THE CONFLICT BETWEEN MODERN AND TRADITIONAL PARENTING BEHAVIOURS AS PERCEIVED BY STUDENTS IN SOME SELECTED SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN NAIROBI PROVINCE: COUNSELING IMPLICATIONS

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REG. NO. E83/7600/98

A THESIS SUBMITTED TO THE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY (PhD) IN EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY OF KENYATTA UNIVERSITY

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The conflict between modern and
DECLARATION

This doctoral thesis is my original work and has not been presented for a degree in any other University.

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DEDICATION

This doctoral thesis is dedicated to my parents, to my late father who took me to school against very many odds, and to my mother, whose humble ambition for me was that I should be able to read the “No through Road Sign” in order to avoid trespassing.

AND

My family; husband Joseph Njenga Ngethe who is an ardent supporter and friend. My children; Perpetua Waithera and Harrison Kaguongo who gave me reason to struggle on with life even when hope was almost lost. The most welcome latecomers, Lea Anne Nduta and Noah Ngethe who brought renewed blessings and happiness to my life and to our home.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am greatly indebted to my supervisors, in particular, Professor Augustine Nwoye my lead supervisor for having faith in me and giving me great support. Without his encouragement, support and diligence in supervision this thesis report would probably never have seen the light of day. If one day I become a professor my wish is that I try and emulate him.

In a similar vein I am highly indebted to the guidance given by Dr. John Aluko Orodho during the last stages of the research. I am indebted to him for accepting to join in the supervision of the work following the death of Dr. Frank Oyungu Ingule, and for standing by me at every inch of the thesis after that.

I wish to acknowledge with gratitude all principals, the teachers and the students of the schools where the data was collected. Without their permission and cooperation this thesis would never have been written.

The department of Educational Psychology under the chairmanship the following heads; of Professor S Bali, Professo F. Okatcha, The late Dr.F.O. Ingule, Dr.M. Mwangi, and Dr. S Tumuti has been supportive and nurturing and provided an enabling environment for this study. The secretariat at the department headed by Hellen Chimoyi has given me invaluable support.

I also wish to recognize the challenge my colleagues posed to me when they went ahead and graduated before me. Dr. Theresia Kinai, Dr Christine Wasanga and, Dr. Josephine
Arasa have been constant reminders to me that I had unfinished business. To them I owe
the motivation to struggle on. Other colleagues who have been very supportive are Mrs
Doyne Mugambi, Mrs Mary Mungala, Mr. David Kariuki, Mrs. Kwena, and Dr. Mweru.
The support they gave me made the going bearable. Also the post graduate committee
under the chairmanship of Dr. Hanniel Gatumu gave me great support at every stage of
the current study.

The staff at the Moi library gave me much needed support whenever I needed to refer to
the various sources either in the Africana Section of the library or accessing the internet
for sources. Without their cooperation and support it would have been extremely difficult
to source information for the research.

I am indebted to my husband who has been a great source of encouragement and support.
My children also deserve to be acknowledged for their unwavering support, love and
faith in me.

I also wish to acknowledge the contribution of the following research assistants; Harrison
Kaguongo of Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology; Dickson Waime
and Newton A. Mukolwe, both of Kenyatta University, for being there for me when I
needed level- headed people around me.

I feel greatly indebted to Kenyatta University the institution that has been my home for
the last eighteen years and which has been instrumental to my professional and
intellectual growth so far. The school of Education, under the deanship of following people; Professor P. Mutunga, Professor J.E. Otiende and currently Dr. J.O. Ogeno as well as the post graduate committee under the chairmanship of Dr. Orodho has been very supportive. Mrs. R. Mworia has been of great support and I am greatly indebted to her.

The Graduate school under the Deanship of the late Professor E.W. Mwatha has done a lot to ensure my intellectual reawakening that enabled me to make strides in the current study. Currently, Professor J. Waudo and her staff have been instrumental to the final completion of the work, its examination and defense. For this I am indeed grateful.
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ABSTRACT

This study was undertaken to examine and analyze the impact of westernizing influences on the parenting behaviours of modern Kenyan parents. This analysis was conducted, not by approaching these parents directly, but by means of the Internalized-Other-Interviewing technique intended to determine the perceptions of students in some selected secondary schools in Nairobi province, on the parenting behaviours of their own parents. In this regard, the critical issue was that of ascertaining the extent to which traditional parenting practices have been eroded by the multi-faceted influences impinging on the modern Kenyan family. The major purpose of the study was to isolate the traditional parenting behaviours and values that have resisted change despite these influences and those that have succumbed to the change.

The sample for the study consisted of form two students drawn from a sample of secondary schools in Nairobi province. A self-developed questionnaire, containing a variety of possible parental behaviours of modern Kenyan parents was used as instrument for data collection. The researcher herself with the assistance of two research assistants administered the questionnaires directly to the students and collected the instruments immediately afterwards. The data collected were analyzed by means of descriptive statistics that helped to generate trends and conclusions that assisted in the resolution of the key questions investigated.

The results showed, among other things, that parenting behaviours of modern Kenyan parents have been severely affected by a number of westernizing influences. This is
evidenced by the majority of the families that have adopted monogamous marriages and who have fewer children than the traditional African family. Modernization is also evident as the number of relatives resident among the families continues to drop. The modern Kenyan family is one that avails children with modern facilities like the radio, television, video and newspapers which the adolescents studied use avidly as opposed to the traditional past where the children were socialized through communally organized activities. The mother has appeared as the dominant parent as she is in close proximity with children of both sexes while the father seems to be distanced from both sons and daughters which itself is a modern trend. Maternal domination of the domestic scene was noted to cover many areas of the child’s life as the mother is reported to be more engaged than the father in parent-child shared activities, in meeting the psychological needs of children, child discipline, decision making in the home, house-keeping and child-rearing. This can be interpreted to mean that compared to those of the older generation of Kenyan parents, as highlighted in studies by Kenyatta (1938), Ngugi (1965), Omari (1972), and Nukunya (1992), children of modern Kenyan families are parented differently from those of their own parents and grandparents.

A discussion of the findings was undertaken to draw out some implications of the study and to make recommendations as well for counseling purposes to enable modern Kenyan parents to contend with the new trends indicated, emanating from the study. Hence the following recommendations were proffered: egalitarian parenting and the need for mothers to tone down their maternal gate-keeping and fathers to become more participative in attending to their modern family roles. It was also recommended that
parents should endeavor to understand the benefits as well as the damaging effects of the
electronic devices in the home and as such, to properly guide and monitor the children’s
use of these facilities. Professional implications of the study were also drawn, suggesting
that counselors need to be conversant with adolescents’ experiences in the homes and in
that way to facilitate forums aimed at helping parents to be more effective in an ever
changing world. Policy makers were urged to indicate the direction along which we must
go in the future if the noted devastating effects of westernizing influences on the modern
Kenyan family are not to be allowed to deal an irreversible blow on the mental health and
psychological characteristics of the modern Kenyan child. Recommendations for further
research along the lines were also made.
CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1.0 Background of the study

According to Hastings (2000), parenting is a serious daunting task, which in current times appears to have become a matter of life and death. Throughout the history of mankind, parents have been perceived as the focal point of human upbringing; while children in the opinion of Kinuthia (1989), could be seen as the seeds of the human race. All over the world parents are entrusted with the task of begetting children and raising them by way of employing various parenting behaviours. The parenting behaviours engaged in determining the psychological health of the children and that of the entire family as well. Many factors among them traditional, cultural, ethnic as well as global influence determine the parenting behaviours of a given family setting. Due to the dynamism of the psychosocial processes in which families find themselves parenting behaviours are ever influenced by the global patterns, which are for ever changing.

In order to understand the status of parenting in Kenya, in the past, the present and to chart possible future directions, there is need to look at the phenomenon of parenting globally and currently as compared to what it was in traditional Kenya. Globally, parenting can be seen as a universal phenomenon characteristic of animals and human beings. It comprises all behaviours geared towards caring for the young offspring to ensure their survival and growth to maturity. These behaviours include feeding, keeping warm and protecting the young from danger. In the animal species, parenting is a natural process that is guided by instinctual mechanisms. According to Atkinson (1990) and
Laird (1991) maternal behaviours in animals are innately programmed in the brain. These instinctive behavioural dispositions enable the animals to feed, protect their young, nurse and clean them until they grow to maturity. These instinctual parenting habits are repeated by animals to perpetuate and propagate themselves throughout the generations.

However, for human beings parenting is not innately programmed and as such is not as easy a process. Whereas the human parent serves the same function as the animal parent in feeding, keeping warm and protecting the young from danger until growth to maturity is realized, the human parent lacks the pre-programmed instincts of animals, which tends to make human parenting a very complicated endeavor. Human parenting is complicated by the fact that the human infant needs consistent long-term care and institutional support to grow to maturity and propagate themselves. This means that for human beings, parenting goes beyond the provision for basic survival needs. According to Phenice (1982) and Kithinji and Kithinji (2005) parents must meet the biophysical and psychological needs of children. In agreement with the above sentiments, Shaffer (1977) identifies three goals of parenting to include:

- Promotion of the physical survival and health of the child ensuring that the child will live long enough to have children too.

- Fostering of skills and behaviour capacities, which the child needs for economic self-maintenance as an adult.

- A self-actualizing goal, which helps to foster behavioral capacities for maximizing other cultural values like morality, religion, achievement, wealth, prestige and a sense of personal satisfaction.
The examination of the environments where children are raised reveals that they are raised in social contexts, which specify the characteristics that every individual should possess. In the history of mankind, there have been predominant themes that have influenced parenting behaviours as well as the child-rearing practices of a people. These are:

- History and tradition.
- The cultural practices of a people.
- The economic activities of a people.
- The religious beliefs of a people.
- The ever-evolving cultural trends.
- Advances in technology.

