

**PARENTAL REGULATION OF CHILDREN EXPOSURE TO INTERNET AT AN
UPMARKET RESIDENTIAL AREA IN NAIROBI COUNTY –**

BY

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DECLARATION

DECLARATION BY CANDIDATE

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this thesis to my family, friends and supervisors who stood by me throughout the study.

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ABSTRACT

The internet has the prospective to offer children and youths a wide collection of opportunities to learn, to develop different skills, to be in touch with friends and for entertainment purpose. At the same time, the Internet also offers new risks including Internet addiction, cyber bullying and exposure to inappropriate content such as pornography. Technology has opened ways for paedophiles to contact children through social networks, chatrooms or even on their mobile phones to begin conversations that lure them to join indecent forums on the internet. This study sought to investigate parents' awareness of risks associated to children's exposure to internet and the strategies that they use to regulate children's use of internet. The study took place at an up market residential area in Nairobi, Kenya. The study adopted a mixed approach involving quantitative and qualitative techniques. A survey involving 200 families was conducted to explore parental awareness of risks associated with children's internet access. Thereafter, six focus group discussions were conducted with families selected through purposive sampling technique from those who had participated in the survey. Focus group discussions aimed to understand the everyday practices in children's exposure to internet and the experiences of parents in attempting to regulate what children access. Findings of the study suggest that even though majority of the parents knew the kind of danger that their children were exposed to online, there was a general lack of knowledge on how to determine relevant content for their children, and how to regulate their access to internet. Parents experienced challenges regulating younger children's exposure to internet in situations where their older siblings had internet-enabled mobile devices. It was also established that children had adopted strategies that would make it difficult for parents to monitor what they were accessing on the internet. Some parents, however, indicated that they regularly guide and advise their children on what was appropriate/not appropriate in the internet. The study recommends that parents be educated on the need and the strategies of regulating their children's access to internet.

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OPERATIONAL TERMS

Court -In this study refers to a gated community either staying in apartments or houses that are situated in one compound under a central management.

Children - In this context are children between the ages of 8-14 years

Online Activities -Exposure to Internet contents

Internet -Is a term used to refer to connectivity to a network through which users can electronically share information from one device to another.

Internet Risks-Includes risks such as pornography, sexual exposure, crimes cyber bullying, theft identity among others

Teenagers Refers to children between the ages of twelve to nineteen

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ISP	- Internet Service Providers
IRCs	- Internet Relief Chats
IM	- Internet Messages
UNICEF	-United Nations Children’s Fund
ICT	- Information Communication technologies
SPSS	- Statistical Package for Social Sciences

CEOP	-Child Exploitation and online protection
DCMS	- Department for culture media and sports
CAK	- Communication Association of Kenya
SPSS	- Statistical Package for Social Science
FGD	- Focus Group Discussion
CIPA	-Children Internet Protection Act
ICAC	- Internet Crimes against Children
OJJDP	- Juvenile Justice & Delinquency Prevention
COPPA	- Children Online Privacy Protection Act
ODE	- Online Disinhibition Effect

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Overview

In this Chapter, I present the overall introduction to the study. I start with the background to the study which helps in giving the setting of my study both geographically and conceptually. It is followed by the statement of the problem whereby I present the issue that prompted me to do a practical study on parental guidance to children exposure to internet. Subsequently, I provide my research questions, scope, limitations and significance of the study. The chapter ends with a brief summary of the chapter.

1.1. Background of the study

This study is about parents' regulation of children's' internet use. This study is based on media studies, a sub-discipline on field of Communication Studies. Specifically, this study is situated in the area of media effects. In this field, the issues that have mainly been explored in research are the social, cultural and psychological effects of media content and use (Collins et al. 2004). The number of Internet users and the variety of information found on the network have grown dramatically in the last decade. The Internet has absolutely changed the nature of communications globally. People use internet in chat rooms, post and read messages in social networking sites and write and interact with blogs. They also join in other online activities, including games (Livingstone &Bober, 2006).

According to Gordon Alexander, the Director UNICEF Office of Research Innocenti, most children are very contented using computers and mobile devices and are fascinated by the information and images that can be explored at the click of a mouse. What's more children gradually do not need to be in the company of a responsible adult in order to use a computer (UNICEF, 2011).

In many countries the risks of mobile internet use and social networking has also received attention, these includes developing countries where computer and broadband internet use is low but access to mobile phones is high (Beger, Hoveyda, & Sinha, 2011). The internet provides an interactive environment, especially for children who are frequently enthusiastic partakers in social media platforms, and are also inventors of content across different services available to them. As such, internet policy has to address questions of conduct initiated by children themselves, where children's behaviour has led to new areas of risk and potential harm. Cyber harassment and cyber bullying, arising mainly out of communication between peers has attracted substantial attention as a persistent and at times intractable aspect of young people's online behaviour (Erdur-Baker, 2010).

The non-regulatory approach to children internet safety has been the emphasis on awareness-raising and education. Training of young internet users is acknowledged as essential to empowering users and encouraging safer and more responsible online behaviour. Awareness-raising campaigns, with both public and private sector input have been widely used to draw attention to issues of security and safety, while promoting specific safety messages regarding online use. Educational support in partnership with

national education systems is seen as vital to improving levels of digital literacy and encourages self-governing discipline on the part of children (Eurydice, 2009).

Formulating rights and formal limits to the use of Internet by children is a challenging task, for instant setting the age for the acquisition of right as described by UNICEF is a complex matter that must balance the concept of the child as a subject of rights, whose evolving capacities must be respected with the concept of the State's obligation to provide special protection as stated by Dr Ellen Helsper, associate professor in media and communications at the London School of Economics. He believes that research on children's online access must aim to inform regulators about appropriate legislation. However, a common law is almost impossible because the impact of the internet is not uniform for all users this is influenced by socio-economic background, psychological characteristics, location and education influence on how children and different cultural practices are affected by online material (Lise, 2011).

Online interactions present new types of relationships across time and space, which would not be possible in the offline world. It therefore becomes very easy for identities to be hidden or misrepresented, making accountability and track back difficult. Government and industry sponsored structures are designed to provide various kinds of protection to children online. These include age-rating classification schemes, filtering systems to block unsuitable or harmful content, formulation of laws and acts among others, in attempt to facilitate the fostering of trust in the Internet communication (Lise, 2011).

The Communications Decency Act, 1996, was possibly the first legislative action by the US government to regulate content on the Internet. It was aimed at protecting children from inappropriate content on the Internet and the Act restricted speech of adults which, ironically in the real world would have been perfectly legal. Naturally, in due course, the Act was deemed by the Supreme Court as imposing 'impermissible burden' on the free expression rights of adults and hence, was ruled out as unconstitutional. The Communication Decency Act was followed by the Children's Online Privacy Protection Act of 1998 (COPPA), which regulates collection of personal information by persons or entities from children below 13 years of age. It also provides guidelines and rules for designing privacy policies, which a website operator must follow when designing a site that could be used by minors and stipulates when and how to seek verifiable consent from a parent or guardian to protect children's privacy and safety online.

In the United States of America, the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA) aims to protect children from obscene or harmful content over the Internet in schools and libraries. All institutions that receive grants and discounts for Internet through the E-rate program are subjected to CIPA, which ensures that children using the internet in these places are not exposed to obscene material, child pornography and harmful messages. Organizations under the CIPA are required to aggressively monitor the online activities of users and educate children about appropriate online behaviour, including ethics to be followed during exchanges with others on social media. It is encouraging to note that the Federal government of USA extensively funds task forces to support state and local law enforcement in protecting children against Internet crimes with positive outcome. For instance between April and May 2015, Internet Crimes Against Children (ICAC) task

forces, funded by the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP), arrested 1,140 child predators from 41 states in an operation *called* "Operation Broken Heart". The task forces have delivered more than 2,200 presentations on Internet safety to more than 186,000 youth and adults during those two months (Bailey,2007).

With all these efforts the fit of Internet into the current system of jurisdiction continues to remain ambiguous in many countries, including America, and Internet users do not have a unified set of rules or laws to live by.To position the issue of parental regulation of children internet access into perception, a detailed background is provided below.

1.1.1 Research on internet effects on Children

Arguably the internet poses a much greater risk and damage to children than television, movies or music. This is because the major media such as television are at least identifiable and are subject to some pressure and legislation. Even though many companies that provide internet access seek to provide subscribers with safe experiences, it's not possible to monitor everyone on the online world like the rest of society. Some people may be hateful, detestable, or even exploitative, as a result of this children can be targets of crime and harassment on the web and thus the need for parental supervision and consistent advice (UNICEF, 2011). The words "harmful" and "offensive" can be interpreted in many ways. In this research we will use these terms to deal with pornography, profanity, hate speech and related threats. Among the kinds of risks children face on the internet are exposures to materials that is sexual, hateful or violent or that encourages dangerous or illegal activity (Oswell,2008). Guides provide resources for parents to maximize the benefits of internet for children and minimize the dangers. For

that reason there is need to understand the strategies of mediation that parents practice in regulating their children's Internet use with a view of developing an effective intervention in order to protect children.

Studies of children and media have concluded that parents play a crucial role in mediating the negative effects of internet content (Van, 2002). The rapid growth on internet occurred with minimal control of content. Media surround children and young people in the modern household and in most times parents seem engaged in a constant battle with their children as they seek to balance the educational and social advantages of media use and the negative effects that some content of mediated contact might have on children's attitudes, behaviour or safety. Though parents assume media affect other people's children more than their own (Carlson 2010). They try to regulate their children's media use hoping to maximize the advantages of today's media-rich environment for their children and to minimize the disadvantages. Among the kinds of risks children face on the internet are exposures to materials that is sexual, hateful or violent or that encourages risky or illegal activity. In most instances physical molestation develops as a result of children providing information or arranging a face-to-face meeting with people they have connected with on the internet.

Harassment and bullying of children's mostly accounted online by receiving messages that are aggressive or demeaning, or when down loading a file that contains a computer-damaging virus or allows a hacker to gain access to the computer which potentially jeopardizes the family's privacy and safety. To limit such risks there's no substitute for parental involvement and supervision. Open communication about children's online

activities is important in technology, while it is not a complete solution but can provide some support (Oswell, 2008).

While the online world has opened up countless opportunities to expand our experiences and social networks, it has also created new risks and threats. Psychosocial problems that young people confront offline overlap with their negative online experiences (Comstock & Scharrer, 2009). When considering the risks of Internet usage, attention should be paid to the problems young people may encounter offline. Ideally, the media and communication environment has become increasingly difficult for governments to regulate and so hitherto private activities of parents are becoming more appreciated within public policy frameworks, especially those concerned with protecting children from media-related harm (Van, 2002). This is broadly consistent with the theorization of parental mediation in terms of the family system, for this view parental mediation strategies represent ways in which the family reproduces its values in the face of ensuring children's safety (Nikken & Jansz, 2006).

Young adults and children can easily be soothed into a false sense of security and in the sense that they may compromise their safeguard about the type of information they post. While these networks may be desirable to the anonymity of chat rooms and Instant Messages, parents still need to be watchful. The exceptional amount of personal information accessible on social networking and blogging sites makes them a perfect spot for people who could prey on youngsters. This can occur physically by luring them into a meeting in person or by exposing them to unsuitable content, cyber bullying or committing identity burglary (Ritchie & Fitzpatrick, 1990).

1.1.2 Internet as a Media of Communication

Internet is used as a communication tool for mainly three purposes thus for sharing information, for educational purposes and entertainment. Internet educates by improving technology and information to essential skills used to solve problems and by communicating with others and meeting a growing demand for these skills in the workplace and learning institutions. When it comes to entertainment people share interesting and enjoyable experiences in order to learn and have fun together, according to the study done by (Mitchell, 2007) in Kenya whose study trends between 2000 to 2005 it indicates that more people are turning to the internet and away from TV and movies. It shows that 56 percent of the respondents stated that they were on the internet more than a year ago and 49 per cent spend more time accessing social media for fun. On the Internet currently, there are a variety of games to choose from and the majority of them are free. Shopping online is fun and beneficial since one can find items that are not available in stores (Warren, 2005).

Internet users take advantage of email usage, Instant Messaging and chats (Livingstone & Bober, 2005). Through email the internet has replaced a large amount of the postal service because of the speed and convenience by which communication is made possible that is preferred by many people. For instance, in lieu of educational purposes, email has been an important tool by which instructors at the elementary and secondary level use. It has been used to assist students maintain a closer contact with instructors at all levels of education (Wolak, 2007).

According to Gordon Alexander, the Director UNICEF Office of Research Innocenti, internet is a quite useful tool in communication however the abusive use of internet images is threatening effective development and growth of children. It is said to be luring and grooming children to sexual conversations as well as abuse by adult offenders who bully and harass children online (UNICEF, 2011). There is no doubt that the Internet has numerous opportunities and benefits for children in terms of its impact on their educational attainment and social inclusion. However, it has also exposed children to dangers that defy age, geographic scene and other boundaries that are more clearly defined in the real world.

The need to regulate the children's media usage is however significant in the today's advanced information and communication technologies (ICTs) environments. Therefore, as pointed out by Alex Gakuru, Chairman ICT Consumers Association of Kenya, this requires a collective responsibility to protect the children from negative Internet usage that requires the involvement of policymakers, law enforcement agencies, social workers, teachers, parents and the private sector to systematically protect children (ICT daily newsletter 2014). Most children try comfortably navigating the Internet and are able to avoid risks, however children should be allowed to express their views on how to mitigate risks and be listened to and empowered to safely exploit the benefits of the Internet.

1.2 Statement of the problem

There is a growing online connectivity of children and young people to date and the levels of Internet access are high in the industrialized world, although low and middle-

income countries are fast catching up (Nikken & Jansz, 2006). Internet usage is changing with mobile phones becoming a significant source of access. The statement of the problem is children accessing internet without being regulated therefore risk being victims of cyber bullying, internet crimes hence there is need for parental regulation to minimize dangers associated to internet. A key dimension of the growth of online activity is that children and young people are participating in learning from and creating an environment that in many parts of the world still remains unknown and unfamiliar to their parents. There are concerns that greater access and exposure to electronic media can have harmful implications, including potentially weakening parental capacity to understand children's experiences or to offer effective protection and support. While the generational divide around Internet usage is beginning to narrow in the industrialized world, the gap between children and parents in Internet use in the developing countries remains significant (Livingstone, 2010).

The advancement in information and communication technologies has much opportunities and benefits to young people. However, its extreme exposure to the children is posing danger to this future generation. The abusive use of internet images is threatening effective children's development and growth. The problem is whether parents know the kind of danger that their children are exposed to online, in the absence of effective clear regulatory framework. In relation to this, there is the likelihood that in countries where children are more reliant on Internet access through mobile phones, there seems to be less regulation, less opportunity for reporting and in most cases little overall investment in building a protective environment (Aslanidou & Menexes, 2008). However, this depends on types of activities that children are involved in while online,

they can still be exposed to dangerous environment online which jeopardizes their safety. Reasons why children do not look to their parents for protection from online harm include children's beliefs that their parents do not understand the world in which the abuse takes place and their fear of having mobile phones taken away, or Internet access being restricted for fear of threats by the abuser or shame and degradation. Parents may insist on safety of their children; however children may feel their privacy being interfered with since they do not want adults interfering with their internet use. Puberty tends to be a developmental stage in children that involves exploratory behaviour and pulling away to a degree from parents thus the youth perceive parental presence and involvement in their social space as interruption (Nikken & Jansz, 2006).

A study done by UNICEF in Kenya in 2012 whose objective was to assess issues of digital access to young people and their knowledge and emerging practices, showed mobile penetration was over 75 per cent and Internet penetration stood at 20 per cent. Technology has opened ways for paedophiles to contact children through social networks, chatrooms or even on their mobile phones to begin conversations that lure them to join indecent forums on the internet. Reports recently highlighted from the local media namely the Daily Nation newspaper on the extradition case of a Kenyan wanted in the US for operating an Internet-based child pornography syndicate illustrates how in Kenya there are limited laws that specifically apply to online abuse that is the reason why the victim was not charged here in Kenya. There is need therefore for specific laws to be enacted on online sexual exploitation of children. The public also needs more awareness on the dangers posed by the Internet, especially on children (Oswell, 2014).

Along with offering a fascinating new way to connect with the world, the Internet also offers new risks including Internet addiction, cyber bullying and exposure to inappropriate material including pornography and security threats as a result of revealing too much personal information (Livingstone al 2006). The most addictive sites are said to revolve around pornography, entertainment, relationships and social networking. Some of these sites could be harmful, especially to young people and it is important for children to have set restrictions when accessing information from the Internet. The problem is whether parents are playing a greater role of regulating their children to be able to understand the dangers their children are exposed to and lastly most studies are limited on the initial stages of internet with the current evolution there's need for additional and more recent studies to be done to complement the recent changes.

1.3 Objective of the Study

The aim of the study was to find out whether parents are aware of the risks associated with children unregulated exposure to internet.

1.4 Research Questions

To achieve this, I posed the following questions:

1. What do parents know about the risks of children's unregulated exposure to internet?
2. What strategies do parents use to regulate children access to internet?
3. What challenges do parents experience in mediating children's access to internet?

1.5 Scope of the Study

The study investigated the extent to which parents were aware of the risks that their children are exposed to while online. This aimed at finding out how parents were regulating their children online activities and the challenges that they encountered.

The study also investigated the online experiences of children between the ages of 8-14 years this aimed at finding out the challenges that they encounter. I was also concerned with whether parents co-view the online contents with their children, if the time spent at home together with the children enhances parental regulation on children exposure to internet and whether family interaction patterns promote or lowered parental online regulation.

The researcher carried out the study at an up market residential area in Nairobi County in Kenya. Specifically, the study was carried out in 20 courts. I selected 10 families in each court making a total of 200 families. In the first phase of the study, I targeted 200 households who have access to internet. In the second phase of the study, I carried six focus group discussions. I specifically targeted three focus groups for parents who have teenage children and the other three focus groups for children between ages 8-14 years. This was achieved by use of a mixed approach. In the first phase of this approach which was the quantitative phase, I administered researcher-based questionnaires to 200 households within the 20 courts in this first phase the parents of teenager children were required to fill the questionnaires. The manner in which participants answered the questions led me to the second phase which was the qualitative phase. In this phase, I did purposive sampling based on the demographic data obtained from the questionnaires. The researcher also focused on group discussions for both parents and children. The study

was carried out for over a period of 5 months. This is discussed in detailed in Chapter Three.

