Estate

Eldoret Town

KAPSAOS

KILIMANI

KAMUKUNJI

SIGOT

HURUMA

KAPSOYA

LANGAS

3   0   3   6 Kilometers

69