The concern about who should raise children and even how they should be raised is as old as the documented history of man. Ancient Greek philosophers like Plato aired their views regarding child-rearing in relation to the children’s expected behavioral outcomes. Plato at around the 3rd century B.C.; as cited in Hetherington and Park (1986) advised that child-rearing should be the responsibility of the State. In his view, the family context was unfit for child-rearing as it would produce spoilt children. The concern at the time was about raising children to become responsible individuals. Plato believed that children of both sexes should be given equal opportunities.
Aristotle, cited in Hetherington and Park (1986), was another Greek philosopher and a student of Plato but he aired different views. He felt that children should be raised by their families as the family environment was conducive for the development of emotional security. In his view, the family environment provided the children with the privacy needed for healthy development. Aristotle advocated the division of labor in the home saying that the females were to devote their lives to the rearing of children and the supervision of the home while the men took care of business outside the home. This trend was recognized among the traditional African cultures (Kenyatta, 1938; Ngugi, 1965; Mead, 1968; Omari, 1982; and Kithinji and Kithinji, 2005).

Examining parenting and the child-rearing practices in Europe before the advent of Christianity, references regarding child-rearing practices were drawn from the way the Spartans of ancient Greece raised their children. Spartan children, it was reported, were exposed to very harsh conditions and extremely harsh discipline so that only the very healthy among the children would survive. The Spartan discipline was meant to create people who could withstand the harshest of conditions like living through the winter without protective clothing as well as the ability to survive with minimum amounts of food (Irwin & Simons, 1994).

When Europe embraced Christianity, church leaders became responsible for matters pertaining to child rearing. They advocated the view that the child was born evil and gave every parent the authority to institute harsh discipline in order to defeat the child’s evil nature. The Calvinistic discipline was practiced where-by children would be beaten
brutally, denied food, as well as being subjected to extremely harsh conditions (Hetherington & Park 1986). The wind of change that came with the Renaissance sweeping across Europe during the middle ages brought with it new ideas about child rearing. Locke (1690), cited in Irvin and Simons (1994), advanced the view that the child’s mind at birth was like an empty slate. The experiences the child encountered wrote on this slate. In this respect, the parents and teachers were advised to be careful about the way they organized the child’s environment. Rousseau, a French philosopher, also cited in Irvin & Simon (1994), believed and propagated the view that the child is born well but that it is the evil society that corrupts him making him turn from the good nature.

There is, furthermore, evidence from available literature that the economic activities as well as the technological advances of a people have continued to influence parenting behaviours. Thus, before the 18th century a period considered in history, as the pre-industrial age, the prevalent family structure was the patriarchal system (Mead, 1955). Then, the father was the head of the family and marriage was valued. Having many children was a prestige symbol (Zastrow, 1984). This was the age of the extended family when the child grew up surrounded by grandparents, uncles, aunts and cousins all behaving like surrogate parents to the young children. This trend appeared to have been the norm in many pre-industrial societies including those in Africa Kenyatta (1938), Ngugi (1965), Mead (1968), Omari (1982, and Kithinji and Kithinj (2005).
According to Shaffer (1966), Kenyatta (1938), Kithinji and Kithinji (2005) the following characterized traditional family processes:

- There was strong kinship support, which ensured children’s psychological adjustment.
- Parenting followed a well-beaten path, as the child’s discipline to be enforced was known by all.
- Every family attempted to uphold values such as hard work, good behaviour, courtesy and honor.
- At the time, the process of child-rearing was the responsibility of the community and not the preserve of a single-family unit.
- Then, the family had not suffered the social and geographical mobility that characterize modern families of today.

According to Kenyatta (1938), Mead (1968), Galdston (1976), Zastrow (1984) and Nukunya (1992) there were identifiable themes that run across the social fabric and that determined the path individual children followed in their course of life. These encompassed the following experiences:

- In the family, the sons were trained to model their fathers and grandfathers before them and establish their own homes and raise their own children in accordance with predetermined ways.
- On their part, the girls were trained to model the women in the society: to grow up, get married, have children and raise them like their mothers before them. During the pre-industrial era parenting behaviours were stable and every child’s
path was well charted by an entire community, facilitated as it is by the phenomenon of distributed cognition.

- Every one went through identical rites of passage from childhood through adolescence, and adulthood.

- The father held a place of honor as the pillar of the family institution. He was the transmitter of culture and the head of the family. Then, the father was never far away from his wife and children. He was that ever-watching eye that kept the family in its place of honor.

- Family life was characterized by undisputed sharp division of labour that put every family member in their respective and proper roles.

Changes in the family structure, at least in the West, came with the advent of industrialization (Zastrow 1984) and Mead (1955). Industrialization ushered in conditions that called for new adjustments for the whole family set up. Men had to move out of their homes to seek employment. At worst the whole family was uprooted from familiar environments shifting to new areas hence becoming alienated from their people and their ways of life. Thus, the industrial revolution ushered in the age of the nuclear family.

The nuclear family brought the following structural changes in the family:

- The man and his wife were left to raise their own children away from the extended family of origin.
• The father became the sole provider or the breadwinner who would be away working in the factories in order to raise his family. Consequently, he could no longer monitor his children closely.

• The mother became the children's nurturer and her whole life centered on children. She found herself all alone at home taking the central roles of caring for the home and minding of children without the assistance from the extended family members.

• The industrial revolution changed the position of the children in the family set up. Prior to industrialization the family unit was a complete economic entity and children were major players in it as they had specified economic roles to play. With industrialization the father alone went to work leaving the children and their mother at home. Thus the children lost their role as economic assets and were reduced to economic liabilities. The resultant effect was that the family needed fewer children.

These changes brought with them the era of the female-headed or mother-centered family structure, which developed as a consequence of paternal absenteeism. The genesis of fatherless families is traced from the dynamic changes taking place at the time. The industrial era freed the children from the tight parental controls where-by children had a lot of time on their hands and they began to form gangs and to roam the streets. All the time, the father’s grip was slipping away, his control over his children continuing to diminish. This has been recognized as the origin of parenting problems Shaffer (1989).
The advent of the modern family has witnessed even more drastic changes. Its evolution has been characterized by not only paternal absence but the maternal absence as well. Due to the ever-rising cost of living, many families have adopted the dual-income mode of life with both the mother and the father working. The resultant effect has been the removal of the mother from the home as well as her separation from the children for long hours during the day. To complicate issues even further, the mother who has to work like her husband must also fulfill the traditional roles of running the home, which according to Gachukia (1989) makes her life so complicated to earn the description as a “double shift” life.

Due to the unique characteristics of the modern family, many people have voiced some serious concerns regarding the life experienced in many homes. All such voices agree that the absence of the extended family’s contributions in raising children has been disadvantageous as the parents are left on their own to figure out how to raise their children without the benefit of experienced hands or even social support Duffy (2005).

There is equally, some concern over parental absence in the home and fragmentation of family life Phenice (1982). The views expressed by Phenice are that parents are home less and less and therefore young people experience homes where both parents are absent which tends to reduce the family to a temporary meeting place for boarding and lodging. Individual family members are all busy pursuing self-interests leaving the children feeling empty, lonely, unloved and unlovable. A number of other voices have aired their own dissatisfaction with modern family trends. For example, Zastrow (1984) became
concerned about the effectiveness of the nuclear family as an environment for raising children. According to him the nuclear family is profoundly disappointing, as it has been characterized by individualism.

Greatly worried about the trend the family was taking were: Zastrow (1984) who aired his concern about the inability of the family to perform important functions of education, socialization and religion; Watson (1928) who had a grim out-look of the future of the family predicting that it would be dead in fifty years; and Gordon (1973) who proclaimed that the family as it was known in the past, was indeed dead. Kariuki (2005) complained that there is something terribly wrong with parenting as children are drifting like rudderless ships. Due to the lack of guidance the children have become violent, destructive and lacking in values and virtues.

The transition of the family from the traditional set up to the modern trends has been influenced greatly by exposure to media facilities like the radio, the television, the computer as well as internet access. These facilities have taken center stage in the family scene bringing global influences into the homes at speeds heather-to unknown in history. Consequently, the parents may not know nor control the information children read, watch or down load from the cyber space. The new parenting trends of the modern family are therefore quite worrying. According to Duffy (2005) parenting is becoming a lost art as many parents have become so lax that there are five-year-olds who literally run the house. There is tolerance for diversity and parents find themselves losing control over the situation as one cannot spank their child and those who are strict with their children are
scorned. According to Narramore (1972) many parents complain that they do not know what to do with their children.

Another factor to contend with in the modern family is the new trend towards the shifting of roles previously stereotyped as male’s or female’s. With both parents working, there is need for both the mother and father to learn to perform duties that were traditionally performed by the opposite sex. The woman in the modern family has to learn to repair the cooker because the man is not always there to do so, while the man has to learn some cookery because the woman is not always there to fix meals. Child-rearing duties, which were the preserve of the mother or some other female hand, are now being performed by men. There is a baby to be fed, changed and bathed while the mother is away at work. Making these adjustments may not be easy for some parents even with the advise given by parenting specialists Hastings (2000) advises a parenting partnership where both parents are involved in raising the child.

It is important to acknowledge that the problems of modern parenting above highlighted are universal as all the people of the world try to balance the traditional values of raising children while they keep adjusting to new demands all the time. Some problems associated with the modern parenting trends have been identified. According to Mead (1955), Narramore (1972), Gordon (1973), Rogers (1977) and Duffy (2005) the parents do not receive any training for the complicated roles they have to undertake. The girls are expected to become mothers without ever learning how to parent while the boy’s role as a future father is ignored all together. Today, bringing up children has been recognized as
the only full time job taken without formal training Narramore (1972) and Hastings (2000). Consequently, parenting comes easy for some people while for others it is difficult and aggravating.

Today, parenting has emerged as one of the most difficult human undertaking. Some parents do not seem to know how to parent Ipaye (1983) and Hastings (2000). These sentiments are in agreement with Duffy (2005) who observed that many of the parents care very little about their children; they shirk their responsibility towards them. Parents are under enough pressure of varying kinds so that they find themselves uncertain and confused. They suffer parental panic and anxiety while most may not seem to know how to protect their children from physical danger, drug abuse, sexual promiscuity, among other destructive vices (Duffy, 2005). Adding his voice to this sorry state of affairs was Zastrow (1984), who pointed to the existence of shocking amount of parental neglect and lack of child protection, which has crept into people's culture and lifestyles.