1.6 Limitation of the study

At the beginning confidentiality was a concern since most of the respondents were not ready to answer the questionnaires as required and give subjective information. The confidentiality strategy was to halt many respondents from revealing much information about the study problem and this could have resulted to sampling errors thus affecting the results of the study. I however gave an introduction letter that detailed the purpose and intention of the study which enabled most of the respondents to confidently avail much information about the study problem. In addition, I sought permission from relevant authority to administer questionnaires to the respondents.

Due to overwhelming duties to respondents, some parents were held up with key duties of the day or attending to emergency activities in the households while others at work. However, I gave them ample time before collecting the questionnaires. Reference materials for secondary data were a challenge since the internet has diversified with less recent research carried out, most of the research dwelt on the initial stages of internet evolution. The researcher evaluated the opinions of the family heads and children in the up-market residual estate of Nairobi and also referred to related research and journals.

Another limitation was the fact that in the qualitative phase of this study, some participants pulled out of the study due to conflicting schedules. To counter this, I did

more follow-ups with the participants who participated in the study to ensure that they found suitable time to participate.

1.7 Justification of the study

The justification of this study lies in the fact that very few investigational studies have been conducted in Kenya that examines parents' awareness on risks that children encounter online. This study makes a contribution to the literature and largely to the study of regulation for children's safety on internet. The study also intends to create awareness amongst the children and the parents so that they are aware about threats brought through internet exposure. In this regard there is need for certain online information to be regulated due to regional and international laws. A balance is needed between Internet regulation policies and freedom of Internet access, which can be found by conducting carefully, designed surveys at a national level.

This area of study has seen intense growth since the inception of internet in Kenya, unfortunately less has been done to examine the state of parental regulation knowledge and its implications on children's exposure to inappropriate activities. Also there are hardly any investigations into Kenyans' on children's exposure to internet, and their perceptions on their parents' mediation styles, yet these advisories are meant for them, so the findings of this study lay the groundwork for future studies in this area. With the contribution of this study to the literature, future researchers can now continue looking at the value of having children's voice in regulation of internet exposure.

There's need to develop adequate protective mechanisms to support safe internet use for children. Thus to support children with the management of 'harmful' or 'inappropriate' material online, whether that's through creation of safe environments by parents, or parents providing support through the use of available tools to enable children and young people to manage risks at different ages.

A number of studies on media effects have focused on television, whereas internet is generally diversifying being a fast growing media of choice for many people including children, this fast growth of internet and internet platforms such as mobile internet exposes children to many dangers, hence the need to come up with a mitigation strategy. Hence when thinking about adolescence and these new technologies, there is need to consider how this vital process of exploration and experimentation takes place over the internet and in cases where children and young people seek out access to age restricted material and experiences such as movie designed for adults, there is need to put in place protection aimed at their vulnerabilities (Mitchell and Savill-Smith, 2004)

1.8 Significance of the study

This study reveals what parents know about parental regulation of children's exposure to online activities and their views on the risks associated to this kind exposure. Some parents do not understand the extent to which the current danger poses to their children

and are therefore faced with difficulty in regulating their children since they have limited knowledge in regards to internet and hence not in a position to clearly advise their children. This study also reveals children's views on parental regulation and the risk associated with online activities. Children just like parents know that there are risks associated with online activities. Results from this study should help the government, media companies, non-governmental organizations with children's interest at heart and other experts develop regulatory framework system in the country to mitigate the risk and create awareness on online safeties. These findings should also lead to awareness raising campaign by the government functions responsible for this, so as to enlighten parents on the importance of regulating children online activities.

1.9 Conclusion

In this chapter, I have given an overview of the importance of parental regulation to children exposure to internet and most prominently the importance of parents knowing the danger that their children are exposed to in the absence of effective clear regulatory framework and their role in guiding their children to be able to understand the risk. I highlighted the need to find out whether Kenyan parents are aware of these online risks, how they regulate children to ensure their safety online by considering the varied nature of programs and children's interests and finally how their regulation and implementation of parental guidance knowledge influences children's views and actions on their online safety. These findings will help add to the literature on Kenyan parents' knowledge on regulating children safe use of internet as well as lay the groundwork for future studies in the area of children's views and actions with regard to their parental mediation on children safe use of internet.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Overview

This chapter presents a review of the literature available on key issues on parents' knowledge on the risks involved in unregulated children exposure to internet. This chapter begins with situating the research topic within communication study. This is

followed by a review of theories relevant to this study. Then a systematic review of relevant literature organized in accordance with the research questions. I focused on the internet and its use among children which includes the benefits of internet use to children, the role of parents in regulating children access to other media and the regulation of children exposure to internet with reference to old media, the negative effects of the internet to children and a summary of the chapter.

2.1. Situating the research topic within communication study

This study is about parents' regulation to children exposure to internet specifically this study is about what parents know about the risks of children unregulated exposure to internet and the strategies that they use to regulate children access to internet. This study is situated in the field of communication studies which is an academic discipline that studies communication. In this study, communication is defined as the process of human interaction that involves generating, organizing and sending ideas or feelings between two or more receivers. There are various sub-disciplines of communication studies. These sub-disciplines can however be grouped into four broad categories; intrapersonal communication, interpersonal communication, group communication and mass communication.

This study is situated within the Mass Communication sub-discipline of communication studies. Mass Communication is defined as the industrialized production and multiple distributions of messages through technological devices (Turow, 2009). Although the field of mass communication is still evolving, four areas are regarded as the major areas of study within mass communication. These areas are advertising, broadcasting,

journalism and public relations. This study is situated in the area of public relations. Public relations (PR) is the practice of managing the spread of information between an individual or an organization, it may include an organization or individual gaining exposure to their audiences using topics of public interest and news articles that do not require direct payment. This differentiates it from advertising as a form of marketing communications. Public relations as a form of a social media, in many ways also address the concern of the online community which includes internet. The Internet falls under the social media, it gives everyone the ability to share their views about everything within the entire world in a matter of seconds and has the ability to reach thousands or millions of people practically. Social media is a double edged sword as anyone can publish about a brand online, this opens up both risks and opportunities. The widespread use of social media has fundamentally changed how people communicate and share information.

This study is situated in the area of media effects because it explores parents' knowledge on regulation of their children internet use and also seeks to establish whether they are aware about the risks of children unregulated exposure to internet. In the past decades, the area of media effects on human behavior has been one of the most studied areas in the field of communication studies. Recent studies have revealed that children are spending so much time on internet hence parents are concerned about children's exposure to too much sexual content, violent content, and alcohol and drug abuse content on internet.

2.2. Review of relevant theories

A number of theories have been used to explain why some internet content may lead to areas of crimes, violence, pre-marital sex, drugs and alcohol abuse. Uses and gratification

theory asserts that the online addiction leads people to see the world as portrayed on the internet, while the social learning theory asserts that children learn various behaviors by observing those exhibited by others. These two theories are reviewed below to depict the varied nature of online programs, and why this raises concerns to parents and the reason why parents should implement parental guidance in regulating children online activities.

2.2.1. Uses and gratification

The uses and gratification theory is an approach that is used to understand why and how people actively seek out specific media to satisfy specific desires. This communication theory is a socio-psychological communication tradition, and focuses on communication at the mass media scale. It assumes that audience are not passive consumers of media, rather the audience has power over their media consumption and assumes an active role in interpreting and integrating media into their own lives (Blumler, 2004). This theory originated in the 1970s as a reaction to traditional mass communication research emphasizing the sender and the message, stressing the active audience and user instead.

Many theories on media explain about the effects media had on people. Uses and gratification is a theory which explains how people use media for their needs and fulfillment. In other words, this theory affirms what people do with media rather than what media does to people. According to uses and gratification theory it is the people who set the agenda on the media for their specific needs (Edwards, 1998). This theory is said to have a user/audience-centered approach. For instance, in inter-personal communication people refer to the media for the topic they discuss with themselves, thus knowledge is got by using media for reference.

Jane Brown professor of journalism and mass communication at the University of North Carolina, concentrated her remarks on sexuality in the media by asking, ‘What do we know about how teens learn about sexuality from the media? Her presentation on uses and gratification theory proposes that the possible impact of sexual content is tied to what inspires young people to view media content (Huston et al. 1998). Research on the impact of sexually explicit content must therefore be understood in the context of why teenagers choose media content and what may drive their interpretation of this content. According to Brown adolescents are actual interested in sexuality and changes in early adolescence, teenagers go through a normative developmental process in which they start to look for information on sex and their bodies as they develop a sexual self. Teenagers often turn to the media for information on sexuality for several reasons, including searching for information they cannot obtain from parents or schools and to find specific answers to questions that are embarrassing to ask (Brown and Stern, 2008).

2.2.2 Social Learning theory

Social learning theory operates on the idea that the role of parents is to establish their child’s inhibitory controls. The way a person develops social responses is an example of social learning. Those who control the child’s environment for instance parents have the power to reward morally acceptable behaviors while punishing transgressions. In doing so, parents and other dominant figures are said to shape the moral conduct of young children (Henderson, 2008).

The schemes of social learning theory are appropriate in determining whether children are conditioned about their online behaviors by the rewards or punishments meted out by parents. A lack of praise or restrictions on the part of the parent may then indicate a negligent or tolerant parenting style. The model can also be influential in determining what type of cognitive process lead children to choose a particular behavior over another. The internet is a vast of many networks which allows users to communicate freely with others all over the world. One consequence of this is that there is no obvious single point at which editorial control can be exercised. This means that it is very difficult for national Governments to reduce the availability of harmful and inappropriate material. However, the majority of material accessed by internet users is hosted on a relatively small number of highly popular sites, the rest of it occupying less popular material (Boyd, 2012). This means that parents should focus efforts on reducing the availability of harmful and inappropriate material in the most popular part of the internet. Parents also have a key role to play in managing children's access to such material. There is a range of technical tools that can help parents do this for instance through safe search, however they only work effectively if users understand them. So restricting children's access to harmful and inappropriate material is not just a question of what industry can do to protect children, is by developing better parental control software but also what parents can do to protect children for instance by setting up parental control software properly and what children can do to protect themselves (Boyd, 2006).

Just like in the offline world, no amount of effort to reduce potential risks to children will eliminate those risks completely. Parents cannot make the internet completely safe. Because of this, they need also build children's resilience to the material to which they

may be exposed so that they have the confidence and skills to navigate these new media waters more safely (Boyd, 2006). By using the right combination of attainments against the three objectives namely reducing availability, restricting access and increasing resilience to harmful and inappropriate material online. Parents can adequately manage the risks to children online. A number of efforts are already being made in pursuit of these objectives. There is need for more strategic approach if industry, families, government and others in the public and third sectors are going to work effectively together to help keep children safe.

More research to gather basic information about children's Internet and media consumption as well as studies to identify the impact on cognitive, social, and emotional development of internet use would assist in the creation of suitable policy for young people's Internet use and activities (Brown, 2002). While a critical research base on the impact of internet content is not yet available, schemes to provide young people with constructive and enriching internet experiences can be developed from a systematic understanding of the growing needs and milestones of children. Existing research on the cognitive, social, emotional and moral development of young people represents a significant resource that could be used to create educational and inspiring internet content in helping to meet the growing needs of young people and prevent them from bumping into inappropriate material by proposing enticing and useful alternatives (Brown, 2002). In addition to creating age appropriate internet content developmental psychology that can be used to generate programs to educate young users about internet use and the media (Brown, 2002).

For instance, in America both illegal and prescription drugs sales done through the internet are illegal, apart from a customer of a state licensed pharmacy based in the United States. Teenagers use the chat rooms, emails and other social networking communities by texting and use of other interactive ways to communicate directly with their peers. These forms of communication can be used to arrange drug sales, promote illegal online pharmacies and provide address for purchasing ingredients that are used for manufacturing illegal drugs. It is the responsibility of parents to supervise online activities of teenagers and maintain their safety just as they do for their other ordinary activities (Brown, 2002).

The way parents communicate with their child impacts on how they manage media. Most parents communicate openly to their children and encourage autonomy, others are apathetic and do not put into consideration about the children's emotional concerns (Steyer, 2013). Most times the dynamics of how parents and children communicate together will influence media management. This leaves parents feeling loss of control and they feel they cannot shield their children from everything and everyone in the online world (Steyer, 2013).

Many parents are not available to their children in order to manage media since today's personal life is busy, each day is full of activities and additional obligations. There appears to be little free time available, most parents are less accessible due to the nature of their work schedules or community obligations. The parents personal background influence the child's development and media use. When most people are online, they relax and feel less reserved and therefore are able to express themselves more freely than through other types of communication (Steyer, 2013). They don't sense the same kinds of

social pressures that lead individual to conform to various social norms for instance like politeness which is common in face to face social relationships. John Suler, a psychology professor at Rider University, calls this the online disinhibition effect (ODE).

Among the negative consequences of the internet is the over use of the internet by children and youth which could affect their normal routine at social lives, school and home. This kind of internet dependence may reach a pathological state that may progress to a level that will require a clinical treatment. Internet obsession among teenagers is becoming more of a concern with the development in the dissemination worldwide. Usually addiction is studied as a clinical condition to be treated. The over use of the new technologies is becoming an increasing concern for parents and policymakers. There have been experiential studies on how pathological use of the internet may harm people and develop further mental problems such as depression (Richards, et al, 2010).

The schemes of social learning theory are appropriate in determining whether children are conditioned about their online behaviors by the rewards or punishments meted out by parents. A lack of praise or restrictions on the part of the parent may then indicate a negligent or tolerant parenting style. The model can also be influential in determining what type of cognitive process lead children to choose a particular behavior over another.

2.3. The Internet and Its Use among Children

The internet is a term used to refer to a global system of computers connected by a network through which users can share information from one computer to the other at any given time provided they have the necessary networks connections and permissions

(Smith, 2006). The Internet plays an increasingly important role in the lives of children and adults as an immense base of information, a source of entertainment and a platform for new means of communication (Cohen, 2007). First introduced by the Advanced Research Projects Agency (ARPA) in 1969, the internet is one of the 20th century inventions that have revolutionized most if not all aspects of human life in the current world. At that time, it was known as the ARPANet with the aim of creating a network that would facilitate communication between users of a computer in one university and computer users in other universities for the purposes of research (Edgington, 2011).

Youths account for a noteworthy percentage of Internet users and are the first generation to grow up digital, many of them do not recall what life was like before the Internet. Children have access to internet in various places, including schools, libraries, homes, community centers and commercial Internet cafés. This growing access means that youths have at their fingertips a number of educational content that schools and public libraries of earlier generations could certainly not offer. Indeed, while a library's collection of books and journals may be narrowed by its budget and space, a computer terminal and a phone line provides the Internet readily (Keller et al. 2001).

Ever since its conception, the internet has evolved in terms of infrastructure, speed and functionality to what it is today (Price &Verhulst, 2005). As Cohen (2007) notes, the internet has provided a safer, faster and more convenient way of doing things, making life way easier for people with access to the World Wide Web. At the press of a button, it is possible to pay bills, book flights, watch movies, buy goods and services and attend virtual school classes and so much more. All one needs is an internet enabled device and an internet connection.

As more and more services are incorporated into the World Wide Web, access to the internet has become more of a need than a luxury, even for young children below the age of 12 years (Livingstone, 2008). Over time, internet access has shifted from the computer to smaller portable and handheld devices that are easily accessible to children. Most children nowadays at least own a phone or tablet that they can use to access the internet (Lonie, 2014). A survey done in 2013 published by the Guardian estimates that almost half of British children have internet access in their bedrooms. The report adds that four in ten children aged 5-15 years use a tablet computer at home and this number has been on the increase over the previous years.

The number of people accessing the internet in Kenya has been on a stable rise (Murungi, 2011). According to the Communications Association of Kenya (CAK), Internet usage statistics confirm that many Kenyans access not only local sites, but also global sites with local content. According to Alexa.com, the top visited sites by Kenyans include Google.co.ke, Facebook, The Standard, Daily Nation, OLX Kenya, Capital FM 98.4, Kenyan-post.com, Ghafila Kenya, and Safaricom. Further, key global websites visited include Google, YouTube, Yahoo, Twitter, Blogspot.com, Wikipedia, WordPress.com and BBC Online. This proves that people in the country largely enjoy unrestricted access to the internet.

In the United States, according to a 2011 survey done by United States Department of Commerce, approximately 80 per cent of children aged 5 years and below access the internet at least once a week. Even in developing countries that do not have a nationwide wifi network, for example, Kenya, mobile phones service providers like Safaricom,

Orange and Airtel provide their clients with data services. This means that anybody with an internet enabled phone, tablet or computer can use these networks to access the internet. Starting just from Kshs 1000 (US \$ 12), one can purchase an internet enabled phone in Nairobi and other major towns around the country. This low cost of mobile phones has seen a steady increase in mobile phone internet users. A report produced in 2014 by the Communications Authority of Kenya estimates that Kenya had 22.3 million internet users as of 2014.

Children use the internet for various purposes. Top on this list is social networking (Livingstone, 2008). Most of the children in this age group use their smart phones to send, receive and post messages and photos online on social networking sites for example Facebook, Twitter, Badoo and WhatsApp. Other uses include online games, movie and music streaming and downloading, academic and general research among others. Despite the availability of sexually explicit material, most parents agree that the Internet is an extremely useful and productive tool in improving academic performance and preparing their children for a technology-driven society. As a result few parents would cancel Internet services to prevent access to pornography this is according to National School Boards Association, Kenya report for 2012.

As (Lonie, 2014) states, internet use can be useful to all children, ranging from toddlers to teenagers. According to a 2011 report by the United States Department of Commerce, internet access promotes creativity and communication among children while at the same time improves academic growth. Internet access also exposes children to a bigger world with bigger ideas and opportunities that avail conventional physical world around them.

Even for children who cannot physically interact with their peers due to different barriers, the internet provides them with a channel to spend time with fellow children in the online world.

The internet also provides academic benefits to children. With search engines like Google and Ask.com, children can exploit the wide variety of books, journals, articles and other scholarly material in the web for academic purposes. Most research has shown that kids with the greatest home Internet use had higher grade-point averages than those without internet access (Livingstone 2008). Most schools also run online classroom chat rooms where students can interact with each other and the teachers on academic matters on such sites, they can discuss class notes, assignments and revise for exam without having to meet physically, all they need is an internet enabled device and an internet connection.

The other benefit of the internet to children is socialization. As Lonie (2014) notes, the internet especially through social networking sites allows children to interact with other children from different parts of the world. For example, a teenager in the United Kingdom can become friends with another teenager in Tanzania through email, Facebook or WhatsApp from the convenience of their bedroom. In this way, as Edgington (2011) agrees, internet use among children promotes communication, socialization and interaction amongst children.