Various explanations have been posited to shed some light as to why parenting has become an impossible task for a good number of men and women, fathers and mothers. The conclusion was that, parents cannot cope with the radical social changes taking place in the parent-child relationships. These changes are directly related to changes taking place inside and outside the family. For example, Omari (1982) points out that there are no standard requirements for parental behaviour for optimum growth and learning for the child. The present family is in a state of crisis resulting from socio-economic, cultural and psychosocial disorientation (Shaffer, 1989).
In agreement with others, Phenice (1982) noted that there are a multiplicity of factors affecting the welfare of today's children and those of the future which calls for inquiry into individual family, societal and cultural variables which influence their welfare and development. According to Holt (1974), Hake (1972) and Narramore (1972) the family has been identified as the source of many people's most worrying problems associated with the following negative trends, because it has become:

- An institution of dominance, slavery and dictatorship.
- Hostile towards many of its members and especially children who are mistreated.
- A place that makes children's life painful and destructive.
- An institution where parents get anxious, irritable and impatient with their children.
- A place where the relationship between parents and their children is characterized by strain, tension, conflict and anger.

It is necessary to note that there are available data that suggest that the above are vices applicable to family experiences in modern Kenya. It has, for example, been documented that Kenya as part of the global village has had her own share of domestic and social problems that are indicative of the inability of some men and women to cope with the requirements of parenting. In this regard, both the print and electronic media have documented many incidences where the following frightening things happen. Homes exist where children are not given the care and protection that is theirs by right. Nduati and Muita (1986) pointed out that there are children under 18 who lack reasonable care
and protection from their guardians and parents. There is documented evidence of parents who are raising their children literally in bars. These parents even give alcohol to their under age children resulting to a case where a ten-year old child is addicted to alcohol and is in a rehabilitation center (Nganjiri & Muriuki, 2007). There are also cases where children are physically and sexually abused. According to them children are abused physically, sexually and emotionally. They also noted the existence of educational, medical and nutritional neglect among some Kenyan families. Randa (2006) seems to concur that sexual abuse on the children is on the increase. Children between the ages of five months to sixteen years have become victims of these heinous acts.

Some children find themselves neglected as they go lacking both in basic and psychological needs. Cases of children who drop out of school early in order to look for jobs to boost their family’s income abound and children as young as ten years work in coffee farms while they abandon school (Wachira 2006). Wachira cites a grim picture of about two million children between ages five and seventeen who engage in exploitative labour in Kenya.

There are children who are physically and sexually abused and most lamentably, these acts are perpetrated by their own parents, grand parents or guardians. This unfortunate state of affairs was also reported by Muriuki (2006), who was voicing the concern of the Vice President of Kenya, Honorable Moody Awori who was decrying the increased violence against children in Kenya. According to the Vice President, “the children find themselves prey, not to strangers, but to persons known to them and trusted by them as
In extreme cases some parents are known to kill their children for various reasons. There are adults who do not value parenting at all and instead of preventing pregnancies they abort the fetuses at various stages of development. The teachers too have failed to protect the children and they have been accused of physically and sexually harasing them. In so doing they have failed to play their designated parental roles as protectors and custodians of children.

1.2.0 Statement of the problem

The young people have responded to the problems they encounter at home through the outward manifestation of many acts that translate to gross maladjustment. A major characteristic of the behaviour of young people is youthful unrest with its manifestations noted in the following ways:

- Students’ non-compliance to school rules and the tendency to engage in destructive school strikes.
- Engagement in aggressive acts towards fellow students as noted when acts of bullying cause serious bodily harm to other students.
- Students kill other students in arsonist fire or in brutal acts.
- Resorting to rape orgies and other sexual crimes like sodomy that result in not only bodily harm but great psychological damage to the victim.
- Engaging in rampant cases of drug use and abuse with its attendant evils.

According to Waithaka (2006) and Ndirangu (2004) drug abuse is common among 12 to 18 year olds in Kenya. In this view:
• There are sad cases where the young show their desperation by committing suicide.

• The teachers have not been safe either, as some students have killed their teachers.

• Youthful unrest has also been noted among the youth who are not in the school system. There are reports that point to the following crime trends:
  
  (i) Many violent crimes in Kenya today are committed by young persons who are still in their teens and who carry guns and shoot to kill.

  (ii) These are young people who are not just playing police and robbers but they are indeed robbers.

  (iii) Most lamentable is the fact that some of the young robbers do not come from poor homes but from middle class family backgrounds.

When there is a social problem there is always an attempt by various people to deny responsibility and to shift the blame on to some one else. In the case of parenting there has been an attempt to shift the blame on the influences outside the home. The media, peers, the schools, the community, modern influences are all blamed for the destruction of the young people. When blame is shifted in this manner no one will attempt to search for answers to the most worrying problems of our times.

It is the contention of the present study that, the roots of the above problems are likely to be found within the family, which has been described as the basic unit of society by Kithinji & Kithinji (2005). In the current study, the most likely place to start investigating
the problem is the source i.e. investigating the actual transactions that take place between the parents and their children. And the central assumption of this study is that the most likely reason for the present sorry state is that serious deviations from the traditional parenting practices have occurred.

The current problems may also be indicative of failure of the present families to adapt competently to the changing social requirements in a world whose social institutions have failed to move at the same pace with the technological advances.

These however are only but assumptions. The central problem is determining how true they might be to reality when subjected to methodological and systematic study. Hence there is reason to wonder the extent to which both men and women have tended to shift away from the traditional mode of life as well as the extent to which they have responded to the new roles ascribed to each one of them by the changing times. Therefore the key task of the current study was to explore the extent to which the modern Kenyan family is struggling successfully with the conflict between traditional and modern parenting as well as to find out the extent to which they are adjusting to the requirements of modern roles for both men and women. Through such a study it is expected that useful data would be generated that would enable to determine the extent to which people have abrogated the traditional functional roles and espoused modernity, or how they have been able to blend the strengths drawn from the two competing traditions in forging out a fulfilling approach to parenting in contemporary Kenya.
1.3.0 Purpose of the study

The current study aimed at describing the extent to which modernization has affected the parenting practices as well as establishing the traditional parenting practices that have resisted change. The study intended to achieve this by finding out parenting behaviours employed by fathers and mothers and the extent to which they can be described as traditional, modern or none of the two. Further to this, the current study attempted to discover whether there are gender differences in the parenting behaviours experienced by boys and girls.

Hence, this study was intended to investigate the actual and specific parenting behaviours of both men and women. The parenting behaviours investigated were those that focused on the way fathers and mothers individually address the following critical issues:

i. Demographic variables influencing parenting.

ii. The facilities availed for use by the children.

iii. The shared parent-child activities.

iv. Provision of psychological and educational needs.


vi. Decision making and the general running of the home.
1.4.0 Objectives of the study

This study addressed the following objectives, namely to find out:

(i) The demographic variables that influence parenting behaviours among the respondents of the study indicate the conflict between traditional and modern parenting practices.

(ii) The facilities/resources for modern parenting available in the homes of the respondents under study are pointers to the conflict between traditional and modern parenting trends.

(iii) Ways in which the patterns of parent-child shared activities as reported by the respondents are a reflection of the conflict between the traditional and modern parenting trends.

(iv) Whether the methods parents use to meet the psychological and educational needs of children is a reflection of the conflict between the traditional and modern trends of parenting.

(v) If the nature of parent-child control is a pointer to the conflict between the traditional and modern parenting behaviours.

(vi) Describe whether the way in which parents contribute to decision making, child-rearing and house keeping in the home is evident of the conflict between traditional and modern parenting behaviours.
1.5.0 Research questions

The following research questions were formulated to guide this study:

(i) **Research Question One**: Are the demographic factors influencing parenting behaviours indicative of the conflict between traditional and modern trends in parenting?

(ii) **Research Question Two**: Are the facilities and resources available in the homes of the respondents under study pointers to the conflict between traditional and modern parenting behaviours?

(iii) **Research Question Three**: In what ways do the parent-child activities indicate to the conflict between the traditional and modern parenting behaviours?

(iv) **Research Question Four**: Does the way parents meet the psychological and educational needs of their children reflect the conflict between traditional and modern methods of parenting?

(v) **Research Question Five**: Is the nature of parent-child control a pointer to the conflict between traditional and modern methods of parenting?

(vi) **Research Question Six**: Is the conflict between traditional and modern methods of parenting evident in the way parents make decisions regarding house-keeping and child-rearing in the homes of the respondents.

1.6.0 Justification of the study

The current study was justified in that it was interested in exploring the extent to which the conflict between the traditional and modern orientation to parenting is ironing itself out or coming under control by possible synthesis of the two.

The crux of the study was to find out the nature of the possible synthesis being forged between the old and the new ways of parenting in modern Kenya. There seems to be some confusion in which way to go in giving the children the best of all possible worlds,
drawing from the old and the new. So far the literature has shown that there is confusion among the parents regarding which ideal parenting framework to guide their practice. The study is interested to find out if this confusion is clearing and in which way.

Additionally, the area of traditional parenting behaviours and the relative modern influences on parenting is poorly researched in Kenya. It was therefore hoped that the findings of this research would add to existing knowledge in the area of parenting behaviours in modern Kenya. Instead of dwelling on speculations about the nature of the parenting behaviours currently adopted by modern Kenyan parents, the need was felt to collect tangible data that will illuminate the actual picture regarding what the parents are currently doing. The extent to which they are in touch with the traditional parenting behaviours as well the extent to which they subscribe to modern practices will be interesting to explore. The study of parenting behaviours is also important because it is related to the issues of mental health and adjustments of individuals. The findings of the study would in general:

- Stimulate interest in future researchers to undertake research in the area.
- Help understand the position of parenting today in relation to the traditional as well as modern trends.
- Suggest ways of starting counseling as well as training programs for parents.
- Advise on how the positive aspects of traditional parenting behaviours can be blended with the positive aspects of the modern world to produce
an eclectic approach to parenting which would benefit the parents of the future.

- Encourage children to seek counseling services when they encounter challenges they can not handle at home or in the school.

In addition, the findings of this study would make a contribution to the theories of parenting from a Kenyan perspective providing further related research in the hope of improving parenting and relationships between modern parents and their children.

1.6.1 Significance of the study

Significance of this study is found in the following areas:

1) The current study has brought new evidence to bear on an old problem in that although has been known that a conflict existed between traditional and modern methods of parenting in Kenya; this is the first time its documentation has been done.

2) The use of the Internalized-Other Interviewing Technique used in the current study is a departure from the methods commonly used in educational psychology studies. Many of studies conducted in this area rely on self reporting techniques.

3) The current study has brought new insights in the area of the conflict between traditional and modern parenting behaviours in a way that it has not been done before.

4) The current study has also used a cross-disciplinary approach to attain the goals intended; in particular the study has attempted to find the meeting ground between...
the authorities in traditional parenting practices and the psychology theories on child rearing and parenting.

1.7.0 Basic assumptions of the study

In this study the following assumptions were made:

(i) That some parenting behaviours among modern Kenyan parents have been influenced by global trends while others have remained unchanged.

(ii) That the boys and girls under study gave correct information about their perceptions of the parenting behaviours of their parents.

(iii) That the research tool used in the study yielded valid and reliable data.

(iv) That the findings from this study can be generalized to the population represented by the sample.

1.8.0 Scope and delimitations of the study

The study was interested in describing the conflict between traditional and modern parenting behaviours as perceived by some selected students in secondary schools in Nairobi Province. In addition to the parenting behaviours, another preoccupation of the study was the changing family structures, family types, and family size which have been perceived as factors explained by the demands of modernity.

In terms of scope, the current study has been confined only within the few sampled schools in Nairobi province. As such, the findings can only be generalized to the extent...
that students in other schools in Nairobi, in particular, and in other urban centres, in
general, have similar characteristics and are exposed to similar environments as the
subjects of this study. The study used samples drawn from two students and did not
students from other classes.

The principles of Occam's razor were used in restricting the study text reflecting the
traditional family forms to those of Kenyatta (1938), Laye (1954), Ngugi (1965), Meade
(1968), Nukunya (1972) and Omari (1982). This is because when there are a lot of
options to choose from the minimum that is necessary to achieve the goal is what is to be
selected.

1.9.0 Operational definition of terms

The following terms are defined as used in the study:

(i) Parenting behaviour – refers to all the interactions that take place between
parents and their children and which go towards the facilitation of all the
developmental needs of children physical and psychological growth and
development. Parental behaviours include provision of food, clothing, shelter,
love and belongingness. They also include parental personal and direct
involvement in the life of the child observed in time spent with the child,
activities done together with the child, behaviour regulation and control. They
also include instructional parenting, teaching their children facts and wisdom of
their culture and tradition.
(ii) **Traditional African family** – refers to the families that existed before the influences of Westernization. These families practiced subsistence economy, and were mostly polygamous.

(iii) **Conflict** – This refers to the situation of meeting of culture (Traditional and modern) in which the incoming (modern) culture puts pressure on the old (the traditional) to give way and to disappear. This results in a clash between the two with losses on both sides.

(iv) **Family structure** – refers to whether the family is run on the basis of monogamous marriage, polygamous, divorced, single parent or extended.

(v) **Modern Kenyan family** – refers to the family that has been alienated from the traditional roots and which subscribes to the global culture where the world has been reduced to a global village. In particular, it refers to Kenyan families located in urban towns and cities.

(vi) **Modern influences** – refers to all the changes that have occurred as a result of the African community's induction to new ways of life issuing from modernization and globalization. Among the influences are; new religious beliefs, a movement towards a new value system, urbanization and departure from the traditional ways of life, exposing children to a reading culture, electronic devices that may expose children to pornography and other negative media messages.

(vii) **Paternal behaviours** – refers to the specific ways in which the father parents his children.

(viii) **Maternal behaviours** - refers to the mothers parenting behaviours.
Disclosure — refers to the way family members share with each other the good as well as the bad things that happen to them. This may include sharing personal problems like inadequate finances, marital problems or even social problems. The disclosing person may be husband to wife, wife to husband, father to son, father to daughter, mother to son, mother to daughter. Son to father, son to mother, daughter to father or daughter to mother.

Internalized other interviewing — is a method used in counseling and family therapy whereby a spouse may be interviewed to reveal the mirror image the other spouse casts or a child could be asked to reveal the way he or she perceives a parent. In the current study the internalized other method has been used with the subjects with the intention of exploring how they perceive their parents’ parenting behaviours.

Curfew- is a regulation that states the time family members are expected to return home. Curfew may be set at 6 o’clock or any time the family may specify.

This chapter has provided the basis for this research by outlining the need to investigate the effects of modernisation on traditional parenting practices among students in Nairobi. It was therefore found necessary to acquire empirical evidence to show the extent to which both the modern and traditional parenting behaviours interact and impact on children’s adjustments in the family.
CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.0.0 Introduction

In this chapter, the theoretical and the conceptual framework of the study are highlighted. This is followed by the review of related literature in the context of the traditional and modern parenting styles by both African and foreign researchers. At the end of the review a summary of the literature was made to identify existing trends with regard to the research questions of the study in order to establish whether previous researchers indicate a changing pattern and in what direction, which traditions are changing and which ones have resisted change, and whether the change is partial or total. This will pave way for making comparisons with the reality on the ground at the end of the study.

2.1.0 Theories on parenting

This section highlights theories on parenting which include the following:

- The psychosexual theory by Freud (1905, 1924).
- The psychosocial theory by Erikson (1968, 1980).
- The behavioral theory by Watson (1928).
- The Good-Enough Mother theory by Winnicott (1953).
2.1.1 The Attachment Theory

Bowlby (1969, 1973) proposed the attachment theory to emphasize the importance of the maternal parenting behaviours. The theory focuses on maternal behaviours that facilitate the development of a bonding or attachment relationship between the mother and the child. Bonding for Bowlby (1969, 1973) refers to the positive effect of the first experiences of maternal love, warmth and a demonstration of acceptance of the child. According to the attachment theory, the child who experiences maternal love and acceptance feels secure, develops trust, and perceives the world as secure, friendly and approachable. According to this theory the child who experiences maternal rejection develops the perception that the world is insecure, unloving and threatening and dangerous.

In the current study the attachment theory has been used to explore the extent to which the parents of the subjects under study have demonstrated love and support for their children in the following ways:

- Adequate provision for the needs of their children
- Spending quality time with the children.
- Showing outward manifestations of warmth.
- Use of healthy methods of behaviour control
- Demonstrating concern for the welfare of the child

The mothers’ role in the family has been associated with nurturance. This is true for both the traditional as well as modern set up. The current study intends to examine the extent to which this maternal perception has been affected by the modern trends.
2.1.2 The Psychosexual Theory

Freud (1905, 1924) developed the psychosexual theory of personality development. This theory recognizes the importance of both parents during the formative years of children’s development. According to the Freudian theory, the mother’s contribution during the oral, anal, and phallic stages of development is crucial. She provides for the gratification of the oral stage by providing the breast for the child to suckle, she is involved in toilet training of the child and she provides the role model for identification for the daughter who learns to identify with her after the resolution of the Electra complex. For the boy, the mother is the first love object that helps to catalyze the resolution of the Oedipus complex. In the Freudian theory Oedipus complex refers to a situation where the boy falls in love with his mother from about the age of four to six years. This boy fears that if the father discovers this love for the mother he would castrate him. In order to resolve this conflict, the boy uses two defense mechanisms, repression of the love for the mother and identification. In identification the boy becomes like the father in behaviour, attitudes and values and he assumes the male gender role. The principle is that the father cannot castrate a person who is like him.

The psychosexual theory recognizes the importance of the father in the rearing of the child. His presence and active participation in the life of the child facilitates the sex role development in both boys and girls. The father is particularly important to the girls’ role as he provides the opposite sex model that helps the girl to learn how to relate with men.
For the boy the father models the male gender role as the boy learns to identify with him after successful resolution of the oedipal complex. The psychosexual theory credits the father’s role with the development of the super ego in children of both sexes. A father who undertakes his role well has children who develop a healthy conscience. The parents who provide their children with pleasant experiences set the pace for the development of psychological health while those who expose their children to psychological trauma set the potentiality for the development of psychopathology.

In the present study the researcher intends to examine the extent to which Freud’s ideas are identifiable in the parenting behaviours of modern Kenyan parents. It is noteworthy to mention that Kenyatta (1938), Laye (1954), Ngugi (1965), and Omari (1982) reporting on the traditional African parenting behaviours, described parenting as nurturing and facilitative. The mother is described as one who nurtured the child while the father is seen as one who provided discipline. Each parent’s role as a model for behaviour is well outlined. It will be interesting to determine the extent to which this structure is still in place among the families of the students to be studied.

2.1.3 The Psychosocial Theory

Erikson (1968, 1980) a neo-Freudian, developed a theory that described psychosocial events that shape the child’s development. In his theory the child is seen interacting with various social environments that shape the development from the time the child is born.
through the various stages of life until death. The parents are identified as significant people in the child’s life who determine how to meet the developmental needs of the child. During the first year of the child’s life they are expected to provide experiences that promote the development of trust in the child. Of great importance during this time, is the quality of maternal care that the child receives. The child who experiences warmth, love, acceptance and unconditional positive regard, is enabled to be a trusting person, while the child who suffers parental rejection learns to mistrust the world. As the child continues to grow the parents set the stage for the development of autonomy or shame, initiative or guilt, industry or inferiority and eventually culminating to the development of identity versus identity confusion during adolescence.

In the current study this theory has been juxtaposed with the current parenting trends with the view of determining the extent to which current parenting behaviours subscribe to it. Like many developmental theorists, Erikson’s views subscribe to the traditional approaches of parenting. The theory is in great concurrence with the views expressed by Kenyatta (1938). The traditional Kenyan child according to Kenyatta (1938), was seen as one who enjoyed an environment tailored specially to enable him or her to graduate through the various stages of life with as much ease as possible. The mother was always there to see to the child’s needs, and the basic function of the home was to ensure conducive conditions for the growth of children. The current study is oriented to assessing the extent to which current parenting behaviours are in agreement with Erikson’s theory as well as the extent to which the general trend of parenting in modern Kenya deviates from the theory.
2.1.4 The Behavioral Theory

The behavioral theory was developed by Watson (1928) and Skinner (1953, 1971). The key concepts in this theory that relate to the current study are those that emphasize the importance of the environmental conditions for child rearing. The behavioral theory states that all behaviour is determined by stimulation that is present in the environment and the responses that the person produces in reciprocation. Since the events that promote the occurrence of behaviour exist in the environment then it is important that the stimulating conditions be set. The parents are advised about the need to provide children with conducive environments so that they can acquire all the necessary behaviour patterns. The behavioral theorists believe that a child’s behaviour can be shaped depending on the reinforcement procedures availed by the parent such as the behaviour shaping methods, the manipulations of positive reinforcement, negative reinforcement, punishment, extinction procedures, discrimination training and generalization training. In this theory too, parents are encouraged to become good role models to their children.