Internet use also cultivates and promotes creativity and innovations in children (Livingstone, 2008). In the United States, for instance, students were able to compose music and email it to established musicians and music tutors for review. This was through a Vermont project sponsored by the Department of Commerce. The internet provides

resources that can help children develop and sharpen their skills in music, photography, graphic design and film. Children can therefore use the internet as tool to discover, nurture and share their talents with the world.

The Internet is considered in light of moral development as noted by Youniss (2003), he also ascertains that one of the most important factors that internet offers is directing moral development and gives feedback from relationships with others (Youniss and Yates, 2003). Peers and parents can give positive and negative feedback, both forms of criticism helps young people develop a moral code. The internet might not necessarily provide negative feedback if a young person is engaged in an activity or conversation that is not moral, but then it poses a problem for development (Youniss and Smollar, 2002).

Since online events can be done anonymously in privacy and without visible consequences, it is a typical avenue through which youth establish moral principles. Youniss points out that, although a predominant belief in our culture is that “parents teach you what is right, and then peers come along and teach you all the deviance you know,” this is not really true. Finally, Youniss commented on monitoring and how parents should balance keeping track of their children’s online activities without violating their privacy. Literature on monitoring has been consistent suggesting that parents should not monitor through self-initiated actions instead monitoring should come from the relationship between parent and child (Kerr and Stattin, 2000).

2.4. Role of parents in regulating their children’s access to media

i) Other media

Studies have shown a correlation between television viewing and negative behaviors, including obesity, anxiety, depression, violence and attention disorders. The appropriate way to approach the study of internet mediation and television is to explore into social learning theory which helps children's observation and modeling in settings between children and parent(Livingstone, 2008). The two main ways advocated for in combating the effects of internet and television on children is through the process of co-viewing and mediation. Co-viewing is sharing in the experience without commenting on the content or its effects. Active mediation consists of talking about media content while the child is engaging with watching, reading and listening to the medium hence this includes both positive instructional and negative critical, which enable parents set rules that restrict use of the medium, including restrictions on time spent, location of use or content for example restricting exposure to violent or sexual content, without necessarily discussing the meaning or effects of such content (Livingstone, 2008).

Comparison with television and even video games indicates that it is difficult to make internet use a shared activity because of screen size, sitting position, reliance on the mouse and common location in a small or private room. Also online activities cannot be easily monitored with a casual glance at the screen, given multitasking across multiple open windows. Most important, online risks to children are greater than are television-related risks regarding the extremes of violent or pornographic content, privacy or contact risks from strangers, giving rise in turn to greater anxieties among parents (Peter & Valkenburg, 2006).

ii. Internet

When considering the potential dangers that children face on the internet and understanding what children do online, it is necessary for parents to initiate ways of keeping them safe (Smith, 2000). This will ensure that children are safe as they use the internet. Even though the content on the web might be beneficial and useful for children, for example, academic and spiritual material, the internet still has a large variety of content that is not suitable for children this includes pornographic, brain washing video games and uncontrolled dating sites (Lonie, 2014).

Despite all its benefits and advantages, the online world is loaded with potential dangers to youngsters. Sexual texting, harassment and sexual advances from outsiders are online dangers cutting edge teens regularly encounter. Formulation and implementation of laws that govern how children use the internet will protect children from the eminent dangers that they face on the internet. Some of these laws work towards filtering the content that children can access on the internet.

In the United States, it is a legal requirement for all websites containing sexually explicit content to display an age warning content warning on their home pages. This warning serves to warn internet users that the content on that particular website is meant for adults only and children should not view the website. Lonie (2014) argues that putting pornography and other harmful content out of reach of our children is not a violation of anyone's rights. In Kenya, the government institution charged with this mandate is the Communications Authority of Kenya (CAK), formerly known as the Communications Commission of Kenya (CCK).

Kenya has constrained digital laws (Murungi, 2011), these are mostly found in the Kenya Information and Communications Act that has since 1998 been altered in light of developing digital issues. Critical revisions of these laws were established in 2001, 2008 and later on unlawful acts identified with registering, for example hacking, furthermore explicitly accommodated the incorporation of electronic communication as confirmation for purposes of lawful processes.

The skills necessary to assess Internet content are a bit challenging than those a child would require to watch television analytically. One of the main differences is that most web sites provide what seems to be informational content but the most important aspect is advocacy that may or may not be found on research. Youth have difficulty in telling the difference between absorbing rhetoric and an argument based on understanding, which are very significant skills for today's children to acquire. Media literacy deals with a set of cognitive skills that can protect against misleading information or a disturbing image by training children how to identify underlying messages, criticize them and develop productive counter storylines (Mangleburg and Bristol, 2008).

As for strategies to prevent children and teenagers from inappropriate material, media and information literacy offer a number of benefits by teaching them critical thinking, knowledge evaluation and skillful use of the Internet through effective searching, which will make them resistant to a wide variety of media influences for instance messages that can encourage unsafe sexual practices or other unsafe behaviors as well. Once taught these critical thinking abilities, they will stay with the child and can be used in any other setting involving the Internet (Keller, 2000).

The educational outreach is an objective to raise parents' awareness about safety issues on the Internet that they need to discuss with their children. This type of campaign would positively reach a wide audience particularly if television were the platform to reach people. It could initiate parents' interest to convey information and refer them to additional information. Though this would only reach those parents who are already online and perhaps seeking information on their children safety while using internet (Keller, 2000).

Livingstone (2006) notes the overall agreement is that children are inexperienced users and are therefore sexual naive, these are the main reasons why they are preyed upon. She suggests that a third yet hardly discussed risk is parental invasion of children's confidentiality. Thus the well-intended move by parents in response to anxieties over external threats may institute a new internal threat, one that may risk the crucial relationship of trust between parents and children. According to Livingstone there are alternatives to parent policing and continuous invasion of privacy that may not erode the parent child relationship. An alternative to parent policing is one that balances risks to children from unrestricted Internet use against the risks of invading their privacy when confining their access to the Internet. Hence prompting child centered style that seeks a balance between children's safety and privacy (Livingstone, 2006). The child focused approach to parenting is defined as allowing the child some input in regards to rules by allowing a degree of privacy, yet the parent can still set perimeters to which the child must abide. Livingstone in her study further finds that teenagers seem to have trouble explaining how to change or where to find privacy settings on their social networking

sites, proving that the perceived Internet literacy of some teens is vague and confirming that site settings are poorly designed so that users have a hard time tracing them.

According to (Sarah, 2000) in her book entitled 'The Parents' Guide to the Information Superhighway' contains a wealth of useful suggestions and information for parents to consider as they make choices that affect their children's Internet use and online activities. The guidance notes that there is little research on the influence of technology on children, it is likely to offer some practical suggestions based on the advice of child development experts for setting age-appropriate guidelines for children's internet use. The following represents an abbreviated list of some of the suggestions contained in the guide. For children between ages 2-3 years, computers need not play much of a role in the youngest child's life, but it doesn't hurt for very young children to see family members using computers and enjoying themselves online. The guidelines given are to put your child in your lap as you "play" on the computer, secondly look for books and children's video programs like Sesame Street that include images of children and family members using a computer(Sarah, 2000).

For ages 4-7 years, though serious internet use isn't a priority for these youngsters, children at this age can begin to make greater use of computer games and educational products. The strategy used is to spend as much time as you can with your child while he or she uses the computer. Secondly to show lots of noticeable results and achievements, for instance print the work your child has done on the computer and share an email address with your child, so that you can oversee his or her mail and discuss correspondence. For ages 8-14 years at this age is when children can begin to directly

experience and appreciate more fully the potential of online experiences. For instance, children can begin to use online guides, download pictures for school reports or have email pen pals.

The instructions at this time are to set very clear rules for online use and clear consequences if they are broken, teach children to let you know if they encounter anything suspicious or unusual online experiences and discuss some of the unique aspects of behavior in cyberspace like anonymity and have a setup of clear parental rules, limits, and periodic check-ins. Parents should set clear rules about which chat rooms are acceptable for their teenagers, and how much time can be spent on internet, and be sure that the children understand the actions that they can take, if people harass them online or do anything inappropriate to them. Lastly parents should pay particular attention to games that teenagers might download or copy as some of these games are extremely violent (Sarah, 2000).

As for ages 15-18 years the internet provides a rich resource for older teens, including information about job opportunities, internships and colleges, applications to create multimedia reports and specialized help with foreign languages and other school subjects. The references given are for parents to ask teenagers for help to research topics of interest to the family, talk to teenagers about new things online and encourage discussion of new experiences. Parents should ensure their teenagers knows the legal implications of online behavior and watch time limits to make sure that teenagers are still pursuing a well-rounded set of activities. Situations where the teenager is especially interested in

computers encourage him or her to help younger children with their online explorations (Sarah, 2000).

2.5. Regulation of Children Exposure to Internet With Reference To Old Media

The internet is proving challenging, even frustrating, for parents and children as they attempt to fit it into their homes and their lives (Price, 2005). The first step of ensuring successful parental regulation of internet use by children is by understanding the children's internet use behavior. Edgington (2011) notes that majority of parents are not aware of what their children do on the internet. Since they have their private gadgets with consistent internet access, children can hide what they do on the internet from their parents.

According to (Livingstone, 2006) parents can no longer monitor a single computer in the living room, around 19 per cent of 9-19 year-olds in the United Kingdom have internet access in their bedroom. Most children do this because they fear losing access to the internet if their parents found out what they are actually doing on the internet. While parents' strategies for managing their children's use of the internet are emerging, children are devising more tactics for evading or resisting.

According to research conducted by McAfee internet security firm in 2012 in the United Kingdom, four-fifths of teenagers say they know how to hide their online behavior from their parents. To avert unnecessary web use (Price & Verhulst, 2005) suggests that parents take a dynamic enthusiasm for their youngsters' online exercises through backing and examination.

Parents' backing in restricting extreme web utilization of their kids is especially gainful in situations where the youngster has encountered something offensive in the web. Academic literature divides regulation into positive regulation which includes encouraging and facilitating and negative regulation includes discouraging, impeding or prohibiting certain activities. According to (Edgington, 2011) most parents tend to combine positive and negative strategies.

Research shows that parents tend to have a tendency to consolidate positive and negative measures, from the moderately open, non-directional strategy of parent-child co-viewing or sharing the media experience to more prohibitive or controlling techniques. Parents may attempt to impact their youngster's responses through examination or by just sharing media time with the child, and they may look to control access to media and there after check on time used on that activity (Edgington, 2011).

As Lawrence (2007) notes, the strategies used by parents to control internet use by their children are different in intention and implementation. One views the internet a potential positive contributor to their children and works towards creating an environment conducive for their children to tap these benefits. The other views the internet as a potential danger to children and works more towards protecting them from the internet. Critics argue that an adult-centered approach focuses more on the worries and concerns of the parents while ignoring the desires and interests of the children. As Edgington advices, a child-centered approach shows more concerns for the children's wellbeing and concerns with their independence, privacy, play space and rights to self-expression.

Some technology companies have invented applications that parent can use to monitor and control how their children use the internet. An example is Kytephone's app called *namesake*. This application allows parents to control the apps and sites their children use and the people they receive texts and calls from (Lawrence, 2007). Another application that is used for this purpose is a browser app released by a monitoring software company called Net Nanny. This application is available for Apple's iOs and Google's Android platforms. The company is still working to develop a web-based tool called Net Nanny Social. Russ Warner, the CEO of the company says that the tool will enable parents keep an eye on problems such as cyber bullying, sexual predators and identity theft on social networks including Facebook and Twitter. Most of these tools come with a price tag. For example, Net Nanny Social costs \$19.99 annually. (Price & Verhulst, 2005) indicate that this cost is a hindrance to the number of parents who use such tools.

Parents exercise regulation on how their children use the internet in various ways (Edgington, 2011). Majority of them just asks the children what they are doing online. They believe the responses they get from the children to be honest and they do not do anything beyond that. Others help their children online by browsing the internet with them and helping them navigate different websites. Another category of parents keeps their eyes on the computer screen as they browse while some just stay in the same room with the child as they browse the internet. The last category of parents checks the computer later to review the browser history. But as Lonie (2014) notes, this is very ineffective since most children will just clear their browser history before their parents can access the computer to review the sites they have visited. So when the parents check

the computer to see what their children were doing online, there will be actually nothing for them to check.

According to a 2011 report by UNICEF titled “*Regulating the Internet at Home*” parents attitudes and perceptions towards their children on matters of internet exposure was seen to affect how they regulated their children’s internet usage. Parents who believe that their children are too innocent and morally upright to engage in online vices, for example watching pornography were seen to be more relaxed and exercised very little regulation on how their children used the internet (Lonie, 2014). The report indicates that only 16 percent of the parents interviewed believed that their children might have viewed pornographic content on the internet. Participatory regulation is viewed to be more effective than passive regulation.

Although most would agree that it would be ideal for teenagers to seek out their parents for information on sexuality, parents are still hesitant to talk to their children about sex. The information that parents do tend to offer is about physical development and the bodily changes their children experience as well as a talk about abstinence (Brown et al. 1990). While it is important for parents to convey to their children the personal values they hold about when and how to choose to be sexually active, many parents talk to their children about abstinence and nothing else. In addition, because it is often challenging for parents to talk about passion and desire with their children, youth sometimes find it difficult to get into a clinical discussion (Brown, 2012). Adolescents are therefore left with several unanswered questions and they habitually turn to their peers who often have much misinformation to share as well as to the internet (Sutton et al., 2001). The internet

can fill this gap by providing information that parents are not discoursing and providing a comfortable venue for teenagers to seek information.

Brown stated the media often make youth more comfortable in seeking information which is accessible and anonymous, since it does not talk back unless one is in a chat room and is less embarrassing than most of other sexual socialization sources. In addition to trying to find out if their bodies are developing normally, teenagers similarly begin to have questions about relationships and how to initiate sexual contact. Brown referred to this set of questions as pertaining to the development of “relationship scripts” or schemas, meaning that young people can use the media to establish socially normative behavior patterns for sexuality (Huston et al., 1998). Script and schema theories suggest that experience may be principally significant in determining the influence of sexual content in the new media, and that entities with less sexual experience may be more greatly affected (Huston et al., 1998).

2.6 Negative Effects of the Internet Use on Children

In the last decade the risks faced by youth on internet use have progressively increased and the policy of not regulating content seems less predictable (Currie, 2005). With growing complexity of technology and wider media choice, society will have to take more responsibility for what they and their children view and get on screen and online to become gatekeepers for content coming into homes (Ofcom, 2004).

Cyber bullying is one of the biggest negative aspects of the internet to children (Rogers, 2010). As Lonie (2014) adds, cyber bullying has become the new face of bullying. On

social sites for instance Facebook and Twitter, the unlimited freedom of expression is misused by some users. Cases of children being ridiculed and insulted for their appearance, race or religions occurs in every passing minute. Young children may not be strong enough to handle this negative attention (Rogers, 2010). As a result, most of them develop depression and self-pity, lowering their self-esteem and morale. In some extreme cases, some children have even committed suicide after being bullied on the internet.

Current trends in internet use among children have shown a decline in grammar and language proficiency among children using the internet regularly. In most online sites especially social network sites, children used broken language and cunningly shortened acronyms that defy the existing language and grammar rules (Livingstone, 2008). The negative effect of this habit has trickled down to other areas of the children's life where a good mastery of language is necessary, for example in school. To other people not conversant with this language, they may not understand what such acronyms means. As Lonie (2014) agrees, this habit lowers the children's ability to communicate effectively especially in official setups.

Concerns about youth being surrounded by the explicit passionate heterosexual script through easy access to pornography on the Internet have emerged, though noted that the Internet is a powerful information tool for children and teenagers. For instance, in America instead of the youth turning to a scene from a film for perspective on how couples handle intimacy, a young person could go to the American Social Health Association's teen sexual health web site 'iwannaknow.org' and connect to a monitored chat room with other teens to talk anonymously about sexuality. This kind of chats are supervised and expedited by an expert in sexual health and could be an extra productive

learning experience than the messages a teenager may collect from an extremely exaggerated scene from a movie (Brown, 2001). The combination of exploring changes to the beliefs of their family and children's need to belong can lead adolescents at risk for being drawn into radical groups such as racist or violent groups. Girls tend to be more socially advanced than boys not only because their bodies are more fully developed, but because they are thinking prudently about what it entails to be a woman, a mother, and family role they play (Levine et al. 2003).

Both real-life and media-related activities affect the development of children. While much emphasis has been placed on the threats of exposure to both mass and new media, today's generation is also on the higher end of advances in technology worldwide. In cyberspaces children do as in the real world. Children use computers for most of the activities of modern childhood. That is, they play, socialize, communicate and learn in the course of their explorations (Bautista, 2008).

According to Roberts, children's access to inappropriate material on the Internet represents one important thread within the larger context of educating young people to be competent, skillful, and knowledgeable users of technology (Roberts et al., 2000).

According to Joanne Cantor, a professor at the University of Wisconsin, numerous types of effects have been observed in studies of vehement media content and children which include desensitization, increases in hostility, imitation, fear and anxiety reactions. Desensitization arises when an emotional response to a stimulus is diminished after recurrent exposures to that stimulus. This can be adaptive for instance a doctor who

becomes habituated to seeing blood and does not have the strong emotional reactions. The media though creates imaginary exposures to content that can cause excitement. For example, a child who sees a graphic fierce image might become irritated or frightened. If this image is a demonstration and not a genuine event, then the distinctive reactions are not fitting or functional. With recurrent exposure, a child may cease to have these emotional reactions (Cantor, 2000). Research has shown that desensitization to media ferocity can result in reduced arousal and emotional disturbance when witnessing real violence, greater reluctance to call an adult to mediate in an actual physical dispute and have less sympathy for victims of abuse and assault (Cline et al., 2003). Repeat watching of violent material tend to create an enduring hostile mental background that discourages viewers from interacting clearly with others.

Sedentary pursuits like watching television and playing computer games have become favorite activities for children and youth. These activities expose them to a number of physical risks including vision problems, appropriations, hand injuries and other complications. Such activities have also been cited as a factor in the increasing number of obese children and adolescents. Liwag (2007) claimed that exposure to imagery on the internet might have contributed to the selective increases in non-verbal intelligence standards during the preceding century. She cited the study by Flynn (1994) which compared the average scores of British respondents of comparable ages in the non-verbal test in 1942 versus 1992. The said test showed that there were significant increases for all age groups tested. Media, particularly the new media, have affected the social and emotional development of children and the youth. The way they relate to their parents and their peers is influenced mainly by their exposure to various media. For example,

Liwag (2007) cite Social learning theory operates on the idea that the role of parents is to establish their child's inhibitory controls. The way a person develops social responses is an example of social learning. Those who control the child's environment for instance parents have the power to reward morally acceptable behaviors while punishing transgressions. In doing so, parents and other dominant figures are said to shape the moral conduct of young children (Henderson, 2008).

2.7 Summary

I will give a summary of the literature review, the need for parental regulation, what the parents know about the risks brought about by unregulated children exposure online and the gaps that exist, that will be filled by this study.

2.7.1 Summary of the literature review

The wide variety of beneficial services provided by the internet makes it a necessary risk for the 21st century child (Livingstone, 2008). Children need the internet to socialize, learn, explore their talents and play games among many other uses. However, the dangers that children face in the online world seem to outweigh the benefits of internet use for children. As Smith (2009) argues, national regulation of internet content and access may not fully protect children from the negative aspects of the internet. The fact that most children use the internet at home therefore puts more responsibility of regulating their internet exposure squarely on the parents. Parental regulation of internet use by their children proves more effective since they are in touch with the children and they can use the various methods of internet regulation they consider fit for their children.

In addition to varying public perceptions and concerns about what Internet content may be tricky for youth is the fact that children's cognitive, emotional, and social development changes rapidly, from the time they may first look at a monitor as young children to late adolescence, when computers may be a daily part of their lives (National Research Council and Institute of Medicine, 2000). Since children's developmental desires change so greatly, content that may be unsuitable at an earlier age may or may not be inappropriate when children are grown up. Therefore, communities must rely on their own awareness in defining how best to approach this concern. What scholars can offer is a conceptual framework and a set of non-technical schemes that may help the public and parents choose an approach that fits their values, concerns and the desires of their children. In general, non-technical approaches are those focused on training people to use the internet effectively and safely in order to increase online skills and minimize exposures to inappropriate content, or develop skills for individual users which will enable them to be more resistant to messages implicit in unsuitable content. For instance, creating a code of acceptable internet use and online behavior can assist in ensuring that young people use the internet safely and wisely Singer and Singer (2003).

The only approach to ensure that children are not harmed by inappropriate content is to arm the child rather than the computer. A teenager who is taught strategies to stay in control of their online proficiencies, can be critical and skeptical about the essential messages in advertising, romanticized and sexualized images, and to report users lobbying their personal information to be harmful to their growth.

2.7.2. The need for parental regulation

It is therefore evident that there is need for parental regulation on children online activities in order to give guidance to children against destructive advances. The strive of parents and children in perfecting these dangers and opportunities as they pursue means of using the internet profoundly within their daily lives, raises ethical challenges and problems (Livingstone and Lemish, 2006).

Parents play a direct social role in supporting their children's internet use by suggesting websites for them to visit and regularly sharing their experiences of using the internet by sitting at the computer with their children (Livingstone, 2008). At most two complications undermine parents' attempts to regulate their children's internet use. The first is that though parents are responsible for their children's safety, they need also to manage their children's growing independence and rights to privacy, something that children themselves feel strongly about. The second is on privacy children delight on the opportunities the internet gives them for individuality, relationships, exploration and communication, and they may not wish to share this experience with their parents (Livingstone, 2008).

Linda Roberts (2000) notes on her book for 'Parents policies on children regulation to internet exposures' that acceptable policies should be developed in conjunction with parents, community members, teachers and youths, these policies should be communicating clearly to children and parents about protective measures to ensure safe internet use which should be used as an opportunity to educate the user about how to avoid such content in the future. This should include how to remove it from their screen, and if necessary how to report it to the Internet service provider.

Livingstone stresses the importance of providing young people with action or response oriented knowledge that would allow them to recognize and deal effectively with unsafe strangers, online predators and hate group recruiters. They must also learn to recognize when they might be vulnerable and what steps to take in challenging situations. The internet bloggers attempt to get as much personal information as possible and then start feeding them “candy” in the form of compliments. This may seem a simple and obvious tactic, but for teenagers may not be proof to flattery (Livingstone, 2008).

2.7.3 What is known about children unregulated exposure to internet and what are the gaps

Parents are aware that unregulated children exposure to internet poses risk to children development and safety (Wartella, 2000) stresses that by supporting informed policy decisions and better educational practices, will help identify several areas which will greatly aid in making informed policy decisions and develop practices concentrating at educating parents and children about the Internet.

These areas include doing research on network environments, experiential studies of the impact of new media content on youth and initiate studies to develop media literacy for both parents and children. According to (Wartella, 2000) not enough research is being conducted on networked environments, therefore knowledge base that could inform policy and practice is lagging quite behind internet growth and changes in the ways that young people use and access the Internet. Wartella also states that there is a great need of regularly conceptualizing which constitutes networked environs and the media, and therefore a new research is necessary to reflect the significant online changes.

As new technologies offer additional means to access the Internet these includes cell phones and video games that connect to the Internet and penetrate to the population, it is likely that media platforms and communication forms will continue to fail. This study intends to promote and empower parents by building upon lessons of the past era and develop a modern agenda that can reinforce parents' involvement in their children's safe internet use through the effective deployment of knowledge, by involving the state to create policies and financial enticements that support the empowering of parents through technology agenda. This issue has been seriously neglected over the past decade since it does not yet have an influential backing from the public and government.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

In this chapter, I explain the research design, then the research approach followed by sampling which presents my study site, research population, sampling technique and research sample. This is followed by the data generation, the data analysis, the ethical issues that I encountered while collecting and analyzing data and the validity of my study. Finally, I conclude the chapter.

3.1 Research Design

In the first phase of the study, I used survey method whereby I obtained data by administering questionnaires to 200 participants who were parents from 20 courts out of 50 courts within the surrounding. Based on the information and the data obtained from the 200 participants, in the second qualitative phase I used a case study, where thirty-six households were sampled to participate.

In the qualitative phase of the study, I used a case study method using six focus group discussions (FGD). A case study is an intensive examination, using multiple sources of evidence, of a single entity which is bounded by time and place (Daymon & Holloway,

2002). It also helps to explain both the process and outcome of a phenomenon through complete observation, reconstruction and analysis of the cases under investigation (Tellis, 1997). My choice to use a case study design was to understand the everyday practices in children's exposure to internet and the involvement of parents in attempting to regulate what children access. Through the focus group discussion (FGD) which is a method used to gather people from similar backgrounds or experiences to discuss a specific topic of interest. The group of participants is guided by a facilitator who introduces topics for discussion and assists the group to participate in a natural discussion amongst themselves, in order to provide an insight into how a group or individuals think about a particular issue (Kruger, 1988). In this study, I purposely selected six focus group discussions from three courts, each FGD had an average of 6 participants for both the parents and the children, the first part of FGD had three groups for parents who have teenage children and the last three FGD was for children between the ages 8-14 years in an attempt to unveil the complexity of what parents know about children unregulated exposure to internet and how they regulate their children online use.

3.2 Research approach

This study took a sequential mixed approach. This method uses both quantitative and qualitative methods. This study took the explanatory sequential mixed approach design whereby I collected data in two phases: quantitatively and qualitatively respectively. This study began with the quantitative data collection and analysis in the first phase. The quantitative data and its subsequent analysis provided a general understanding of parents' knowledge of regulation of children access to internet. Then based on the findings of this

first phase, I followed up with a second phase of qualitative data collection and analysis to help explain in detail the results of the first quantitative phase.

Quantitative research is a formal, objective, systematic process in which numerical data are used to obtain information about the phenomena under investigation. This study used this approach to describe variables and examined the relationships amongst these variables. Qualitative research on the other hand explores attitudes, behaviors and experiences (Dawson, 2009) and focuses on meaning and understanding. This study began with the quantitative data collection and analysis in the first phase. The qualitative data analysis further clarified quantitative statistical results by exploring participants' views on strategies that parents use to regulate children access to internet and the challenges they experienced while mediating children's access to internet. The two phases are allied in the intermediate stage in the study whereby the data collected and analyzed during the quantitative phase was integrated with data collected and analyzed during the qualitative phase (Creswell, 2003). The use of this design allowed the qualitative results to connect and develop on the quantitative results in order to build on the research questions.

3.3. Study Site

The study took place in an up market residential area in Nairobi. It has an urban setting with cosmopolitan population. The choice of the site was because most of the residents have access to internet and use it regularly. Being cosmopolitan, majority of the occupants of this location were conversant with either Kiswahili which is the Kenyan

national language or English which is the country's official language since they are from different ethnic groups and some are from other nationalities.

In order to ensure that the study findings reflect the diversity of parents' knowledge of parental regulation of children online exposure and their experiences when implementing this practice across Nairobi county, exposure to internet was considered when selecting a site to participate in the study. Further consideration of economic empowerment and levels of education of the people led to the identification of 20 courts in the up market residential area at Nairobi as potential site, additionally the researcher had relevant contacts and access to the households thus the process of data collection was more convenient.

3.4 Sampling

Sampling is a process of selecting actual data sources from a smaller group of a larger population in order to make an impact that can be generalized to a larger population. Sampling consists of two related elements, the population and sample. The population can be defined as the full set of possible data sources, while a sample is selecting specific data sources from that population (Morgan, 2008). In the first section I present the research population and a detailed description of the research sample of this study.

3.4.1 Research Population

The research population of this study was parents who have teen age children and also targeted children aged between 8 to 14 years old. Target population was 200 households. It was optional in this study to have families that had both the father and mother living

together with their children in the home or single parents. These families had at least one or more devices used to access internet in the home at the time of this study. Out of this research population, participants were sampled for the quantitative and qualitative phases as discussed below.

3.4.2 Research Sample

The research sample of this study was 200 households for the first quantitative phase and approximately 36 participants for the second qualitative phase as discussed in detail below. This study used sequential mixed approach sampling, whereby the information from the first quantitative phase sample was required so as draw the sample for the second qualitative phase.

3.4.2.1 Quantitative Phase Research Sample

In the quantitative phase of this study, simple random sampling was used to select the participants who participated in the study. In this phase only participants from households with internet access were selected to participate in the study. Parents from 200 households were selected to participate in the study.

Table 3:1. Quantitative Phase Research Sample

Phase	Sample Size	Sampling Strategy
Phase 1	200	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Random sampling of 20 courts in an upmarket residential area in Nairobi area whereby in each court I purposively selected 10 families and asked one parent per household to fill questionnaire

During the quantitative phase of this study, the care taker of each court I selected accompanied me on the day of administering the questionnaires and in their presence I explained to the participants the purpose of the study and what it entails to participate in this study. I also read to the participants the letter from the education ministry permitting me to carry out the research. However, the care taker did not sit-in while I was administering the questionnaires. The second principle was based on family composition. The participants were selected from either married couple or single parent. The participant also had to have at least one child between the ages of 8 to 14 years at the time of the study. This was because the children from these households would also be sampled for the second phase of the study. This allowed me to get closer to reality through the voices of both the children themselves and the parents who are exposed to internet. This study focused more on parental regulation on children online exposure which calls for parental guidance.

3.4.2.2 Qualitative Phase Research Sample

In this second phase this study used purposive sampling whereby I carried out six focus group discussions, three for parents who have teenage children and the other three groups for children between the ages of 8-14 years. The first principle was based on the uniqueness of the information given by the participant during the quantitative phase of the study. If the information provided in the open-ended section of the questionnaire was unique, I set this participant aside for consideration of further follow-up discussion on the focus group discussion. The aim being to get further information on the participants' experiences on parental regulation of children online use and their children's interest on the same.

Table 3.2 Qualitative phase research sample

Phase	Sample Size	Sampling Strategy
Phase 2	36 participants (3FGDs with Children and 3 FGDs with Parents with each FGD being between 5-10 participants)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I purposively selected three courts and conducted a focus group of between 5 to 10 parents who had teenager children. I selected 3 courts and conducted a focus group of children in groups of between 5 to 10 children.

The six focus group discussions were conducted, with thirty-six willing participants (approximately eighteen parents and eighteen children) selected through purposive

sampling from across the twenty courts. It should be noted that only one parent in each household participated in the focus group discussion.

During the qualitative phase of the study, I did not use the care taker as gatekeepers because I had already gained trust from potential participants during the quantitative phase. I however thought it was courteous to let them know that I was back in their respective courts carrying out further research.

3.5 Data Generation techniques

In my study, data was collected in two phases. In the first quantitative phase, data was collected using questionnaires. In the second qualitative phase, data was collected in the form of focus group discussion (FGDs). Each technique is discussed more in detail below.

3.5.1 Questionnaires

A questionnaire is a list of questions to be asked by the researcher and it is prepared in such a manner that the questions are asked in exactly the same way to every respondent. The questionnaires were only issued to parents and they were presented with exactly the same wording and in the same order to all participants (Kothari, 2004), refer Appendix II.

Out of the 200 questionnaires administered in the first quantitative phase 189 were returned. Nonetheless, since the participants' reserved the right to answer only questions they were comfortable with, some participants did not respond to some of questions in

the questionnaire. The questionnaire was divided into four sections with specific questions directed at four different categories; demographics, parents' knowledge of parental regulation, how they regulated their children online and the challenges that they faced while regulating them. Demographic data was vital in the selection of participants for the second phase and also in determining the correlation between children's age and parental regulation of children online use.

The questionnaire contained both open-ended and closed-ended questions where the participants could at hand select an answer and on the other give clarity. Some of the close-ended questions were dichotomous which means that these questions had only one response of the possible two responses, while other close-ended questions allowed for multiple responses. A few open-ended questions were included in the questionnaire to allow participants considerable freedom in answering the selected questions. These open-ended questions focused on the mechanisms that parents put in place to try and regulate their children's online activities and the challenges they face while trying to regulate them.

In this study, I coded the data I got from the open-ended questions of the questionnaire because depending on the uniqueness of the information that I got from the questionnaire on how parents regulate their children online and the challenges they face while trying to control what their children get exposed to on internet, I retained some participants for further participation in the research. The coding process is discussed in more detail in the data analysis section of this chapter.

3.5.2 Focus Group Discussions (FGDs)

The second phase qualitative session of the study explored on parents' and children understanding of regulation of children online exposure and how children interpret their parents' mediation behaviors. Mediation behavior in this study means all the mechanisms that parents put in place to try and counter their children from accessing inappropriate content to internet programs. It also explored the mechanisms that parents use to implement parental guidance in their regulation. This was achieved by use of FGDs to expound on how parents and children perceived the parental regulation on children internet exposure. This phase included thirty-six participants, eighteen parents and eighteen children. FGDs were conducted in a group of five to ten willing participants selected based on the uniqueness of data they presented in the quantitative phase. This was a FGDs guide that I used (reference appendix V).

Table 3:3. Data Generation techniques

Phase	Data Type	Data Generation Strategy
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Phase 1	Quantitative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The method for collecting data on the first phase was questionnaires' targeting 200 families ▪ The questionnaires contained both open and close ended questions
Phase 2	Qualitative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The method of collecting data was focus group discussion; I purposively selected three courts and conducted a focus group of between 5 to 10 parents who had teenager children. ▪ I selected 3 courts and conducted a focus group of children in groups of between 5 to 10 children

3.6 Data analysis

Data Analysis is the process of systematically applying statistical and/or logical techniques to describe and illustrate, condense and recap, and evaluate data. In my study I applied distinctive data analysis procedures for the Quantitative and Qualitative research phases as explained below.

3.6.1 Quantitative Phase data analysis

In the quantitative phase of this study I used the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) software Version 17.0 that was used to code and analyze the questionnaire findings referred to as descriptive statistics. Descriptive statistical method enabled me to use the data and provide general information about the participants explored. I then summarized the data in frequency distribution tables which lists the frequency of events occurrence of specified responses to questions in relations to participant's demographics, on what parents know about unregulated children and how parents regulate their children online use. This data however was not sufficient to comprehensively answer the question

on how parents regulate their children online exposure to internet and children's interests. Since the questionnaires were administered to parents only, this data did not answer the question on how parental regulation of children exposure to internet influences children's views and actions with regard to risks children are exposed to online. These therefore led me to the second phase of the study where I held focus group discussions (FGDs) in the selected households.

3.6.2 Qualitative Phase data analysis

The process of qualitative analysis consisted of six steps (Jwan & Ong'ondo, 2011). The first step involved transcribing all the focus group discussions, during the transcription period, all the audio recorded discussions were transcribed into text material and labeled, which later developed the primary data for subsequent analysis.

The second step was to review each transcript from one sentence to another to ensure that it made sense, in order to attain a general sense of the information and to reflect on the data's overall importance. I started the third step by coding process, in this process the steps involves identifying, arranging, and systemizing the ideas, concepts, and categories uncovered in the data(Benaquisto, 2008). The coding process in this study consisted of three phases; the open coding phase, axial coding phase and finally the selective coding phase.

3.6.2.1 Open coding

Opening coding which was the third step is the process of developing codes of information (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). In the open coding phase, I imported the MS Word documents that were transcribed in step one into the NVivo program. I looked at each

transcript highlighting information that talked about distinct issues in relation to my study. Though, I was also open to new concerns that might arise. Some transcripts contained information of data that seemed unnecessary to the study, these portions of data were highlighted and labeled other.

When I finished the process of open coding, I then copied the transcripts to a new MS Word files, and then cut the different chunks of data and paste them under the various codes identified. This gave rise to into a long transcript containing all the codes that were generated from all the data and the corresponding chunks of data below the codes. Then next was the fourth step of qualitative data analysis known as axial coding.

3.6.2.2 Axial coding

According to Corbin and Strauss (2008) axial coding is a process for interconnecting the code. At this stage I observed the relationship between the codes generated during the open coding phase and grouped similar codes together. Where I merged several codes, and turned some codes into categories. A category being a broader headline to which several codes may be grouped (Jwan & Ong'ondo, 2011).

I then went back to the transcript produced at the end of open coding where I cut and paste data again according to the new categories and codes (See Appendix VI). I also went back to the chunks of data labeled other and found data that fit into the new labels. At the end of this phase, I reviewed the data under the new categories, codes, and relevant chunks of data under them.

3.6.2.3 Selective coding

The fifth involved grouping the different categories and codes into themes (See Appendix VII), these themes corresponded to the research questions that I had posed at the beginning of this study. This stage is referred to as selective coding. During this step, I reviewed the data under the new themes and to confirm that the categories and codes were appropriate labels for the chunks of data under them (Jwan & Ong'ondo, 2011)

3.6.2.4 Producing a research report

The sixth step was to concentrate on giving a narration description of the data in a manner that would make sense (Jwan and Ong'ondo 2011). This is where I present the participants narration to the readers by paraphrasing the statements of my participants and ensuring that I retain a few direct quotations. This was saved as the first draft of my research report. Using a new MS Word file, I concentrate on editing the narration by paraphrasing most of the data from the first draft, by deleting repetitive parts, retaining only a few as citations to give the report credibility and summarizing parts of the report. This was saved as my second draft report.