In the current study, this theory is taken into account to find out whether the parenting behaviours studied display some discernible agreement with the theory. The theory holds the traditional perspective of parenting that seems to suggest that parental training is of great consequence to the child’s development. It supports the traditional notion of child discipline which believes that to spare the rod is to spoil the child. The current study has tried to compare the theory with the views expressed by Kenyatta (1938). The traditional Kenyan parent is described as one who took great concern to ensure that the child was raised in an environment that supported all the learning expected of every child.
2.1.5 The Parenting Styles Theory

Baumrind (1966, 1967, 1991, and 1995) developed a theory of parenting styles. She described parenting in terms of four styles, namely, authoritarian, authoritative, permissive and uninvolved. She described the authoritarian parent as one who is high in demanding and low in responsiveness. This parent demands the child’s obedience, is highly controlling, believes in giving orders and relies heavily on punishment. The authoritative parent, on the other hand, is described as one who is high in demanding while at the same time shows high responsiveness towards the child. This parent is supportive, warm and communicative, and respects the child’s relative independence. S/he allows the child freedom of expression as well as the opportunity to make choices while at the same time s/he is firm, clear and explicit about her or his position regarding issues.

The permissive parent is high in responsiveness but low in demanding. S/he gives the child too much room to do as he/she pleases and provides for the child’s needs without giving the child any direction in terms of expectations for behaviour or other issues. S/he is poor on limit-setting abilities in promoting the development of the child. The uninvolved parent is neither demanding nor responsive. He/she shows no concern for the child’s needs or the need to impose controls for behaviour. This parent does not show any warmth and he/she does not communicate with the child and like the permissive parent does not set limits to their children’s behaviours.
This theory is built into the theoretical framework of the current study in order to try and find out if the parenting styles of parents of the students under study subscribe to the various styles. An attempt will be made to determine the extent to which the parenting styles closely resemble those described by Kenyatta (1938), Laye (1954), Ngugi (1965), and Mead (1968). According to these writers the traditional African parents tended towards authoritative parenting, which was high in demanding, high in responsiveness, warmth and support.

2.1.6 The Good – Enough Mother Theory

According to Winnicott (1953), the psyche of the child develops in relation to the availability of a real influential parent. In Winnicott’s view this parent is the mother. For a child to develop psychological health the mother must be good enough. One important maternal behaviour identified by Winnicott is holding of the baby. The holding has physical as well as psychological qualities that make the baby feel secure. A good – enough mother provides a good holding environment and she is sensitive to the ever evolving needs of the child. At birth the baby is in a state of complete dependence and needs complete holding by the mother. Holding here refers to the way the mother becomes sensitive to all the needs of the baby and meets all in total commitment. A good – enough mother knows that as the baby continues to grow and to mature she must adjust her holding accordingly loosening her grip in order to allow the child room to gain competence in the world. This mother allows the child to experience increasing doses of frustration, which should help the child to move towards healthy independence. She
knows when to expect the child to start feeding, dress oneself, become toilet trained or start taking responsibility of his/her toys.

The not good – enough mother, according to this theory, is one whose holding is faulty. This mother may fail to hold the child physically or psychologically at a time when the child needs being held. The not so good- enough mother may hold a child too tightly and fail to allow him/her enough room to interact with the environment. This mother may have tendencies of holding the child too tightly through over- protection and smothering which hinders the child from seeking increasing levels of autonomy as he/she grows. A not so good – enough mother may also push away the child too early denying him/her the kind of assistance that he/her requires at an early stage. According to Winnicott (1953) wrong holding is associated with the development of psychological ill - health in the child.

In this study Winnicott’s theory is considered of great relevance as using it one can easily assess the extent to which the parenting behaviours under investigation subscribe to good holding by good - enough mothers or to wrong holding by not so good-enough mothers. In that case, Winnicott’s theory will help to identify the extent to which a good majority of modern Kenyan mothers can be characterized as ‘good enough mothers’ or as ‘not good enough mothers’ judging from the perceptions of their children.
2.2.0 Conceptual Framework

This study is built on the assumption that a conflict exists between traditional parenting behaviours and modern trends of parenting. The modern trends are assumed to have affected the way parents and their children interact with each other as well as the way children perceive their parent’s roles. The current study has attempted to describe the actual parenting behaviours of the Kenyan parents as perceived by their children. Very specifically both mothers’ and the fathers’ parenting behaviours have been put on the spotlight with the intention of discovering how they have been influenced by modernization. Indeed, the traditional and the modern parenting behaviours occasionally influence each other and thereby merging in conflicting way, thus resulting into child rearing issues that are likely to manifest in child maladjustment. Figure 2.1 below illustrates this possible transactional flow of events.
Traditional Parenting Behaviours

- Source of problems.
- Outmoded practices
  - Polygamy
  - Extended Family.

- Many Children

Modern Parenting Behaviours

- Sources of strength
- Parental authority.
- Father involved

Merged Neo-Modern (Mixed model)

- Reinstate parental authority
- Egalitarian parenting
- Acquire new skills

- Seeking counseling help
- Healthy Family Functioning

- Psychologically Healthy Children

END OF CONFLICT.

Fig 2.1 Conceptual Framework of the Study.
Using the first arm of the model, the interaction between the traditional and modern parenting practices are smoothly negotiated and navigated, resulting in no conflict or confusion about the new demands in the modern Kenyan child. Following this model, parents examine the strengths and weaknesses of both the traditional and modern parenting practices, and are able to adopt and blend the practices that are beneficial to the families. In this case, they seek to harmonize the two parenting practices and to borrow from each selectively. Consequently, the whole family benefits and is characterized by healthy adjustment for all the members. The blending of the traditional and the modern parenting styles ensure that every member of the family assumes the rightful place in the family constellation. Parents become co-partners and they guide the family towards psychological health.

On the other hand, using the second arm of the model, it is noted that, when the transition from traditional to modern parenting styles is not smooth or confused, a conflict arises. This conflict occurs because the parents are not able to draw from the strengths of both traditional and modern styles of parenting blending and harmonizing them. In this way, modern Kenyan families are not likely to be neither truly modern nor truly traditional. This state of affairs causes confusion which has translated itself into parenting challenges. These challenges manifest in the form of maladjusted behaviours in family members.

The key concepts explored in the study relate to the extent to which parenting behaviours of modern Kenyan parents show a deviation from the traditional ones. For instance, today
the father’s role in the family may be shrouded by ambiguity as he may be perceived as a person who provides resources without any significant identifiable role. He may be perceived as a person who does not fit in the family picture while the mother takes the center stage in the family constellation. Consequently, many children may not enjoy the benefit of having two parents who are co-partners in the parenting endeavor, if the father is side-lined as redundant. This negates the fundamentals of the traditional parenting behaviours as stipulated in Kenyatta (1938), Laye (1954), Ngugi (1965), Mead (1968), and Omari (1982).

2.3.0 Review of existing literature

In this section, the literature on both the traditional and modern parenting behaviours is reviewed. This is followed by the review of related studies done in the context of the objectives of the study. That is research focusing on time children spend watching the television, the amount of time parents spend with their children and the type of activities they engage together, methods parents use to control children’s behaviour as well as curfew hours imposed for guiding the children. Also to be reviewed is literature relating to family rules, decision making in the homes, gender roles in the family as well as the perceived gender differences in the way families raise their sons and daughters.

2.3.1 Traditional parenting practices

In the African context child rearing was intended to make a child a functional and responsible adult in his or her society. There were specific core values that were recognized and enforced by majority of African traditional societies (Kenyatta, 1938).
Many of them were child-centered in that the child was desired by all parents, and the activities of the home were organized in such a way that the child’s needs were met (Laye, 1954). In traditional African societies marriage was highly valued with every child growing up with the knowledge that the ultimate goal of growing up was to get married, start a family, and raise children like his/her parents before him/her (Ngugi, 1965).

In this section an attempt has been made to review the relevant authorities in traditional parenting practices. It is hoped that the information to accrue from the review will illuminate the position and conditions of parenting in African societies before the emergence of the globalization and modernization phenomena. The principal sources on the traditional parenting practices reviewed in this section are: Kenyatta (1938), Ngugi Wa Thion’go (1965), Omari (1982), Nukunya (1992), Laye (1954) and Mead (1968). These principle sources are used following Occum’s principle in, Audi (1995), of age and popularity. Where as other people may have written about parenting practices in different communities in Kenya, they are not as old, or as popularly known like the authorities reviewed in the current study.

2.3.1.1 Kenyatta (1938): *Facing Mount Kenya*

Kenyatta (1938) was concerned with the socio-cultural life of the Agikuyu of Kenya. According to Kenyatta (1938), the Kikuyu society was organized under the patriarchal system with the father as the head of the family. Marriage was highly valued and all women were put under the protection of the men, which was actualized through marriage. It was considered a parental sacred duty to create and rear future generations and this was
considered as the sole purpose of marriage. The Kikuyu society, according to Kenyatta (1938), valued children of both sexes as each had a designated place in the family constellation. The father is depicted as the supreme ruler of the homestead, owner of everything in the home and custodian of the family property.

The father was respected and obeyed by everybody. His children talked to him politely and in return he reciprocated the politeness except when reprimanding them. To the children the father’s name was so sacred that no child ever called him by his personal name. In every family the father acted as judge who settled minor disputes between the members of his family. The father was responsible for the training of the boys; teaching them many things, including: agriculture, wood carving, bee keeping, iron working, hunting as well as teaching the boy about the family and clan issues. Every father made sure that the boys knew every thing to be known about family lands and the boundaries.