The second draft of the report was reviewed severally making the necessary amendments and at the end of this step, I then integrated the quantitative results with these themes resulting into findings. I used these themes to further explain the percentages and frequencies obtained in the quantitative phase. These finding were presented according to the research questions on chapter four.

3.7 Data Presentation

I presented quantitative findings by use of tables and graphs that had detailed references to the objectives through use of short summary notes. Findings on the qualitative were presented in narrative form which comprised of summary findings that included direct quotation from the participants. The summary of the findings was in view of the stated problem and the research questions to ensure that the information ties with the results of the data analysis. A conclusion was made from the summary of the findings. Recommendation was geared towards developing adequate protective mechanisms to support safe internet use for children.

Table 3:4: Data presentation Strategy

Data Presentation Strategy

- Quantitative findings were presented by use of tables and graphs that have detailed references to the text and the objectives through use of short summary notes.

- Whereas qualitative findings were presented in narrative which comprised of summary findings that included direct quotation from the participants
- A conclusion was made from the summary of the findings and recommendation geared towards developing an adequate protective mechanism to support safe internet use for children

3.8. Ethical Considerations

This research being about a sensitive issue in the society that leads to child abuse most respondents expected a high level of confidentiality. The researcher assured the respondents of their confidentiality. Both the parents and the children were advised and given accurate and detailed information about the nature of the research so that they could make informed decision about their participation in the research. I had a letter from Moi University that permits me to carry out the research in the identified area and informed consent was obtained from both children and parents. I obtained the consent from the parents and guardians by having them sign the consent form to allow the children participate in the research.

Potential participants were informed in advance why the information was being collected and the importance of the research, by assuring them about their confidentiality and anonymity to try and ease participants' fears and encourage them to take part in the research. I obtained permit from National Commission for Science and Technology thus I was legally permitted to carry out the research. The plan of negotiating for access started way before, through my colleagues at work and my immediate neighbors, who introduced me to the focal people in the courts that I was not familiar with so that I could gain access

to the courts to distribute the questionnaires and later to carry out the focus group discussions.

3.8.1 Ethical considerations while dealing with the adult participants

First of all, there was need for every participant getting involved in this study to clearly understood what they were getting themselves into, the letter from Moi University clearly stated the purpose of the study so that the participant understood the nature of the research and its likely impact on him/her (See Appendix III). Secondly, this study protected the identity of participants by the researcher assigning them acronyms such as JN, SN and so on.

3.8.2 Ethical considerations while dealing with children participants

This study involved vulnerable populations who are the minors under age of 18 thus I had to consider their exceptional needs so as to avoid putting them at risk. At the beginning of the focus group discussion I acknowledged the participants' rights will be protected during the data collection and it was their right to voluntarily participate and had the right to withdraw at any time, so that the participant is not being forced into participation. It also clearly stated the purpose of the study, so that the participant understands the nature of the research and its likely impact on him/her. The researcher explained to the participants clearly and simply so that the implications of taking part including issues of confidentiality and anonymity were understood.

Secondly, the consent from the family members and specifically the parents/ guardians was sought by signing the consent form. Nevertheless, children themselves were able to

decide whether or not to take part, in order to avoid situations where children felt like they must participate because their parents/guardians have agreed to the research. I ensured that children made their own independent decision on whether they wanted to participate in this study or not. Nearly all the children I approached agreed to participate in the study.

3.9 Trustworthiness

I ensured that credibility was adhered to in the study by reporting on what actually occurred in the field, this included answering various research questions or the same question from different perspectives in order to improve the quality of data (Manson 2002). Trustworthiness is one of the ways in which qualitative researchers ensure that transferability, credibility, dependability and confirmability are evident in their research (Given & Saumure , 2008). In this study I used the following procedures and strategies as a means of increasing trustworthiness; credibility, dependability and confirmability as discussed in more detail below.

3.9.2 Credibility

Credibility is the extent to which my study actually investigated parents' knowledge on children unregulated access to internet and the strategies the parents use in ensuring that they were regulating the children online as discussed below.

3.9.2.1 Triangulation

Transferability was adhered to ensure that the degree of the findings of the study was relevant to other contexts in which the study was not done. This was utilized in the

following ways during the study, I combined various data collection techniques at the focus group discussions in twenty different courts in order to collect data in regards to what parents know about the risk involved in children unregulated exposure to internet in different contexts.

During the study I also gathered evidence from a variety of data sources. Source triangulation involved getting data from different participants (Jwan & Ong'ondo, 2011). Each participant yielded different evidence that provided different insights regarding parental guidance to children exposure to internet. The findings of the quantitative phase were triangulated with the results of the qualitative phase so as to give a more complete picture of the research problem. That is, the analyzed data from focus group discussion (FGDs) were used to further explain the frequencies and percentages obtained from an analysis of the questionnaire data.

3.9.2.2 Conclusion

In this chapter I presented a detailed and clear explanation of how this study was carried out using a mixed approach. This chapter gave in-depth description on how participants were identified and selected for the study. It also gave a complete description of how questionnaires and focus group discussions (FGDs) were used to collect data from the selected participants.

Additionally, it gives a detailed explanation of how data from the quantitative and qualitative phase was analyzed and how the two were incorporated to present information

in relation to the three research questions. This information is presented as findings in Chapters Four. Chapter Four answers the three research questions, what do parents know about the risks of children's unregulated exposure to internet, what strategies parents use to regulate children access to internet and the challenges that parents experience in mediating children's access to internet.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

4.0 Overview

In this chapter, I present the data generated using the 189 questionnaires and six focus group discussions (FGDs). I will also report data on three research questions which sought to find out what parents' know about the risks associated with children's unregulated exposure to internet, what strategies parents use to regulate children access to internet and the challenges that parents experience in mediating children's access to

internet. After collecting data from the respondents, the data was edited, classified, coded and tabulated. The data analysis was based on the research objectives and questionnaire items which were analyzed using statistical tool referred to as frequency distribution tables and graphs, and the results of the analysis presented. The chapter is divided into quantitative and qualitative analysis.

4.1 Demographics

In this study at the quantitative phase (88.9%) majority of the participants were married parents, while the single parents were (11.1%). In my analysis I grouped participants in four categories thus: Both parents' families, single families, and the number of children in each household that varied from one to more than four children, the types of gadgets used to access the internet and lastly the nature of income either formal employment of business. The table below provides an overview summary of first phase quantitative data

Table 4.1: Summary of the First Phase Quantitative Demographics Data

STATEMENT	PERCENT
Both Parents	88.9
Single parent	11.1
No. of Children	
1 Child	8.5
2 Children	43.9
3 Children	44.4
4 Children & above	2.6
No Response	0.5

Family Head Occupation

Formal Employment	75.7
Business person	24.3

Internet Gadgets (Since most families own more than one Gadget the percentages are based on the no. of families)

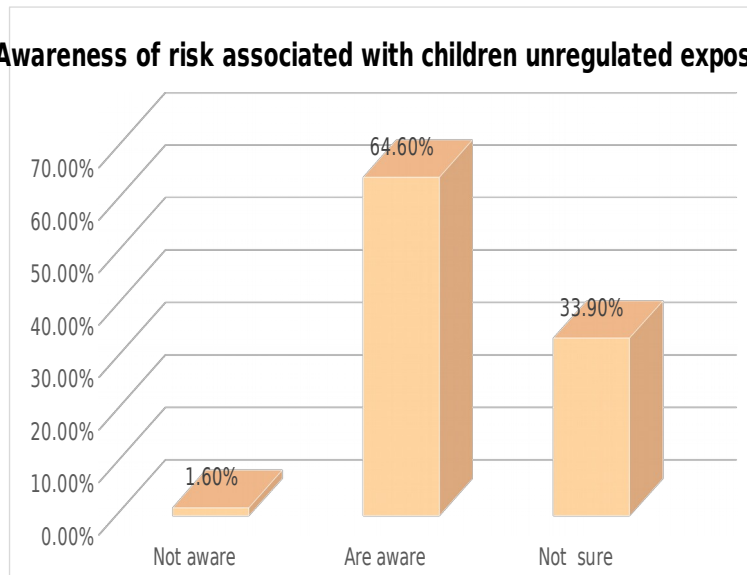
Smart phones	97.9
TV sets	99.5
Ipad	40.7
Computers	13.2

4.2 Parents knowledge of risks associated to children unregulated exposure to Internet

The study sought to find out whether parents know the risks associated with children unregulated exposure to internet. As presented below most parents are reported to have this knowledge. However, parents are confused on the best way of doing this. The effective use depends on parents knowing the importance of regulating their children online. When participants in quantitative phase were asked whether they were aware majority of them were aware, 64.6% confirmed that, 33.9% were not so sure and 1.6% were not aware of the risk they seem not to understand and were not sure whether there were any risks associated with children unregulated use of internet.

Diagram 1. Participants' knowledge of risks of children unregulated exposure to Internet

Participants Awareness of risk associated with children unregulated exposure to Internet



In order to explore the correlation between parents' knowledge on risks associated on children unregulated exposure to internet, focus group discussions were designed to give further details about parents' awareness. And just like the quantitative phase the study established that most parents were aware. Jane (not her real name) a mother of three children aged between 6 to 18 years, and a secondary school teacher acknowledged that she knew the risks and that's the reasons why she frequently monitored her eight-year-old daughter. Most of the parents in the focus groups discussion shared these sentiments.

John not his real name, a parent expressed the following

'Equally for me, what I do especially on the phone where I know they are some sites I don't want them to access I ensure they are password locked e.g. on my whatsapp you must input a password before you read it. My children are also in the same age bracket 5 and 10 and right now they do not know much. Hope when they get older I will have more ideas on what to do since it's a bit worrying.'

Janet not her real name also had this to say 'For me, my children are still young so anytime they access the internet; there is always someone around to check what they are doing. Later when they get a bit older, I will have to check the history and put some software's for blocking some sites they are not supposed to access.'

4.1.2 Parental Knowledge on the Nature of Risks That Exists Online

The study further established that most parents were even aware of the types of risks that exist online, among the types of risks mentioned 7.4% indicated bad influence on children's character. With a majority of the participants about 46.6% confirming fear of their children being exposed to pornography. In the qualitative phase some parents think their children were being exposed to cyber bullying due to the way their children were relating to their parents and their peers which seemed to be influenced mainly by their exposure to various media contents. Whereas in quantitative phase, a number of parents noted lack of concentration on school work and ignorance of more important life issues. Refer to the Table below on quantitative phase results.

Table 4.2: Parental Knowledge on Nature of Risks That Exists Online

	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Bad influence on character	14	7.4	7.4
Cyber crimes	88	46.6	54.0
Pornography	29	15.3	69.3
Exposure to harmful information	21	11.1	80.4
Cyber bullying	21	11.1	91.5
Lack of concentration on school work	1	.5	92.1
Ignorance of more important	3	1.6	93.7

life issues			
Irresponsibility	1	.5	94.2
No response	3	1.6	95.8
Not applicable	8	4.2	100.0
Total	189	100.0	

Participants on the qualitative phase shared the following in regards to threats and risks children are exposed to online.

Grace not her real name had these to say ‘For me, I would say yes and no. Yes, because when the parent is away, it is hard to know what the children access. Some of these may affect them negatively as they may attempt to experiment things like sex and download pornography, which is so worrying.’ Peter not his real name said ‘I have an incident when I found my son watching wrestling and minimized the window when he saw me. When I went to check what he was playing, I actually found out he was watching some animals mating. It was so disgusting. I therefore discouraged him from accessing such contents and instructed him to use it for good computer games and assignments.’

Below are children concerns as narrated during the focus group discussion stating some of the threats they are exposed to while online:

This is an incident as described by a 12-year-old girl

‘Yeah I had a friend who was bullied on social media, she was abused, they talked bad things, about her, and called her names like ‘you are stupid!!’ which made her feel low and depressed (contributes to low self-esteem).’

A story from a 13-year-old boy

‘I had a friend who thought that he had genuine cool group of friends on his chat, only to realize that his friends were slowing drawing him to drugs and before he realized it he was addicted to some drugs that he was being given.’

I observed some children, most of time when describing an incident on what happened they will always refer to an incident that happened to their friend and not themselves this

was to safeguard their image since they did not want to be associated with the risks involved for fear of being denied access to internet by their parents.

As noted by (Rogers, 2010) young children may not be strong enough to handle this negative attention as a result most of them develop depression and self-pity, lowering their self-esteem and morale. Which to some extent may lead to some children even committing suicide after being bullied on the internet. That is why it is important for parents to regulate their children internet exposure.

4.1.3 How parents regulate their children exposure to internet

Both the parents and children are worried about the amount of sexual content in most internet sites. Despite not being very conversant with what their children see on the internet, parents expressed concern over exposure to sexual content and explicit language on the internet.

In regulating their children most parents in the qualitative phase indicated how they advise their children on how to avoid looking at sites that were not appropriate for their age and guiding them by browsing together with them. Other parents regulated their children exposure to internet by generally instilling good morals to the children so that they are able to distinguish between good and bad morals, below are the sentiments that the parents shared.

Doris (not her real name) a mother of two girls aged 6 and 10 years had this to say;

‘But you see sometime they open sites that give them wrong advice. How do you go about that? In such like cases, the morals you instill on your kids play a big role such that good morals will lead them to get out of wrong sites.’ Eric (not his real name) shared the following ‘Apart from passwords, one can block the

contents of the computer. One can also allow the children to access the internet only when they are around them.'

John not his real name a father of two 6 and 8 years feels parents should create time to be with their children, despite their busy schedule. Otherwise, children spend time with neighbors and friends and therefore they acquire unfamiliar behavior. The parents should also maintain close relationship with their kids so that they are free to share everything with them.

On other hand during the children's focus group discussion on the qualitative phase the children reactions to their parental regulation on exposure to internet varied, some children felt their parents were interfering with their privacy. Others felt their parents could do more in regulating them, some felt their parents were too busy with life and therefore did not have time to spend with them, leave a lone monitoring them on their internet access, below are some of the statements as expressed by the children:

Joy (Not her real name) a 12-year-old girl said the following 'As for our parents they can regulate our use of internet by maybe trying to see the people we communicate with on internet, the sites we visit on the internet, what we do there, and the risks that come with visiting such sites.'

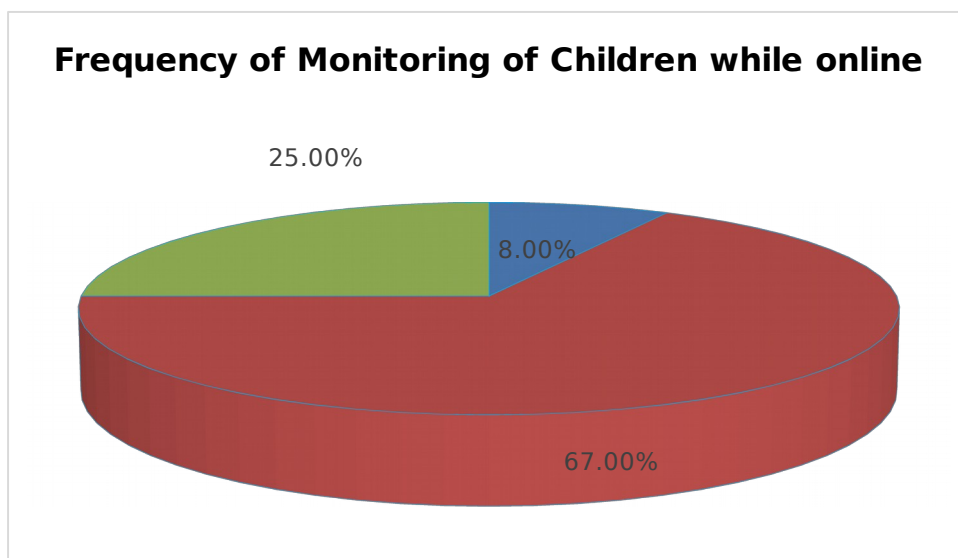
'They can also advise us on how or whether to tell these are the right group of people to be talking to, and how you can tell if these people have bad influence or not, yeah.'

Joseph (Not his real name) a 10-year-old boy said 'Yes, my parents help but it is good to also get their views, our parents should be updated on online activities, yes and have a wide view so that they can be well equipped and well researched in order to be in a position to assist us'

Jane (not her real name) 11-year-old girl said ' My parents are so busy, they don't have time to spend with us, so how do we expect them to know what we do offline leave alone online.'

Below are the results from the quantitative results on how frequent the parents monitor their children online:

Diagram 2: Frequency of Monitoring of Children while online



67% - frequently monitored,
25% - Monitored once in a while and
8% - never monitored

The quantitative phase data revealed that (67%) of the participants frequently monitor their children online activities, whereas 25% of the participants monitored once in a while and 8% did not monitor their children at all. It is therefore evident most of the parents know the importance of monitoring their children online activities.

4.1.4 Challenges of monitoring children online activities

The internet is proving challenging and even frustrating for parents and children as they attempt to fit it into their homes and their lives (Price, 2005). The first step of ensuring successful parental regulation of internet use by children is by understanding the children's internet behavior.

During the quantitative phase of the study parents indicated the challenges that they faced while regulating their children online activities, which was captured through the number of non-receptive children when being monitored. The reason given for being non-receptive was the children felt that the parents were interfering with their privacy however their response reflected the social learning theory that punishes and rewards children according to their actions. Therefore, for those children who resisted being monitoring, their parents still insisted on monitoring them by explaining to them about the risks that exists and for those who continued to be resistant some of the parents were denying them access to internet by disabling the internet connection or taking away the gadgets that connects the children to the internet such as smart phones, IPad and the laptops.

Table 4.3: Showing Reasons for Non-Reception to Parental Monitoring

	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
They feel monitoring them is intruding into their privacy	2	2.1	2.1
Children who accepted to be monitored on-line	185	97.9	100.0
Total	189	100.0	

From this study it shows the number of children that resisted being monitored was very small, the results show only that 2.1% of the respondents felt monitoring children is intruding into their privacy. The majority 97.9% of the respondent was very receptive and therefore it was not a problem for them to be monitored by their parents.

As for the qualitative phase parents expressed the same fears by indicating children were using different tricks for instance by using the smaller kids to get access to grow ups phone and therefore view stuffs that were not suitable for them as explained below by one of the participants.

Cynthia not her real name had this to say:

‘My bigger daughter who is 10 year uses my son who is two and a half years old. So my daughter takes advantage of the kid who does not know anything. So once the boy brings the phone to her, they use the talking Tom system but after a short while, the boy gets the phone to the girl who now begins to check all she wants to check. You find that in most cases, that we have saved some songs which are not very interesting to the children. My daughter begins to dance to these songs. When I once found her dancing, I asked her if she understood what she was dancing to. I sat with her and explained to her that the content of the songs was not for the kids. After that she stopped.’

Peter not his real name a father of one boy aged 9 years had this to say:

‘The other challenge is to balance between restriction and freedom because sometimes they may want to watch cartoons at a particular time when you do not want them to, since they are still young you can say no and they comply with it although they may not be happy with it. Another challenge is that you may not always be there to control what they watch hence ensuring they watch the right content is a challenge.’

4.1.5 Conclusion

This chapter presented findings related to all the research questions, one which was to sought and investigate what parents know about the risks of children unregulated exposure to internet. The chapter revealed that most the parents know about the risks, in addition to that parents’ relationship with their children was linked to this. The findings also revealed that even though most parents were aware of the risks associated with children unregulated exposure to internet, most of them were inconsistence in their regulation. This chapter further revealed that a child’s age and parent’s cultural background influenced parents’ sensitivity on internet impact. However, some parents were not conversant with the risks associated with children unregulated exposure to internet, it was important to find out how parents implement parental regulations over children exposure to internet considering the varied nature of children’s interests. These findings are presented in chapter five.

CHAPTER FIVE

FINDINGS, DISCUSSION, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0. Overview

In this chapter, I present the summary of key findings followed by a discussion. I also present the conclusions and finally I give recommendations and suggestions for further research. This study had three main objectives which were to establish what parents know about the risks of children's unregulated exposure to internet, the strategies they use to regulate children access to internet and the challenges parents experience in mediating children's access to internet. I specifically present data on control mechanism that parents put in place to ensure that children are not exposed to inappropriate materials on internet. The discussions were presented in line with the objectives of the study while the conclusion puts together all the major aspects of the study and presents a general view on the topic. Suggestions for further research in relation to the study have also been given.

Below exemplifies some of the key findings from data gathered via survey questionnaire and focus group discussions.

Table 5.1: Summary of Key Findings

KEY FINDINGS
<p>1. What do parents know about the risks of children unregulated exposure to internet?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents have general knowledge about internet risks • Digital divide between the parents and children • Parents views on how to regulate their children online. • Factors that influence parents' views about children internet regulation.
<p>2. What strategies do parents use to regulate children access to internet?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By use of passwords • Restrictive use of internet by limiting time taken to access internet. • Co-viewing • How parents' knowledge of internet influence children's views and action in regard to exposure to internet • Checking of web site history • Blocking of unsafe internet sites
<p>3. What challenges do parents experience in mediating children's access to internet?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Influence by siblings • Inconsistency in the implementation • Children's reaction to parental regulation • Actual regulation of children's exposure to internet. • Varied levels of parental regulation in regard to internet regulation • Children's views on parental guidance • Conflict between parents and children over access to internet.

5.2 Discussion

In relation to literature review, I will present in the section below a detailed discussion of the key findings on what parents know about unregulated internet exposure to children, what strategies parents use to regulate children access to internet and the challenges that parents experience in mediating children's access to internet.

5.2.1 What parents know about the risks of children's unregulated exposure to internet?

Over the time internet access has shifted from computer to smaller portable and handheld devices that are easily accessible to children. Many children nowadays at least own a phone or tablet that they can access the internet. In this study there is assurance that most parents are aware about the risks associated with children's unregulated exposure to internet. The findings of the study show that 97% of parent attested to the fact that their existed risks for children who are not regulated online. This owns to the fact that most of the parents mentioned how they monitored their children's exposure to internet. The results further showed that one of reason for parents monitoring their children online was to give children guidance on the contents that they were likely to encounter online. Children use the internet for various purposes, most commonly used in social networking. Most of the children between the ages eight to fourteen years use smart phones to send receive and post messages and photos online using social networking sites such as Facebook, twitter and WhatsApp among others.

However, the lower proportions of parents who did not attest to the existence of risk among children unregulated exposure to internet, points to a gloomy picture of reluctance

in solving problems of children risks on unregulated exposure to internet. In many countries it is difficult for parents to effectively communicate information on child abuse among themselves. The study revealed that majority of households often agree that there exist risks for children who are not regulated.

5.2.2. The Nature of Threats That Children Are Exposed To Online

One thing that clearly illustrated that the parents were aware of the risks that their children are exposed to while online was the type of risks that the parents mentioned in the first phase. Which included bad influence on children's character, children being exposed to pornography and to harmful information, exposure to cybercrimes had the highest number with a percentage, among the other threats was cyber bullying, children's lack of concentration on school work and ignorance of more important life issues while some children show signs of irresponsibility. Whereas on the qualitative phase the same risks that children were exposed to came up where most parents expressed their worries about the same.

Concerning online risks, most of the parents totally agreed that they knew the risks of cyberspace. Based on the findings of this study, many children and teenagers appear to demonstrate a degree of pragmatism regarding the possibility of encountering risks online. They indicated that it was necessary to take some risks and also acknowledged that they would encounter possible dangerous sites without wishing to and that they explored sites irrespective of what they found there.

The devices most commonly used are mobile phones with Internet access or computers in cyber cafes across the country. Parents reported children hiding or lying about their use of social networks, which was also commonly recounted among them. Notwithstanding all the benefits and advantages, the online world is faced with likely threats to children and youths which include sexual texting, harassment, sexual advancement from outsiders, online bullying among others risks that children encounter. Formation and implementation of laws that govern how children use internet will protect children from eminent dangers that they face online (Lonie, 2014).

The Internet collapses physical distance and propositions, there is a considerable content of unregulated 'space' accessible to all by means of computers, laptops and increasingly by mobile devices such as smart phones and tablets. Openness and ease of access are vital aspects of the Internet however there exists some of the extreme risks particularly concerning the safety and wellbeing of children and youth (Richards, et al, 2010). The unsupervised online access to internet devices avail children to being potential vulnerable to violence, abuse and exploitation in ways that are often challenging for parents and guardians to sense and respond to this kind of risks (Livingstone, 2008). Likewise, technological advances have been so rapid that parents time and again struggle to keep up with developments particularly in areas with little levels of digital literacy.

The Internet has intensified the imminent impact of existing forms of violence, abuse and exploitation. These include children's exposure to disturbing and potentially harmful content on websites and online forums. With this increased levels of harm for the victims and increase of computer-generated networks of individuals, whose principal interest lies

in child sexual abuse, child trafficking among other forms of exploitation which often results in children's taking part in age inappropriate playoffs with great intensities of violent, racist or sexist content it is necessary for parents to regulate the children's online activities, in order to protect them. This illustrates the role of technology in generating and encouraging violence against children has been growing in recent years with little effort of monitoring or control in place, Livingstone (2008).

Though comparable research and data are not available for all countries and regions, studies suggest that in developed countries awareness of the risks to children associated with the Internet has been gradually increasing, for instance in the 2013 Global Survey on Violence Against Children conducted by the United Nations Special Representative of the Secretary-General (SRSG), it was noted that there is a rising awareness on online risks through Internet and mobile communication devices done through surveys, research and online campaigns. Nevertheless, the scenario is different in many middle income countries, where the Internet is growing at rapid speeds making it difficult to assess how young people are using it, let alone how to protect them from underlying dangers.

5.2.3 How Parents Regulate Their Children Online Activities

Relatively a large number of parents are showing concern over their children's online activities as I have explained the kind of contents these children are exposed to as presented in chapter four, the main question is what are the parents doing about this? Preventing children from gaining access to inappropriate materials can be seen as the most strategy for controlling the undesirable influences of inappropriate internet content.

Most parents confirmed that they were aware of the risks and therefore they regularly regulated their children online use.

It was noted that on the quantitative phase data that most parents who monitored their children once in a while, their intention was to give the children some space and privacy so that they could not see parents as interfering with their space, however the parents stated they occasionally gave children guidance on the correct online contents. A few of the parents stated that they wanted their children to develop their own accountability while online thus to be able to judge what was good for them and what they could avoid. Whereas some of the parents seem not sure about their children's frequency of internet access and therefore could not determine when to monitor them, this was also confirmed by parents who frequently travel and were only available once in a while to check their children online use. For those who monitored their children all the time when they were available, the reason they gave was to guide them all the time on appropriate contents to ensure effective use of the internet. While on the qualitative phase most of the parents in the focus group discussions shared the same answers demonstrating that the risks associated with their children unregulated exposure to internet truly exists.

5.2.4. The strategies used by parents to regulate children access to internet

The manner in which parents communicate to their child affects how they manage their media use. Some parents communicate openly to their children and encourage autonomy, others are unconcerned and do not put into consideration about the children's emotional concerns (Steyer, 2003). Most times the dynamics of how parents and children communicate together will influence media management. In this study the information

gathered through communication among the parents and the children was found useful in helping them to make better decisions concerning children safe usage of internet thus by equipping the children against the risks rather than protecting them against the internet.

It is difficult to make internet use a shared activity because of screen size, sitting position and the reliance on the mouse to navigate on the screen. Most online activities cannot be easily monitored with a casual glance at the screen, given multitasking across multiple open windows, therefore making it difficult for parents to regulate their children. Also to be noted is that online risks to children are greater than those related to television due to the extreme levels of violent or pornographic content and the contact risks from strangers which lead to rise of greater anxieties among parents (Peter & Valkenburg, 2006).

From my study the results showed that most of the parents co-view the sites together with their children and help them select acceptable media contents by actively controlling which sites to be visited, Some parents will sit with their children in the same room and once in a while check on the screen to monitor what they are doing, the other group of parents will ask the children what they are viewing then depending on the answer, they take it from what their children answer, other parents will look at the history of sites visited though this seem not to be effective since the children are capable of erasing all the history of sites visited , while a group of parents use passwords to protect their children from accessing sites that they consider to contain inappropriate information to children.

However, in this study it was established from the respondents that the strategies used by parents to regulate children access to internet were interfering with the privacy of their

children. I also established that more than half of the parents stated that they did not have enough time to monitor their children internet use.

The role of the children in the study was quite important, as for some parents the digital divide appeared to hinder them from properly monitoring their children, since most children seem to know more than their parents, parents are to acquire more skills in order to be in a better position to support their children in safe internet usage. The study shows some children do not appreciate how their parents are regulating their online activities. They think that parents should put more effort in regulating them by being consistence instead of monitoring them once in a while.

Both the survey and the case study showed how parents monitored their children use of internet, about 98% impose rules on whether their child can give out personal information online and they also talk to their children about online risks such as exposure to inappropriate content, cyber bullying, pornography and exposure to sexual materials. Most parents stay nearby their children online. Monitoring what the child does online, this seemed a popular approach, however a few parents felt it may imply less trust. While three quarters use software to prevent spam and viruses, although less than a third use filters for safety reasons.

Around one in ten parents do few or none of the forms of mediation I asked about. It was noted that most parents reduce their mediation particularly restrictions as children get older. From this research I established that parents do more active and safety mediation though with less restrictions. For those parents who use the internet more often, or those

who are more confident when using internet, do more of all forms of mediation except from restrictions.

5.3. Challenges Parents Experience in Mediating Children's Access to Internet

In answering the third research question, it emerged that most parents are involved in monitoring and/or actively mediating their children's internet exposure. This study revealed, various challenges that parents face while seeking to implement parental guidance in regards to internet exposure in their homes. Supervision against children's exposure to inappropriate content showed some inconsistency on implementation of parental regulations, additionally some effects brought about by children's reaction to parental guidance, are influenced by siblings and absence of parents from home due to work-related obligations. These factors significantly reduce the ability of parents to regulate internet content that their children get exposed to.

Challenges can take many forms such as physical, emotional or structural. The study determined the challenges in children's safe internet usage as attested by both parents and children. Most of the children fear to inform their parents on the risks they encounter on internet for fear of their phones being taken away from them. Some children admit that they do not report these cases because they are not sure of the reactions of their parents. Other children know that their parents don't understand the circumstances by which these cyber-crimes arrive as a result fail to report to their parents.

The result shows from the quantitative phase shows that most children feel that their parents are interfering with their privacy while regulating their online activities.

5.4. Reasons for Children Resisting Parental Monitoring

The revealed that it was more difficult for parents to control older children than the younger ones, since the older ones termed their parents monitoring as interfering with their freedom. During the qualitative phase the parents with older children and those parents living with relatives had problems in regulating their younger children due to influence from older siblings hence parents experiencing difficulties while implementing parental guidance on internet exposure.

Parents further stated that with this era of smart phones, it is quite hard to prevent children from sharing what sup messages and videos with older siblings some of those contents are inappropriate for children under 12 years but since the older siblings share bedrooms they view those funny contents in their bedrooms and expose the younger children to inappropriate materials and hence it becomes very difficult to monitor the younger children. This study further established that most parents were afraid of guiding their children on internet for fear that after talking to them about pornography the next time they are on internet they will go to Google and search for it. Most parents on the three focus group discussions expressed their fears since after cautioning children against some contents, this influenced the children to find out more to establish why they were being prevented.

Cultural barriers are not a new phenomenon in the Kenyan society, in this study stigma can be the one associated with cultural beliefs, this occurs especially in cases of sexual abuse, especially when children are growing to teenager stage where they need to know

more information on sexuality which is not provided by the parents as a result children tend to get the information from the social media, which then gives them the wrong advice. Some parents view matters of sexuality as being a taboo thus rendering most children with no option rather than the internet.

5.5 Conclusion

This study focused at finding out parents' knowledge of children unregulated exposure to internet, how they regulate their children exposure to internet and in the process of doing so what challenges they faced. Questionnaires and focus group discussions were used for data collection. The study findings have contributed knowledge to communication Studies and specifically the area of media effects by revealing that some parents do not know the importance of parental regulation of children's exposure to internet. This lack of knowledge has led most parents to implement parental mediation styles that either encourages their children to view age inappropriate internet content that could result to misleading behaviors.

Likewise, children are aware of the threats that are associated with their online exposure and therefore there's need for parental regulation however they perceive the styles used by their parents in regulating them as interfering with their privacy hence leading to conflict over children access to internet. These findings answered all the three research questioned posed by this study. The study has further demonstrated need for the development of awareness campaign to educate parents on the importance of regulating children exposure to internet.

Information and communication technologies (ICTs) are further developing rapidly, with intense effects upon people all the around the world. ICTs bring to the society massive benefits and opportunities, mainly by facilitating access to the Internet. Internet is creating new ways of communicating, learning, delivering services and doing business. For children and youth, who are often mostly proficient at harnessing the potential of these technologies, ICTs and the Internet represent a significant opportunity for empowerment and engagement, offering new means of experiencing creative processes, communication, social interaction, entertainment and learning. Children are not only passive recipients of information but they are also participants and actors in the online world (Boyd 2006)

Each one has a role to play in empowering children to stay safe while they use these new technologies that includes internet, just as it is on non-digital world everyone's responsibility is to keep children safe. This new culture of responsibility calls for parents, children and young people supported by Government, industry and the public and third sectors to step in. "Kids don't need protection they need guidance. If you protect the children, you are making them weaker, they don't go through all the trial and error necessary to learn how they need to survive, parents don't have to fight for their children's battles in order to give them assistance but to equip them with the necessary protection" Livingstone, S. (2008).

In this study it indicated that most of the respondents showed that parents were not adequately doing enough to regulate their children access to internet. The methods suggested for improving parental regulation of children's exposure to internet from

unwanted contents was the government to put more measures to ensure that internet providers are sensible on the contents they post on their websites and to be held accountable for the contents they post. There should be provision of global rules on permitted contents on the internet and creation of more awareness and skills improvement on parents to narrow down the digital divided between the parents and their children. These were amongst the suggestion from the respondents on way forward on improving parental regulation methods to children exposure to internet.

5.6 Recommendation

Technology which includes internet offers extraordinary opportunities for all of humanity, children and young people included. The internet allows comprehensive exploration which can similarly bring risks, frequently parallel to the offline sphere. Internet through video games offers a variety of exciting interactive capabilities for children, though some of the materials are designed for adults only. There exists a digital divide among parents and children which indicates that most parents are not empowered to manage risks in the digital world, in the same way they do in real life (Livingstone, S. 2008).

The internet is often met by public fear about its impact on society and anxiety, this concern therefore leads to emotive calls for action. Certainly, children's use of the internet has been directly linked to violent and destructive behavior in the young people. There are also growing concerns about excessive use of these technologies by children at the expense of other activities and family interaction.

On the internet development, the technology and the children use of it has moved so fast and therefore it is difficult for research to keep up. Given the harmful nature of illegal contact with children online it is clear that there exists a risk. But the main concern has been to look at the grey zones of legal, adult material such as 18 years old and above, in addition to the risks to children face online from a huge range of possibly harmful or inappropriate content and their contact with others in relation to their own conduct.

Parents need to take into account children's individual strengths and vulnerabilities, because those are some of the factors that can discriminate a 'beneficial' from a 'harmful' experience online. A similar content can be useful to a child at a definite point in their life and development and may also be equally damaging to another child. That means concentrating on the child, thus parents should be able to know how children's brains develop, how they learn and how they change as they grow up.

5.6.1 Need for a Regulatory Framework on Children Online Exposure

In relation to findings I recommend that the government through its appropriate functions should come up with a regulatory framework on internet that will assist in safeguarding and protecting the fundamental rights of children through collective responsibility. Based on my study findings parents and children are afraid about the amount of sexual content in most internet sites provided, I recommend restrictive measures be taken by CCK on services providers to consider children who are minors and lastly there should be consistency in implementation of parental regulation of children exposure to internet and

all internet providers should display warning on age appropriate content in order to draw a clear line on children appropriate sites.

5.7. Suggestion for further Research

The extent of social research done on parents' knowledge regulation of children exposure to internet and its influence on children in Kenya is not adequate. The quantitative and qualitative analysis in this study is a step towards understanding what parents know about parental regulation of children exposure. How parents implement parental regulation depends on the varied nature of internet sites and children's interests. The parents' knowledge of implementing parental guidance influences children's views on internet. However, there is significant need for further research in this area of study. While this study revealed parents' knowledge of children's' unregulated exposure to internet, it would be valuable to know whether similar results would be achieved if the research site would have been a mixed setting of both urban and rural settings.

This study used a mixed approach with much emphasize on the qualitative phase. Future studies might consider on the use of random sampling of a larger group to establish greater population validity. There are important issues on this study that will need a follow up to address them. In view of this the researcher makes the following recommendations for further studies.

A study should be done to determine regulation of children use of internet from other entities such as teachers, the government and the entire society. In this way the study will be addressing the society as a whole as being responsible for managing child abuse cases

via internet. There is need to replicate the same study in other counties to establish the role of society in addressing safe internet use for children in as many counties as possible. In this way there will be accumulated knowledge that could be collected to address the problem of unsafe use of internet on children in Kenya and the rest of the world.