Kenyatta depicts the mother as one who was greatly respected by all. To be a mother was considered an honor desired by every woman. The name mother was sacred and defended by all to the extent that men would fight with anybody who showed signs of disrespect to the mother. Children got attached to the mother because she was their nurse who kept closer contact with them than the father did. The mother fed the children, looked after their clothing, defended them when they were in trouble and acted as the children’s go-between in relation to their father. She reconciled the children and their father by doing everything she could to avoid conflict. In cases where the family was polygamous the mother was the immediate head of her household. The mother was responsible for the
training of small children, teaching them all things concerning domestic duties, home management, agriculture, the laws and customs of the people as well as the etiquette of the people. The mother was the first history teacher who introduced the child to the family tree through lullabies.

The family was very important as it constituted the society’s economic unit. A sharp division of labor characterized the life of the traditional Kikuyu family. The housekeeping duties and child minding was solely the domain of women. The children were trained to undertake their various roles in the community according to their age and gender. The education given to the children was practical as they watched the older people perform their roles and started practicing from early in life. The children were taught certain key values such as respecting and honoring people according to their seniority and kinship. They were also trained to be responsible and to be economically valuable. The traditional parenting practices that are identifiable in Kenyatta’s anthropological report highlighted the following:

- The importance of marriage and the family as the ideal child-rearing institution in Kikuyu land.
- The desire of men and woman to live under the identity of the family.
- The paternal role had specific duties that could not be avoided. He was the undisputed head of family, custodian of family property and the pillar of traditional practices. The woman’s role in the family was that of a wife, child bearer and nurse, the mediator between the children and their father as well as the teacher of small children.
• The family values that children imbibed were: Respect and honor for the elders, social conformity, and aspiration to grow to be like their parents.
• The involvement of the entire community in child rearing, confirming the saying that ‘it took the whole village to raise a child in the African context’.

2.3.1.2 Ngugi Wa Thiongo (1965): The River Between

Ngugi (1965) depict how the African way of life was affected by modernizing influences. The novel is set in a typical traditional African village, of the Agikuyu where people are struggling to save their ancient ways from being eroded by westernizing practices while others among them espouse the new influences denouncing every traditional belief or behaviour as sinful. The story is told through the eyes of the protagonist, Waiyaki, who is made privy to the ways of his people by his aging father. As the story unravels the traditional African way of life unfolds. The information gathered from the novel and which is relevant to the interest of current study includes the following:

• Just like Kenyatta’s (1938) views, marriage and parenthood were highly valued and the desire of every child boy or girl was to grow up and marry and have children. This is communicated through the tragic story of Muthoni who wanted to be initiated to adulthood like all the other girls of her tribe and get a husband for her bed and children for her hearth.
• The relationship between the mother and her children is intimate as the mothers tried to shield their children from the wrath of their fathers, bearing all the sins of their children.
• Every person in the traditional home had a role to play, which was designated by the society. The father is depicted as the custodians of knowledge responsible for the transmission of culture to their children. This is seen when Chege takes his son Waiyaki to the sacred groove where he teaches him all the secrets of his people.

• The father teaches the son many things including herbal medicine, the history of the tribe, religion, the family lineage, gender biases and stereotypes as well as the fathers’ expectations for their sons.

• The men were the heads of their families and as such they watched the operations of the home keenly as they sat at a strategic position under the family tree until darkness enveloped the land.

• The men and the women are depicted as living in separate huts; the men in their special hut and the women in theirs. The position of the father is depicted as revered, as no child would ever dare to disobey him. The father is also seen as loving and caring though not expected to show an outward display of emotion.

• A sharp division of labor is also discernible as we are introduced to the mother’s and the girl’s roles as those of bringing the food stuffs home, cooking and giving both the men and children food, while the husband and the boys brought in the cattle and goats.

• Adherence to the traditional norms was highly valued. This is inferred from the various activities the people engage in particularly to do with the traditional Kikuyu initiation rites.
Ngugi (1965) describes how the modernizing influences started to catch up with the people as some of them were converted to Christianity, bringing sharp division as well as strong resistance among the people. The people who took up the Christian values were greatly opposed to the traditional values to the point of disinheriting their own children who refused to follow the Christian views. The novel exposes the struggles that ensued as some of the people attempted to assimilate some of the new influences without giving up all the traditional values. This endeavor is met with hostility by both camps. It will be interesting, in this study, to explore if the same conflicts and antagonism depicted by Ngugi arising between the modern and the traditional ways of parenting are still here with us.

2.3.1.3 Omari (1982): Psychology and Education in Changing Societies

Omari (1982) concurs with the traditional mode of parenting as expressed by people from other traditional African societies. He points out the traditional child-rearing emphasis laid on the child's obedience and respect in all forms of behaviour, that is, obedience, good manners and respecting senior people as well as the authoritarian disciplinary methods. In Omari's (1982) view, the society in which parents are raising their children is changing. There is no standard model to guide child-rearing since there are many influences that have embarked on the scene. In current times one can no longer talk about raising the child in the traditional African way due to the social transformations taking place within the societies.
Today the changing societies are affected by the seeming departure of the father from the family scene leaving the mother as the parent closer to the child. The mother is depicted as the parent who is in closer physical and psychological contact with the child than the father is. She is responsible for child-care as well as being the key person who socializes the child. The father is the breadwinner who works away from the home for most of the day or the week. He is depicted as a person who is always away from home either because he is at work or has gone for leisure. If the family is polygamous the father is still distant because he cannot give his attention to all the members of his family and therefore the mother is still the parent closer to the children. According to Omari (1982), this situation is seen as the cause of the development of mother dependency syndrome among the children as she becomes their key role model in the home. The father still maintains some of his traditional roles as the final authority and the disciplinarian who is respected and feared.

Omari’s (1982) report like Ngugi’s (1965), shows that the present study’s focus on influences of modernity on traditional child-rearing is a worthy venture and its significance is already recognized in the literature.

2.3.1.4 Nukunya: (1992) Tradition and Change

Nukunya (1992) looked at the way the traditional family in Ghana has evolved in the presence of agents of change. Like other African societies the traditional family in Ghana, according to Nukunya (1992) was characterized by similar features as among the Kikuyu where-by the status quo was maintained, laid down procedures adhered to and
rules about acceptable behaviour meticulously taught by the parents enforced by all and sundry. There was division of labor according to the sex and age of the person. Like in other traditional African societies, the people of Ghana also valued children and they would do everything they could to provide and care for them. Children were a prestige symbol and the family ensured that many children were born; a reason that encouraged polygamous marriages. The children of the time learned every thing from their parents, community elders, and age was the basis of acquiring social status.

Nukunya's (1992) account of the family life in traditional Ghana is similar to that of Kenyatta (1938), Ngugi (1965) and Omari (1982). It was interesting to explore if the same values depicted by Nukunya (1992), characterized the parents of the students studied.

2.3.1.5 Laye (1954): The African Child

The most vivid account of family life in a typical traditional African village set up was that documented by Camara Laye (1954). The traditional African family, according to Laye (1954), was always large and served as the sanctuary of the child that provided love, care, security and above all doting parents. The father is depicted as the head of the family who is respected by all the people in the home. He was known to give orders and was the symbol of authority that none dared to question. The relationship between the father and his son is that of love and respect and one characterized by intimate bonding between father and son. As the custodian and transmitter of culture it was the father's
duty to pass on traditional knowledge to his first-born son, a responsibility that was
dispensed when the son came of age.

The mother was depicted as loving and strongly attached to the child, as she was
responsible for protection, caring for and feeding the child. She was very perceptive to
the problems of the child and she communicated this fact well so that the child knew she
cared. The young children slept in her hut as the father slept in his own private hut. There
were some aspects of traditional knowledge that the mother transmitted to her children
according to when they came of age. In the traditional African families the children were
trained to be obedient, respectful of their elders and to perform their prescribed duties
without defaulting. Like was the case in other traditional African villages, the child was
communally raised with every body concerned with the health and general welfare of
each child. Laye’s image of traditional parenting practices confirms the trend that
prevailed in other African communities including Kenya. The current study has tried to
find out if the same trend is obtainable among Kenyan parents according to the testimony
of the children of these parents.

2.3.1.6 Mead (1968): *Children of their Fathers*

Mead (1968) presents another account of life in a traditional African village. Except for a
slight variation in the child rearing practices, the Ngoni child is raised in an extended
family set up and the whole village celebrates his birth. The only exception here is the
rather distant position maintained by the mother who hires a nurse to take care of the
child as a requirement by the Ngoni tradition. In the traditional Ngoni family the father
made important decisions regarding the child’s life. He demonstrated affection to the young children by carrying them about and helping them to take their first steps. The father also taught children how to speak correctly and would always sit with them at the veranda. The father was consulted when the child fell sick and he had to make decisions about what steps to take depending on the gravity of the problem.

The child was raised in an atmosphere of strict adherence to the traditional code of conduct. The whole village raised the child as all Ngoni adults took the responsibility of correcting the child’s behaviour. The children were trained to be deeply conscious of the traditional values of their society: honor, respect, politeness and courtesy. Any slight deviation from the norm was likened to the destruction of the roof of the traditional hut and it was taken very seriously. Mead’s report is again important as it gave an idea of a situation in which even in a traditional family set up, a nurse, not the mother is assigned the major task of bringing up the child. This study intends to explore the extent to which this Malawian model is becoming the order of the day in the context of modern parenting in Kenya.

2.3.1.7 Summary of traditional African child rearing practices

The reviewed authorities concur in many issues regarding the traditional African family structure and child rearing practices. They all agree that:

- Marriage was highly valued by all Africans.
- The families were patriarchal with the man as the head of the family.
- The mother was honored, respected and her name was sacred.
- Having many children was valued; a fact which encouraged polygamous marriages.
- The children were given all the protection they needed.
- The men kept close to their sons and passed on traditional knowledge to them when they came of age.
- Although they kept their respectable distances from their children as dictated by culture, the fathers demonstrated their love and support to their children in an open manner. In that way, both parents have a stake in the up-bringing of children.
- Raising children was a community affair.
- There was a sharp division of labor in the families according to sex and age.
- Motherhood was considered highly desirable.
- The mothers were very close to their children and they played the role of mediators between the children and their fathers.
- The household chores and child-rearing tasks were exclusively carried out by the females.