The significance of a research project is determined not only by the new data attained, but how the study complements previous investigations besides contributing to our understanding of comprehensive effects of internet exposure to children. There is need to investigate the role of modern methods of communication using technological advancement on the successful implementation of child online safety management. Since technology is changing such a study would ascertain if more efficient method of communication can be applied.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX I: LETTER OF INTRODUCTION

Moi University

P.O. Box 3900

Eldoret

Dear Respondent,

I'm a student at the Moi University (Nairobi Campus) pursuing a Master's of Science degree in communication studies. As part of the fulfillment of my degree I am required to carry out a research focusing on parental regulation of children exposure to internet at an upmarket residential area in Nairobi.

I am intending to purposively select 200 participants who include parents of children aged 8 to 14 years old and must have at least have one internet device in the homestead. You will be requested to voluntarily participate by completing the attached questionnaire. On the second phase of the research I will hold six focus groups discussions, three with parents of teenager children and the other three groups with children between the ages of 8 -14 years. All the information that you will provide will be kept confidential and will be only for academic purposes.

This study will be important for parents and the community in general since information given will help in coming up with effective regulatory policies to aid parents understand better how to regulate their children exposure to internet. Your assistance and co-operation will be highly regarded, thank you.

Yours faithfully,

Eva Kiti

Master's Student

Department of Communication Studies

APPENDIX: II RESEARCH CLARENCE PERMIT

THIS IS TO CERTIFY THAT:

**MS. EVA MMBONE KITI
of MOI UNIVERSITY - NAIROBI CAMPUS,
0-100 Nairobi, has been permitted to
conduct research in Nairobi County**

Permit No : NACOSTI/P/15/8998/6245

Date Of Issue : 17th June,2015

Fee Received :Ksh 1,000

**on the topic: PARENTAL REGULATION
OF CHILDREN EXPOSURE TO INTERNET
AT AN UPMARKET RESIDENTIAL AREA IN
NAIROBI, KENYA**

**for the period ending:
20th November,2015**



E. Mmbone Kiti
**Applicant's
Signature**

[Signature]
**Director General
National Commission for Science,
Technology & Innovation**

CONDITIONS

- 1. You must report to the County Commissioner and the County Education Officer of the area before embarking on your research. Failure to do that may lead to the cancellation of your permit**
- 2. Government Officers will not be interviewed without prior appointment.**
- 3. No questionnaire will be used unless it has been approved.**
- 4. Excavation, filming and collection of biological specimens are subject to further permission from the relevant Government Ministries.**
- 5. You are required to submit at least two(2) hard copies and one(1) soft copy of your final report.**
- 6. The Government of Kenya reserves the right to modify the conditions of this permit including its cancellation without notice.**



REPUBLIC OF KENYA



**National Commission for Science,
Technology and Innovation**

**RESEARCH CLEARANCE
PERMIT**

Serial No. A 5408

CONDITIONS: see back page

APPENDIX III: INFORMED CONSENT FORM



Informed Consent for Parents at an upmarket residential area in Nairobi County (Kenya) whom I am inviting to participate in the research project titled “Parental Regulation of Children Exposure to Internet at an Upmarket Residential Area in Nairobi County - Kenya”

Investigator: Eva Kiti
 Moi University
 Department of Communication Studies

This Informed Consent Form has two parts:

- **Information Sheet (to share information about the study with you)**
- **Certificate of Consent (for signatures if you choose to participate)**

You will be given a copy of the full Informed Consent Form

PART I: INFORMATION SHEET

Introduction

I am Eva Kiti from Moi University. I am undertaking a research on parental regulation of children exposure to internet at an upmarket residential area in Nairobi County - Kenya. I will give you information about the research and invite you to be part of this research. Before you or your children decide to be part of this research, think over it and make informed decision. This consent may contain words you do not understand, kindly ask for clarity.

Purpose of the Study

This study seeks to investigate parental regulation of children exposure to internet at an upmarket residential area in Nairobi County – Kenya. The objective being to establish whether parents know about the risks of children's unregulated exposure to internet and the strategies that parents use to regulate children access to internet and lastly the challenges that parents experience in mediating children's access to internet. This will provide the basis that may contribute in policy creations aimed at creating a regulatory frame work in regulating Children exposure to internet.

Participant selection

You are among the 36 participants who have been chosen to participate in this study with your experience as a parent, you may be concerned with your children exposure to internet, and may provide us with information that will be useful in generating an understanding about the threats that your children are exposed to and the kind of challenges that you face while regulating your children’s exposure to internet. During the course of study both you and your children between the ages of 8-14 years may be asked to participate in focus group discussions.

Voluntary Participation

Your participation in this research is entirely voluntary. It is your choice whether to participate or not. If you choose not to participate, the nature of your activities in this division will not be affected in any way.

Procedures

I am asking you to help in understanding your stand on children regulation on internet exposure, how you regulate your children online activities and the challenges that you face while seeking to implement this. If you and your children choose to participate in the study, I will be requesting you to participate in the focus group discussions where I will hold separately three focus groups for parents in groups of 5-10 and three focus groups for children in groups of 5-10 participants. This will give you an opportunity to share your experiences in more details in the focus group discussions. I will guide the discussion. During the discussion, I will raise a question and each of you will be expected to contribute in the discussion depending on your individual experiences. We will all agree on the best venue where we will carry out the discussions. The questions will mainly revolve around the experiences, challenges and awareness of parental regulation to internet exposures.

Duration

The study will take four to five months. During that time, I will visit you for a focus group discussion on an agreed venue and time. All the discussions will take at most one hour.

Benefits

The kind of information you and your children will give, will help to understand the nature of experiences and challenges that you experience while regulating your children exposure to internet. This may help to form recommendations that can help alleviate the problems you encounter.

Sharing of Information

I will not share any information that you give with anybody outside the research team. But if I choose to use the information my reports, I will not reveal your identity in any way. Information that I get from this research will be shared with you before it is made available to the open. I will arrange for a meeting with all those who will have participated in the research where I will inform you of the kind of information that I got through your participation. After the meetings, I will publish the results so that other concerned parties may learn from the study.

Right to Refuse or Withdraw

Your participation is entirely voluntary. You reserve the right to withdraw to participate at any stage with have no consequences on you.

Confidentiality

The researcher will protect information about the study, and all study information will be identified only by individual participant code numbers and will be kept confidential in a locked file drawer at Moi University. This information will only be available to study staff. The focus group may be made part of the final research report but your identity will not, in any way be reflected in the report.

If You Have Questions

If you have any questions or concerns about the research, you may contact my supervisors

<p>Dr. Abraham Kiprop Mulwo Lecturer: Department of Communication Studies, Moi University, P.O Box 3900, Eldoret, Kenya. Email: abraham.mulwo@gmail.com</p>	<p>Dr. Stella Chebii Lecturer: Department of Communication Studies, Moi University, P.O Box 3900, Eldoret, Kenya. Email: stellachebii@yahoo.com</p>
--	---

This study has been reviewed and approved by the National Council of Science and Technology (NCST)

PART II: CERTIFICATE OF CONSENT

I have been asked to participate in a study which aims at finding out parents' regulation of children exposure to internet at an upmarket residential area in Nairobi County- Kenya and I voluntarily agree myself and my child/children to participate in the study.

Name of Participant _____
Signature of the witness _____
Date _____

Thumb Print of Participant



Statement by the researcher/person taking consent

I have accurately read out the information sheet to the potential participant, and to the best of my ability made sure that the participant understands that he/she will participate in the focus group discussion

I confirm that the participant was given an opportunity to ask questions about the study, and all the questions asked by the participant have been answered correctly and to the best of my ability. I confirm that the individual has not been coerced into giving consent and that consent has been given freely and voluntarily.

A copy of this form has been provided to the participant.

Name of the Researcher _____
Signature of Researcher _____
Date _____

APPENDIX IV: QUESTIONNAIRES FOR THE HOUSEHOLDS

Instructions: Respond to each question by ticking/marking by choosing the appropriate answer.

Section A: Background Information

1. This questionnaire was filled by? _____

Both parents ()

Male head ()

Female head ()

2. Communication gadgets owned by the family:

TV () Mobile Phone () cell phones () Computers ()

Others () Specify _____

Specify the number in regards to the gadgets selected

One b) Two c) three d) More than three d) Others _____

3. Main occupation of family head:

Business person () formal employment ()

4. Number of teenagers in the family

a) 1 () b) 2 () c) 3 () d) 4 and above ()

Section B: Parental Regulation of Children Exposure to Internet

1. How often do your children access the internet?

Not at all () Daily () Weekly () Monthly () I don't know ()

2. i) Are you aware of the risks your children are exposure while on line. _____

Yes () No () _____

3. How closely do you monitor them while they are online? _____

Never () Once in a while () All the time () _____

ii) Reason for your answer in 2(i) above

.....

3. i) What kind of sites do the children love visiting the most?

Social media/sites () Entertainment sites () Educative/informative sites ()
 Others (Specify).....

ii) In your assessment, what do they gain by visiting the site (s) you have indicated in 3(i) above?.....

.....

4. i) How receptive are the children to them being monitored while online?

Very receptive () Fairly receptive () Not receptive at all ()

ii) If they are not receptive, why?

.....

v) How do you handle the children who don't want to be monitored while online?

I insist on monitoring them () I leave them alone ()

I deny them access to the necessary gadgets () Others (Specify).....

5(i) Do you sense any threats in children's access to internet?

Yes () No ()

(ii) If yes, which ones?

.....

6. To what extent do the following risks affect children on their use of internet?

	Very Low extent (1)	Low extent (2)	Neutral (3)	High extent (4)	Very High extent (5)	Have you talked to your child about this risk Answer(Yes/No)
Cyber bullying						
Internet Crimes						

Towards the goal of improving parental regulation of children exposure to internet at an upmarket residential area in Nairobi County the proposed research has the following objectives:

- i. To establish what parents know about the risks of children's unregulated exposure to internet.
- ii. To know the strategies that parents use to regulate children access to internet.
- iii. The challenges that parents experience in mediating children's access to internet.

Before the interview time of the group discussion, the respondents should have read or have been informed and made to understand the content of the informed consent form, and agreed to participate in the study. This should be confirmed at the beginning of every discussion.

Introductions

The Researcher

- i. Welcomes group and thanks the participants for their involvement.
- ii. Introduces and explains the purpose and methodology of the focus group discussion.
- iii. Confirm to the participates and emphasize that their voices and thoughts will lead us to better support on children's internet regulation.
- iv. Explains approximately how long the discussion will take
- v. Emphasizes that participation is voluntary and anyone is free to decline to respond to specific question(s) she is not comfortable with, or to withdraw from the discussions at any stage he or she wishes to do so
- vi. Assures participants of confidentiality and anonymity

- vii. Encourages everyone to be honest and open
- viii. Explains that the facilitator will be asking questions and any one is free to respond
- ix. Explains that participants may interject if they have questions, comments or/and need clarifications
- x. Asks if anybody has any question or comment on this study?

Section 1: The Contexts

- 1.1 Do your children have access to internet? (Probe frequency, medium of access, where children have access, etc)
- 1.2 How do your children use the internet? (Probe for examples)
- 1.2 How useful do you think internet is for your children? (Probe for examples)
- 1.2 Does your children's access to internet worry you? (Probe reasons, examples of specific incidents)
- 1.2 Do you have any control on what your children access on internet? (Probe: How, why, etc)
- 1.3 What are your experiences in regulating what your children access in the internet (Probe for examples of incidences?)
- 1.4 Do you experience any challenges in attempting to regulate what your children access on the internet? (Probe for the challenges, specific examples of instances/incidences, what do parents do to overcome these challenges?)
- 1.5. What do you think should be done to improve children's use of internet in Kenya? (Probe for suggestions)
- 1.2 Any challenges/difficulties/vulnerabilities? (Probe for examples and incidence)
- 1.3 How do you deal with these challenges/difficulties? (Probe for examples of

Incidents)

1.7 What suggestions would you make towards improvement of children's internet use?

Section 2: Conclusion

The Researcher:

- 3.1 Asks the participants if they have any questions or comments. If any, the researcher should answer them honestly and inform as much as possible.
- 3.2 Thank them for participating
- 3.3 Affirm them and explain that the information that they have given is useful
- 3.4 Give some contact information for future contact if need be

APPENDIX VI: ANNEX III: PROTOCOL FOR CHILDREN FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION

CHILDREN

On the section of children the objectives are to:

- i. To establish what contents the children look for on the internet
- ii. To identify the specific challenges that children face when accessing internet
- iii. To propose specific strategies that children may adopt towards improving parental regulation of children exposure to internet

Introductions

The Researcher

- i. Welcomes group and thanks the participants for their involvement.
- ii. Introduces and explains the purpose and methodology of the focus group discussion.
- iii. Confirm to the participants and emphasize that their voices and thoughts will lead us to better support on children's internet regulation.
- iv. Explains approximately how long the discussion will take
- v. Emphasizes that participation is voluntary and anyone is free to decline to respond to specific question(s) she is not comfortable with, or to withdraw from the discussions at any stage he or she wishes to do so
- vi. Assures participants of confidentiality and anonymity
- vii. Encourages everyone to be honest and open
- viii. Explains that the facilitator will be asking questions and any one is free to respond
- ix. Explains that participants may interject if they have questions, comments or/and need clarifications
- x. Asks if anybody has any question or comment on this study?

Section 1: Introduction

The children introduce themselves:

- 1.1. Name (if they wish)
- 1.2. Demographic characteristics age, the length of time that they have been exposed to internet
- 1.3. What type of contents do you look for on the internet? (Probe, for specific incidence/examples)

- 1.4. How do you deal with these challenges/difficulties? (Probe, for incidence and examples)
- 1.5. What interests you on internet? (Probe, for further explanation of contents)
- 1.6. How could you wish your internet usage to be regulated by your parents? (Probe, for them to give suggestions and let them state why)

Section 2: Conclusion

The Researcher:

- 2.1 Asks the participants if they have any questions or comments. If any, the researcher should answer them honestly and inform as much as possible.
- 2.2 Thank them for participating
- 2.3 Affirm them and explain that the information that they have given is useful
- 2.4 Give some contact information for future contact if need be

APPENDIX VII: SAMPLE OF CODES FROM THE OPEN CODING

1. Too much sexual content
2. Exposure to inappropriate materials
3. Educative programs on the internet
4. Children visiting internet sites unregulated
5. Cyber bullying
6. Exposure to internet crimes
7. Lack of age appropriate warning system on websites
8. Gender matters
9. Upbringing matters
10. Never heard of internet risks
11. Social networking amongst children

12. Parents checking website history
13. Parent co-viewing internet content with children
14. Lack of parental regulations knowledge
15. Irresponsible internet web sites
16. Time constraint
17. Children are uncontrollable
18. Bad influence on children's character
19. Older siblings interference
20. Disobedient children
21. Age matters
22. Digital divide between parents and children
23. Other

APPENDIX VIII: SAMPLE CATEGORIES OF AXIAL CODING

Lack of knowledge on risks of children unregulated parental regulation exposure to internet

- Unaware of risks
- Aware of the risks
- Children viewing internet unregulated

Parent views on internet content

- Too much sexual content
- Exposure to cyber crimes
- Bad influence on children characters
- Cyber bullying
- pornography
- Age matters

Challenges on Monitoring

- Non-receptive monitoring
- Interruption of children privacy

APPENDIX IX: SAMPLE OF SELECTIVE CODING**Parental knowledge of unregulated children exposure to internet**

- Lack of parental regulation knowledge
 - ✓ Not aware of the risks children are exposed to online
 - ✓ Inconsistence regulation by parents
 - ✓ Parents limited time for monitoring children
 - ✓ Children view internet content unregulated

 - Parent views on Internet content
 - ✓ Too much sexual content
 - ✓ Bad influence on children's' characters
 - ✓ Gender matters
 - ✓ Upbringing matters
 - ✓ Need for age appropriate warning on Web Sites
 - ✓ Age matters
-

APPENDIX X: SAMPLE OF PARENTS FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION

The research was carried out at an up -market residential area in Nairobi. The topic of discussion is on parental regulation on children exposure to internet

The Discussion

Researcher: I welcome all of you. We start our FGD for parents and my first question will be, do your children have access to internet? Let's start with **M1**

M1: Of course, my children have access to internet. Can I explain?

Researcher: Yes

M1: For instance, I have an 11 year old daughter who likes playing with my phone and there is a desktop computer that is internet enabled, so she does have access to internet. I also have a 4 year old boy who is inclined to gadgets like the mobile phone.

Researcher: I would like to know the frequency and the media of access

M1: The frequency is almost on a daily basis esp. after they are through with their homework. In fact sometimes they rush through their homework so that they can play computer games. Sometimes they do access those internet games on the computer and on the phone about 5 times a week.

Researcher: So they have access through both the computer and phone?

M1: Yes

Researcher: Now we go to **J4**

J4: My daughter has access through several means because I have several gadgets in the house. **Researcher:** Which ones?

J4: I have a laptop, an iPhone, an iPad and at time there are these computer games they log into on the television. So whenever they put this computer games, some pop-ups come on the television encouraging them to visit some sites in the internet.

Researcher: How old is your daughter **J4**

J4: She is 8 years old.

Researcher: Do you know the frequency of access?

J4: During school days, mostly in the evening, immediately after school, she drops her bag and goes to my room. I suspect whenever she runs there she goes checking on the internet. Anytime she gets the phone or gets hold of my iPad, severally, she taps onto anything that comes, logs into the internet and starts playing some games or listening to music or even doing assignments whenever they are given computer assignments.

Researcher: What about you K1, Does your child have access to the internet?

K1: Yes, I have a nephew who frequently visits my house and he has access to the internet through my iPad and phone. I also have a very curious niece, going to 5 years. She really likes to aces the phone to see what is there. She is very curious and most of the time she downloads games that she likes to play. I also have a niece who is 10 years old and displays the same case. They always fight for the gadgets.

Researcher: So that means they access the internet on a daily basis?

K1: Yes, mostly in the evening. I however ensure they finish their homework fast and also check what they have access to because they may download some things from which they can begin asking questions that you may not answer. Mostly I encourage them to download school related materials and the games.

Researcher: How do your children use the internet, Kenneth has talked about it but I'll give a chance to Mark, who has not talked

M1: Thank you. I have a son that is now 7 years old and this boy is very much aggressive. He really wants to make use of my phone all the time. For example yesterday, I went home with a new phone. I was under pressure to allow the boy to download the internet enabled games all of which cost over Ksh. 2,500. Now I have restrained them but he has learnt about "www" and so he types it as if he wants to access certain sites in the internet. So I suspect he could be having friends older than him who teaches him how to access certain contents of the internet.

Researcher: You've talked about a daughter too or you just have the son?

M1: There is also a daughter who is much older than the son. She uses the internet in most cases to emulate some of these gospel singers because she aspires to be a singer and currently she sings in the Sunday school. Other times she goes into the internet to check the meanings of vocabulary she encounters while doing her assignments.

Researcher: How about you I1, how do your children use the internet?

I1: I have a son who is 11 years old and my son is a curious boy who would love to get in touch with his peers. Most of the time, he comes to me with requests to help him log into

some sites in order for him to learn some current languages being used by his friends. He wants to get hold of what his friends know.

Researcher: is the language English?

I1: Yes, English and sometime French because they are studying French in school. My son gets curious to know words that his friends use to brag. When he does not want to ask the teacher the meanings of those words, he checks in the internet. Sometimes, he also uses the internet to do school assignments and other times to listen to music. You get home at times and you find him listening to some loud and funny songs in the house, only to find the computers singing.

Researcher: Which kind of music?

I1: Mixed, gospel and secular.

Researcher: What about you **K1**, how do your children use the internet? Do you have examples?

K1: Yes, they come with their homework and use the internet to do more research and check meanings of words. They also learn a few extra languages like French and so they use the Google translator so they can know the correct spelling and pronunciation of those words. They also use the internet to download games. I however discourage them from downloading games that do not help them e.g. those that may make them violent like the *kungfu* games.

Researcher: Now we will go to Mark. How do your children use the internet? Give specific examples.

M1: My kids use internet in various ways. For example my son is very playful and has no phobia for heights. He likes jumping on the sofa sets and wrestling. He therefore googles about wrestling. Especially now that he is learning how to write, he also uses the computer to google about the correct spellings of words. My daughter on the other hand uses the internet mostly to practice singing and learn difficult words, because she is more responsible. But for the boy, I sometimes find him opening some funny windows.

Researcher: If I may interrupt, what do you mean when you say “funny?”

M1: You know there are contents of people who are not fully dressed. He goes to such sites and it excites him. I discourage him to visit such sites. I have come up with passwords to prevent him from doing that. I am also tempted to put passwords in the computer. He however blocks my phone while trying to unlock it and have access to the internet.

Researcher: How useful do you think the internet is useful to your children? Most of you have mentioned education and reference to school work. Is there any other meaningful use of the internet, for the others who have not spoken?

M1: My children normally use the internet for various reasons. For example, as mentioned earlier by my friends, they use the internet mostly for computer games and because of their adventurous nature, they use it to create their own accounts e.g. skype, in order to communicate with their friends. They also want to use the social media like whatsapp. My daughter for instance really wants to join whatsapp. However, because she is under age, she cannot and I have difficulties explaining that to her. Also, my fear is that the media can expose her to unwanted content like pornography that people circulate on whatsapp.

Researcher: What about you **J4**? Do your children find usefulness in the internet?

J4: Number one, it provides interaction tools to them, helps them to learn more about the school work and sharpens their creativity. I however regulate their access by use of passwords. They are clever though and are able to follow up when you type the password and uses it later without your knowledge.

Researcher: **J1** what do you have to say?

J1: I think, the internet in a sense has minimized the parents' worry on how much they can tell the children about matters like sex, which are hard to talk about. You can find someone to come and use the internet guides to teach the children on the same.

Researcher: You mean you call somebody to come and educate the children?

J1: Yes, sometimes it happens. You can call someone like a relative who understands better the sexual jargon to come and elaborate to the children those issues. You know from a third party, your kids can get the essence of what is being brought into the picture. The person may use the net to do a presentation on the subject, using examples and cautioning them against the repercussions of engaging in early sex.

Researcher: But you see sometime they open sites that give them wrong advice. How do you go about that?

J1: In such like cases, the morals you instill on your kids play a big role such that good morals will lead them to get out of wrong sites.

Researcher: Has **M1** said anything?

M1: Yes, I said something earlier. Internet is a very important platform for education. The advantages that come with it are well annexed. It can however be destructive too.

Especially the fear of accessing the content not meant for their age. Am happy the ministry of education is about to include sex education in the curriculum. This will help to complement what the parents tell the children. They will be able to know more about things like online sex. Also, given that our phones have been upgraded to be like computers, it may be hard to control this fully because there are higher chances of the children getting exposure to the wrong contents.

Researcher: lets move to the next issue. Does your children access to internet worry you? If yes give reasons and examples of instances that would worry you.

J1: For me, I would say yes and know. Yes, because when the parent is away, it is hard to know what the children are accessed to. Some of these may affect them negatively as they may attempt to experiment things like sex and download pornography. I remember a friend's five year old daughter who was found, during a certain wedding, downloading pornography using the mum's phone. When caught, she denied having done it. This got people very worried. It is therefore important for the parents to get more cautious. On the other hand, am not worried because the internet helps the children to get more creative, innovative and interactive.

Researcher: I1, do you have anything to add

I1: I will just back him up. It is educative. It however depreciates our moral values. An instance where your kid walks around with other children who you don't know what they are exposed to, your kid may get into wrong traps.

Researcher: What about Kenneth, do you have something new?

K1: Just to concur with what other parents have said, my children's access to the internet worries me a lot more than it comforts me. This is because when you are not there, you cannot control them and all good and bad content are only a click of the button away from them. On the positive end though, it is a social media that help them to interact with the world and get educative material.

Researcher: All of you agree that as much as the internet is useful to the children, there is need to regulate their access to it, since there are also threats. It is important to equip them to use it usefully so that it does not affect their morals.

So the next question is, do you have any control to your children's access to the internet? Some of you have mentioned some of these e.g. the use of passwords and checking what the children access. Is there anything more you would want to say?

J1: Apart from passwords, one can block the contents of the computer. One can also allow the children to access the internet only when they are around them.

Researcher: As parents, you can only control access to your phone? What about the neighbors' and friends' phones

James: Sometimes we don't have that control, but sometimes I think it is good to open up to your children. If you have brought up your kid very well, they will open up to you and share everything.

Eva: Irene, how do you control your children's access of internet?

I1: Apparently, the controlling bit this is quite hard. You can only put control in your home and not outside. For example, while school, the children can access whatever they want to see in their computer labs. So it is just important to talk to your children and teach them what is right and wrong so that they avoid what is wrong when they see it.

Researcher: What about M1? How do you control your children's access of internet?

M1: I do use passwords. They are however able to study me when I type the password and master it.

Researcher: Ok then. You might have said this already but if you have something to add, you can. In your experiences in regulating what your children access, do you have specific examples other than the ones you have given earlier, like let's say you find them watching something inappropriate, what was your reaction to correct that?

K1: I have an incident when I found my son watching wrestling and minimized the window when he saw me. When I went to check what he was playing, I found out he was watching some animals mating. It was so disgusting. I therefore discouraged him from accessing such contents and instructed him to use it for good computer games and assignments.

Researcher: As much as you want them to watch educative things only and contents suitable for their age, don't you think it is also good to tell them what they expect to find so that when they get to those sites, they are aware?

K1: It is good but also no. It is good because those with self-control can stop but the adventurous ones may want to find out more about what they are cautioned against. So, what is important is the manner in which you instill moral values in them.

Researcher: Ok. In the process of regulating the children, do you find any challenges and do you have specific examples? We start with you **I1**.

I1: In most cases you find withdrawal and so much resistance. It is like you are hindering them from knowledge. In such situations, it is advisable to sit down with your kids, bring a picture into their mind and get to know what they expect from the internet, who their

friends are and what they do and what morals they know. Also, as **J1** had mentioned, the relationship between the parent and the child matters a lot. If you are not comfortable with your children speaking out some things, it would be a challenge because they will be withdrawn and will not tell you everything.

Researcher: Are there times when they feel you are interfering with their privacy?

I1: Yes.

Researcher: Do you have any examples?

I1: Like my daughter, I normally see her fight with the dad every time. There is this news system they have installed in the phone called “talking tom.” So you will find my daughter sending my son to the dad with instructions that he asks for the talking tom; only to realize that it is not the son who is in need of the phone but the daughter. She does this because she does not have the password to the phone.

Researcher: How old is your daughter?

I1: She is 8 years old

Researcher: And your son

I1: He is two and a half years old. So my daughter takes advantage of the kid who does not know anything. So once the boy brings the phone, they use the talking tom system but after a short while, the boy gets the phone to the girl who now begins to check all she wants to check. You find that in most cases, that we have saved some songs which are not very interesting to the children. My daughter begins to dance to these songs. When I once found her dancing, I asked her if she understood what she was dancing to. I sat her down and explained to her that the content of the songs were not for the kids. After that she stopped.

Researcher: Mark you have something to add on that?

M1: There are fights sometimes. At some point my daughter asked for her own phone. When I bought a new phone, she insisted she wanted my old phone, which was also internet enabled. When I refused, we were in bad talking times for a while.

Researcher: Finally what suggestions would you want to make towards improvement of children’s internet use?

I1: I would suggest that the government comes in to bring control so that whenever anyone is registering their blogs online, the government can monitor this.

Researcher: But some of the websites are not in the government’s control.

I1: Yes, but the controls are within the government's control. CCK can control these if it wants. In other countries, the governments do this. One way to do this is to license online service providers in order to ensure they only offer specific contents on their sites. Pornographic material should not be let to go to the general public but specific people who requests for it and are licensed to access it.

M1: I would suggest the government to have the CCK to regulate the contents aired in the television, especially sexually oriented movies and songs, which would arouse the children's curiosity and prompt them to log into the internet in order to find out more.

Researcher: And **J4**

J4: Parents should create time to be with their children, despite their busy schedule. Otherwise, children spend time with neighbors and friends and therefore they acquire unfamiliar behavior. The parents should also maintain a close relationship with their kids so that they are free to share everything with them.

Researcher: That is fine because teenagers tend to query a lot of things and if the parents are not there to explain or they shy away, then the children would resort to the internet.

J4: True.

Researcher: So thank you for your participation. I don't know if you have any questions that you would want me to answer (silence).

Otherwise thank you so much. Your contribution will go a long way in my research and I will give you feedback after I finish. Thank you so much

All discussants: Welcome and all the best.

APPENDIX XI: A SAMPLE OF CHILDREN FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION

The Discussion

Researcher: I welcome all of you. We start our FGD for children's first group, it will be based on five points of discussion and my first question will be, how often do you visit the internet?

J1: I visit the internet at least once a day

Researcher: eeh

E1: I visit the internet five times a day

Researcher: EEh!!

S1: I do it on daily basis

Researcher: As you visit internet what do you look for most on the internet, what do you look for mostly?

S1: Movies

Researcher: Which kind of movies?

S1: Cartoons

Researcher: That, talk about what?

S1: They talk about fun stuff ...

Researcher: Fun Stuff? Okay and you ...

J1: Mostly socializing, about latest trends about fashion and school related things.

Researcher: Okay?

E1: I look for movies mostly, face book and funny videos

Researcher: What do you mean by funny videos?

E1: Fun and just short comedies movies.

Researcher: How useful are those content for your daily life? The answer shouldn't be specific, you say what you do, because you do different things, so how useful are they, are they for entertainment or for leisure or studies?

J1: For entertainment ooh to get yourself informed and also for social to get more friends and also you are aware of the latest things that happening around you

Researcher: And like ..You have talked about facebook, what normally do you view, what are the most things or content that you get from face book

E1: Yeah Face book is very good for socializing and you keep in touch with friends and also get to eeh... you can use it for online shopping to keep up with fashion trends and also to know eem which songs have just come out. Also eeh you can use it to carry out research especially educational research or university research.

Researcher: For university when you are looking for the university that you want to join after secondary education?

E1: Hmm Yeah:

Researcher: Okay

Researcher: And you!!

H1: And me

Researcher: What do you enjoy when using internet

H1: I enjoy watching movies and looking for songs.

Researcher: Which songs?

H1: Like the one for movies, like Victoria.

Researcher: So Victoria is a child's site

H1: Yes

Researcher: You are Eight years old

H1: Seven

Researcher: And you

J1: Am fifteen.

Researcher: Just say, what risks does internet expose you to?

H1:its 's my turn

J1:Amm ...

Researcher: Risks like Cyber crime, bullying, what other other risks maybe you have come across in your daily of use of internet?

J1: Some people like to use vulgar language in the internet that is inappropriate and others influence you to do things that are not right, like getting tattoos and other things, yeah which you could have not come across if it were not for internet.

Researcher: Do you at time come across naked people or half dressed?

J1: Yeah. At times people will send you those photos thinking that you are an adult but yeah!! I have come across them.

Researcher: So that is why I was thinking that we could be better to have those sites that are particularly levelled, like this is for particular age or beyond eighteen maybe that will help so that you don't come across such things.

J1: Yeah that will be good.

H1: My turn

Researcher: And you

E1: Internet have vulgar language and also you can have spam messages maybe from someone who is far away like say South Sahara Africa, Morrocco (Aha) those sides, asking you to be a business partner, but you find out, they are all only spam, yeah but they are not really, sensitize, they are not true ones, the internet has also lead to bullying, people may not post good comments on status of pictures yeah .

Researcher: Like do you have another example where you posed something and they said negative things.

E1: Yeah, I saw one thatwas written..... 'People like you should not dress in trousers because they make you look fat' Yeah

Researcher: Okay so they discouraged you. And you!! Any negative effect that you have seen on internet?

Z1: Yeah, the internet makes people change who they are just to please others, like they make you start dressing in other ways that are indecent so as to please others, getting all over, just for the sake of pleasing others, which isn't right.

Researcher: And you, the negative thing about the internet,Like the cartoons, are there some that are very fierce?

Z1: Some cartoon teach others to be violent, cause some are all about fighting, so people watching them think that life resolve around fighting to resolve an issue. Yeah

Researcher: Do you think that's why we have, like for you who are in high school, that's why we have strikes, people tend to behave the way they see it in the internet?

Z1: Yeah, I think so because now you think that is the inn thing so you want to do it mainly to please others. And to feel like you are among those you do it in the movies.

Researcher: Is there any other negative thing that you think off or any additional that t I have not asked you that you encounter in your daily use of internet?

E1: Yeah, if you download certain applications you can end up having viruses in your device and these virus may not , may... end up by damaging files and your phone.

Researcher: Okay what about the use of language, because most of the time like in whatsapp and face book most of the things are written in short form that interfere with your language use, like speaking fluent English or French.

E1: Yeah, some people use sheng or acronyms, sometimes you don't understand and there may be some loss of communication there and this has also made us eeh less fluent in our English and French because we tend to use their language more to embrace them or maybe to be understood.

Researcher: At this rate we have be focusing mostly on effects which are only negative, but you know internet is also a useful tool in some,especially children and grow ups there are some positive or advantages of internet that I could like to hear from you.

J1: Some of the positive effects that you get to know more about school work like say subject like French that you can get more vocabularies and other things about that you have not been taught at school yeah.

E1: Internet can be used for online shopping you don't have to go the super-market you just order to be brought, the things are also cheaper, in addition to that it is very useful in terms of education you can research on any topic an you will be given more information on which will help you to understand the topic better.

Researcher: Ok now do your parents regulate you on the use on internet, and if they do it, how do they do it?

E1: I could say for the phone, the number of MBs we download maybe be monitored through the amount of money we are given for credit eeh...

J1: Also they also regulate time spent on internet, telling us there's time for everything, maybe time to read, time to eat, to socialize yeah.

Researcher: And apart from that, the contents you read, do they give some guidance on what you should view and what you should know, and the effects it will have on you?

E1: Yes, they tell us about these things, for example how people can be cyber bullied, you should not meet them in private and you should not talk to strangers or give personal information andshould meet people in public places.

Researcher: Okay so it suggests that you at times you get to meet people on the internet like facebook then you arrange to meet them elsewhere, or it is just an example they try to give or it has happened to you personally?

E1: It is just an example.

Researcher: What else..what I would also want to know if there's a case that your friends have been bullied and even lead to serious crimes, like being included in crimes like cyber-crimes ,abusive language or being involved in groups that will lead you to like start taking drugs or such like?

Z1: Yeah I had a friend who was bullied, she was abused, they talked bad things, about her, call her names like 'you are stupid!!' which made her feel low and depressed (contributes to low self-esteem).

Researcher: Okay and you?

J1: I had a friend who thought that he had genuine cool group of friends, only to realize that his friends were slowing drawing him to drugs and before he realized it he was addicted to some drugs that he was being given.

Researcher: What do think, Okay what guidance do you think that parents should give that they are not doing that will help you not to be lured into such crimes.

E1: Parents can regulate the use of internet and maybe try to see the people on the sites you visit on the internet, what you do there, and the risks that come with visiting such sites.

J1: They can also advise you on how or whether to tell these are the right group of people to be talking to, and how you can tell if these people have bad influence or not, yeah.

Researcher: What about ...who else do think can help you on these, ...so that you don't end up in to groups or influence that can affect you?

Z1: I think that, since we spend most of our time in school, teachers can play a huge role in these, since we spend most of our time with them and we trust them, they can tell us some of their experiences of internet then we can learn from them.

Researcher: What other things can you suggest to be done, to improve your effective use of internet because the way things are going, it looks like internet is here to stay and it is

diversifying in every way and it is an important tool, do you find a place whereby your parents don't know how to use the internet and therefore cannot help you, in fact you are the one who knows more?

E1: There can be such cases, am but what happens is that we help each other to maneuver our way, to maybe to finding information and sometimes they also know more than we do ,they helps us to maybe register online and yeah

Researcher: Okay thank you for your participation, it will help me in findings in my research. I don't know if you have any questions that you would want me to answer (silence).

Otherwise thank you so much. Your contribution will go a long way in my research and I will give you feedback after I finish. Thank you so much

All discussants: Welcome and all the best.

Researcher: Thanks.

APPENDIX XII: WORK PLAN SCHEDULE

ACTIVITIES	OCT 14	NOV 14	DEC 14	FEB 15	APR 15	JUL 15	AUG 15	SEP 15	OCT 15	NOV 15	DEC 15	JAN 16	FEB 16	MAY 16	JULY 16
Identification of the topic															
Approval by Lecturer															
Collecting literature review															
Designing the data collection instruments															
Collecting the information from the field															
Analyzing and interpreting collected information															
Writing the final report															
Submitting the final report															

APPENDIX XIII: BUDGET

This study will be conducted within Nairobi County. Below is a budget outlay for conducting the study.

ACTIVITY	COST(KSH)
Preparation of the Project Proposal	6,000
Preparation of Questions	3,000
Computer Services	5,000
Photocopying Services	3,000
Proof-Reading and Binding	3,000
Travelling (General)	5,000
Contingency Cost(Miscellaneous Expenses)	12,000
Total	37,000