2.3.2 The modern parenting practices

The modern family is seen as one that has greatly evolved as a consequence of the modernizing influences that have occurred. Following Westernization like other African societies, the Kenyan society has been undergoing socio-cultural change from a traditional economy to modern economy based on Western values. This change is assumed to have had a significant impact on the family as noted in the nostalgic images
of the indulgent; and overprotective traditional mother depicted by Omari (1982) who seems to have disappeared from the family set up. The traditional calm Omari suggested has since disappeared and in its place serious conflict emerged. This conflict has been characterized by a break up of the value system as new values are established. Parenting has been greatly affected as parents are accused of neglecting their parental duty all catalyzing the breaking up of the traditional family set up Adei & Adei, (1991).

Urban life is said to have uprooted the family from its traditional settings, trans-locating it to areas of high population density in the towns and cities. The urban areas have become a melting pot of traditional cultures and one of the aspects that is assumed to have been shattered is family life. Most parents currently are both working and in most cases the young children are left under the care of the housemaid. The house maid is normally a person between 14 to 20 years old who has no training in child care, baby feeding, time management, nutrition and hygiene or home safety and therefore cannot play the role of substitute mother and according to Gachukia (1989), is unlikely to be a child lover.

In many modern families, the status of husband and father has been greatly challenged. The urbanized woman is more economically empowered; and, in many homes, is assumed to have silently taken over as the head of the family. Power struggles in the home have created adverse conditions for parenting (Kinai, 2002). The changed trends are witnessed in people who have no respect for the family institution and who do not value marriage or parenthood. The modern family is plagued by many issues such as
changed patterns of interaction among the spouses themselves and among parents and their children with the dire consequences of infidelity as described by Kang'ong'oi (2006) and Pala (2006). Domestic violence, child abuse and neglect have characterized life in many families. According to Wasanga (2004), many parents have abdicated the role of serving as guides to their children.

The current trends indicate a bleak future for the modern family. According to Nyambura (2006), the fundamental reasons why people get married have changed. In some marriages only one person is married, the woman. New methods of relating sexually have developed with the tendency towards hedonism where the search for personal pleasure has become the guiding spirit in the modern person's life. This is evidenced by reports about highly successful career women who have proclaimed sexual liberation and who enter into sexual contracts with men with no strings attached, as described by Nyambura (2006). Homosexuality and bisexuality are also catching up in various pockets of urbanized society as explained by Pala (2006), in his article, *Under Cover Brother*.

The modern values have become so westernized that people talk openly about issues that were previously for the initiated members of the community. Sex has left the secrecy of the bedroom and has taken center stage in the family living room. A culture of promiscuity is encouraged and issues like abortion are no longer obnoxious or disgusting. In fact, promiscuity has emerged as one of the major battles of female sexual liberation (Obati, 2004). Things that were held sacred like the female genitalia are now a topic of public consumption in the new movement called the 'V' monologues.
Children’s innocence is no longer guaranteed or safeguarded as cases of sexual abuse on children of both sexes are being reported. The shocking thing is that children as young as five months are sexually abused (Randa, 2006). In the current trends some children no longer enjoy parental protection and neither are they adequately provided for as attested by cases of child labor, domestic violence, physical assault, incest and even child prostitution (Wachira, 2006). Many children are not supervised by their parents and they easily find themselves involved in drug abuse (Waithaka, 2006).

Against the disheartening reports about the state of modern Kenya the intended question for research then becomes: What traditional parental behaviours have been able to survive the negative incursions of the westernizing influences as could be reported by the products of these families, the modern secondary school students? What aspects of traditional parenting behaviours have fallen by the way side?

2.3.2.1 The mother and child-rearing

The mother’s role in child rearing has been a passionate subject, which has generated great interest since ancient times. Existing literature has highlighted the primacy of the maternal role in child’s development. Besides providing half of the child’s genetic heredity she also provides the first environment in which the fetus grows and develops before birth. The uterus provides both protection and nourishment for the baby. According to Galdston (1976), the mother is also the birth giver who is also biologically
equipped with the breast-feeding facility. Besides these biologically determined roles, the mother has been assigned principle social roles.

Archetypal theories advanced by Paul Mobuis, cited in Segal (1978), suggested that maternal attachment was natural and was a function of certain lobes in the brain which were larger in women than in men. Comenius the educational reformer cited in Segal (1978) taught that the mothers passed their morals through their milk. Freud (1924), the leading celebrant of mother, considered breast-feeding by mother to be of great importance for nourishment and as a determinant of healthy sexual identity and personality health or ill health. Mead (1955) considered the mother's role in child's development as paramount, unique and without parallel.

The mother is the principle person forming the child's character during the first six years of life. From an African context Kenyatta (1938) and Omari (1982) consider the mother as the crucial person who socializes the child. She is variously depicted as loving, indulgent, tolerant and as the gentle trainer of the child. Laosa (1982) advanced the idea that women obtain fulfillment through motherhood. Bowlby (1969) portrayed the mother-child relationship as intimate, loving, dedicated and natural. This situation is observed in diverse cultures as stated by Stevenson, Azuma and Hakuta (1986), who have indicated that in Japan the father is treated like a high status guest while the mother and the child share great intimacy.
In order to propagate further the ideas about the supremacy of maternal role in parenting, developmental research was generated to confirm negative effects of maternal deprivation on children's development. Maternal deprivation is associated with the development of psychopathic behaviour patterns, delinquency, affectionless, intellectual and physical retardation Argyle (1964) and Phenice (1982). According to Montagu (1974), maternal deprivation leads to psychosocial dwarfism which is evidenced by the lack of impulse control, empathy and sympathy. Bowlby (1972) developed the contemporary attachment theory which places great significance to early mother infant interactions as the basis for secure or insecure attachment which in turn determines the general direction the child's development takes. If the child is good, mother is praised, if bad the mother is blamed.

Current trends of thought have tended to shift focus from maternal role, seeing the mother as only one of a complex web of factors that determine the child's development. Other factors in existence and operating simultaneously are the father, school, friends and the child's nature. Segal (1978) and Galdston (1976) consider the high status enjoyed by the mothers as undue over glorification of her role. In concurrence with the above ideas is Baumrind (1966), who stressed that the most effective parenting is realized when both parents complement each other. For although the mother is a very important person in the child's life, her maternal role is not enough to raise the children. She has to work in conjunction with the father to bring out the best outcomes in the child.
Emerging evidence seems to suggest that, if the mother dominates childrearing in exclusion of the father, the child suffers important deficits in development, which may manifest themselves in problems like crime, drug abuse, depression, and school failures. Research by Rutter & Hoffman (1974), cited by Hultsch & Deutsch (1981) tends to indicate that the most important issue to consider in child rearing is not maternal deprivation but certain child-rearing behaviours which can be provided by mother substitutes.

Some authorities have found the centrality of the mother’s role on the domestic situation as a major source of the child’s developmental problems. This holds true particularly if the father is partially or totally missing from active child rearing activities. Biller (1993) cites juvenile delinquency as a protest against female domination, inadequate child rearing supervision and lack of a male role model as well as the loss of family cohesion. In agreement with this sentiment Galdston (1976) avers that the mother and child do not form a complete unit and they do not exist apart since they are segments of a family with a father set in the social matrix. In concurrence with the above is Ipaye (1983), holding the view that children’s over-reliance on their mothers for emotional and economic support is responsible for the development of delinquent tendencies in children.

2.3.2.2 The Father and child-rearing

For many years, the father’s role in parenting has been ignored in child rearing research. However, this trend is changing and men’s lives in general and fathering in particular have started to receive increased attention from scholars (Booth & Crouter, 1998). In the past negative sentiments were expressed regarding the father’s role as a parent.
According to Hawkins and Dollahite (1997), the traditional family structure has not always encouraged the fathers to be involved parents. Also, the renowned anthropologist, Mead (1955) dismissed the father as a biological necessity but a social accident. Other people have continued to see the father as a luxury or as the Sunday institution. Gibbs (1996) states that, the feminization of the domestic scene and the marginalisation of the father as a parent has occurred due to the mother’s gate-keeping role (Freiberg, 1996). The attitudes expressed by many people are that fathers are inadequate parents while the mothers are the specialists in child rearing Fitzgerald (2004). Consequently, the father has been ostracized from child-rearing responsibilities and parenting has become mother-centered McClelland (2001). Hence, paternal deprivation has been structured in the contemporary society. The consequence has been the existence of fatherless homes as well as the emergence of matriarchal family structures that have characterized many modern families.

It is against this background that current trends in developmental psychology research have developed renewed interest in the paternal role in the development of the child. Currently, research evidence emphasizes the importance of paternal role in child development. Father care is now associated with the promotion of healthy child development. Important paternal behaviours have been identified to include the quality of time father spends with the child, physical and emotional presence, father’s warmth, his masculinity, father’s expectations of the child, and father’s attitude and behavioral sensitivity towards the child. These paternal behaviours are related to the development of the following characteristics in the child: adaptive and problem solving abilities,
cognitive abilities, social competencies and capacity for attachment, empathy, self control, moral sensitivity and higher sociability and compliance Kyle (2001) and Fitzgerald (2004).

Paternal deprivation occurs when the father is not involved with his children and it is associated with the development of pathological states in the children (Gibbs, 1996). According to Fitzgerald (2004), father hunger is the primary cause of the declining well-being of children and is associated with social problems such as teenage pregnancies, child abuse and domestic violence against women.

Freiberg (1996), studying young criminals found that about seventy percent of all juveniles in the State reform institution came from fatherless homes. Expressing similar sentiments decades earlier, Lynn (1956) had compared Norwegian boys whose fathers were out at sea from nine months to two years with boys whose fathers worked and lived at home for the same period. Their study revealed that the fathers absent boys were more immature and dependent and they related poorly with peers than the boys whose fathers lived at home. Father absence has also been found to be negatively related to sex-role, moral, cognitive development as well as social adjustment. According to McLanahan and Sadefur (1994), children raised by single parents mostly women are more likely to drop out of school, get a child out of wedlock or even develop psychiatric problems. Galdston (1976) views the father as an essential pre-requisite for the child's wholesome development. Honing (1988) concurs with the above sentiments seeing fatherhood as a complex and unique phenomenon with huge consequences for the emotional and intellectual growth of children.
McClelland (2001) reports that boys raised by a mother alone have a difficult time shifting away from the maternal orbit while the girl who is lacking a father is more likely to become sexually active early. Fathers parent differently; they are more physically engaged as their play involves game, teamwork, and healthy competition, risk taking activities, independence testing and management of emotions. Girls who relate well with their fathers do well academically and later on they are more successful in their careers. The child with an active father gets more variety in life in terms of extra stimulation, variation in human interaction and gender style. On the other hand, children who grow without the fathers risk growing up with low self-esteem and becoming overly dependent on women. Gibbs (1996) indicated that children without a father are forced to figure out their own ways of doing things. Such children suffering from paternal deprivation may become asocial and display social disorientation and amorality (Galdston, 1976).

According to McClelland (2001) and Fitzgerald (2004) there are barriers that seem to interfere with paternal involvement in the child’s care. These have been identified as follows:

- The gate-keeping role of the mother, which may inhibit the father’s direct interaction with the children. Maternal gate keeping refers to maternal behaviours, which are meant to prevent the father’s direct interaction, accessibility and responsibility over the children (Lamb, Pleck & Levine, 1997).
• The current fathers do not have role models since their own fathers grew up at different economic times when there was a sharp division of labor that kept the father away from child handling.

• Traditionally, parental involvement has always been taken to mean mother alone, leaving the father aside.

• Historically, theories of child development have focused primarily on the mother’s role in child-rearing in exclusion of the father.

• Nurturing and routine childcare have been traditionally seen as women’s roles in many societies of the world.

• Mothers may consider a father who stays at home more of a nuisance than a helper Fitzgerald (2004) and McClelland (2001).

The future trends in fathering roles seem to indicate a shift towards greater paternal involvement in child-rearing. In fact, younger men are expressing a preference to participating more fully in family life and are attending antenatal clinics along side their wives and they are also attending the births of their children. In some developed countries, paid paternity leave is given which offers the father the opportunity to start caring for the baby from the beginning Fitzgerald (2004). With fathers and mothers working, there is need to have both parents involved in childcare so that when the father is at home he can nurture and care for his child. The modern home should be more egalitarian where both parents accept equal responsibility cooperation and compromise. Kinnon (2001) avers that women and men have to deal with being breadwinners and parents, which requires many adjustments.
2.3.2.3 Challenges of modern parenting

Except for a few communities like the Kibbutz community in Israel where children live in dormitories away from their parents, Stephens (1963) notes that the family has been identified as the child’s natural environment. Ideally, this environment should provide for the developmental needs of children so that they grow from a state of dependency to that of autonomy and independence Durojaiye (1977)and Rogers (1977). According to Kithinji and Kithinji (2005), the family’s duties are to provide for children physically, socially, emotionally and morally. Whether the family is able to transact its business well is ultimately determined by the role played by each parent. Although it is difficult to correlate specific parenting behaviours with specific behaviour outcomes in the child, there seems to be agreement that when parenting behaviours are adequate children of both sexes benefit.

When parents fail in their role the child’s wholesome development is put at risk and gross cases of maladjustment may result. A major concern of the current study focuses on the possible reasons why parents do fail in their parenting behaviours. An examination of the current parenting practices will reveal gross deviations from the traditional African ways of handling the entire family set up. The effects of modernization have not had positive gains in many areas of family life. The hardest hit is the traditional role of the father as the custodian of culture and the provider and family protector. The father in a modern family set up finds himself walking alone in uncharted territory. He does not seem to have a point of reference to guide his parenting behaviours because his own father lived
in a totally different set up with different values and expectations and besides as indicated by Honing (1988), in Fitzgerald (1988) modern fathers have little preparation for their roles.

The mother’s role is also greatly affected by the forces of modernization. Many women find themselves overwhelmed by responsibilities, as they have to undertake those roles traditionally designated as female as well as being full time workers Gachukia (1989). It is clear that many women often struggle with family burden unaided. Just like the men, the women are facing serious challenges in the management of their homes and child rearing. The challenges encountered by parents have been attributed to the inability of some parents to make adjustments that are compliant with the changing times.

A good example in this is demonstrated by the reliance on some of the traditional ways of thinking and behaving which may not have a place in the modern family and which may be detrimental to its functioning. As suggested by Goldscheider (1991), the parents should demonstrate the ability to change with the times as new fathers are expected to give day-to-day care to children as an equal partner of the mother. Men should respond to the changing times by taking up child rearing activities as well as house keeping duties. The women should give the men some room in the kitchen and child rearing and they should also train and be proficient in the duties formally performed by men.

In this study cognizance was taken to the effect that a myriad of factors determine what happens in every home. Modern parenting has turned out to be a very complicated affair.
The complications arise as a result of the total effect of modernization. Today the parents or the immediate community are not the only ones who have influence on the child. The child is in school from very early in life, some children being institutionalized as early as age three. There are children who report to their respective schools before seven o’clock every morning and do not return home until dark. In essence, the school is expected to undertake a lot of parenting duties and does so through the provision of various services. Every school provides knowledge that is structured in the curriculum for the child to imbibe and also provides co-curriculum activities that are meant to enrich the child’s experiences. At the school the child is also exposed to people of various statuses who provide role models for behaviour and attitudes. There are peers who come from different backgrounds and they influence the child in many ways.

Over and above the school influences, the child is living in a world where a great deal of information is available through the electronic and print media and which influence behaviour, attitudes, way of dressing, methods of relating with each other as well as the overall approach to life. According to Huesmann, Moise and Podolski (2003), the media has tremendous impact on children’s development. It influences their sex-role development (McGhee & Fruech, 1980) and moulds worldviews from childhood onwards Gerbner, Gross, Morgan, Signorielli, Shanahan (2002). Media use has advantages as well as disadvantages. Attewell and Battle (1999) have indicated that children exposed to media at home may show higher test scores in mathematics and reading, however, greater use of media by children and adolescents raises several concerns such as:
1. The isolating effects on children (Kraut, Patterson, Lundmark, Kriester, Mukhopadahyay and Scherlis, 1998).

2. Reduced physical activity, which may cause health concerns associated with obesity (Southern, 2004).

3. The risks of exposure to pornography and other unsuitable material (Valentine & Holloway, 2001).

In order to ensure that children use media in ways that minimize the possible dangers as well as the negative physical and psychological effects, parental supervision is advised. Research has found that high level of parental monitoring of children’s use of media is associated with better grades in school, lower levels of deviance among young children and adolescents and fewer delinquent behaviours among adolescents (Pettit, Laird, Dodge, Bates, & Criss, 2001). Parental monitoring is suggested, must include supervising children’s activities, restricting the amount of time children spend watching television or the type of programmes children watch (Amato & Fowler, 2002). Parental monitoring of children’s television watching should also extend to the type of programmes watched, time of day, number of hours children spend on the television (Lugaila, 2003). Research conducted in the U. S. indicates that families set the same restrictions for both boys and girls (Vandewater, Park, Huang, and Wartella, 2005).

According to Duffy (2005), some parents have serious problems controlling their children’s use of the electronic devices. Some of them have no rules about what their children watch on television. So some parents allow their ten-year-old daughters to watch
R-rated movies until two o’clock in the morning. There are parents who have no control over the information children download from the internet.

Another parenting problem, which has been identified by Duffy (2005), is the fact that some parents are providing for their children more lavishly than ever before and they are a lot more permissive to the extent that in some homes juveniles are allowed to attend parties where alcohol is taken. In some homes, children set their own bed times and the parents do not control what the child wears. In some homes it has been noted, the parents are not able to assume their roles as the teachers and guides and therefore relate with their children more like housemates or peers. The parent aspires to be the child’s friend and they encourage adolescent’s risk taking behaviour by giving minors alcohol, dropping them at popular party spots, replenishing the pile of condoms and pills as well as supporting them when they have discipline problems at school.

The major problem as seen by Duffy (2005) is that the parents are deeply uncertain about how to teach their children how to live meaningful lives. They are unable to balance warmth with discipline and affirmation with limit-setting. They are unable to help children to resist the negative influence of the media. Some parents tend to feel that they have failed as they lack strong beliefs and meaningful experiences to pass on to their children. They cannot help their children make good decisions about sex and drugs. Many parents seem to worship their children to the point where they are completely unable to discipline them. There is ambivalence on parental authority as the strict parent may be called a Hitler (Ibid).
The peer parenting has had negative effects on the children who have undertaken the following destructive behaviours: The children are lacking in discipline and tend to show increased aggressive behaviour in school. There is growing risk-taking behaviour as children are becoming sexually active early they are engaging in group sex, sex with overlapping partners as early as thirteen year of age. Some children are introduced to alcohol early and rebellion among children has been glorified. It is quite acceptable for a child to argue with the parent and the morality is no longer defined and as such the child is tolerated irrespective of what he does (Ibid).

Another problem experienced by parents due to the demands of modernization is the inability to spend time together. According to Jacobs and Gerson (2001), families are unable to spend time together because of the shift from male breadwinner to dual earner couples, single parent house holds and rushed pace of contemporary life. According to Bronfenbrenner (1979), and Larson and Richards (1994), the youth are losing important opportunities to spend time with their families and parents are missing chances to connect with their offspring and with each other.

Family time refers to time spent together as a family group and is related to psychological adjustment for members. Bond and Galinsky (1998) have identified family time as time spent having meals, watching television, active leisure, religious activities and house work. The benefits of family time have been identified by Larson & Richards (1994) as helping the family to replenish themselves and the affirmation of their experiences as a
family. Family time is also the time when members share the emotional closeness associated with psychological health. The daily interactions are associated with the development of psychological health in the adolescents who demonstrate lower levels of risky behaviour as well as fewer depressive symptoms (Bond & Galinsky, 1998).

There seems to be a need to examine future trends in parenting. With everything taken into consideration parental relevance seems to be at stake the world over. Yet, no society in the world has identified a substitute institution to undertake the role of parenting. According to Adei and Adei (1991), the parental role of shaping their children is greater today than ever before. Neither the school, religious institution nor any other external force can take total responsibility of bringing up the children. Currently, there is no institution that can adequately replace a mom and a dad, as it is only the parents who can teach the child the art of living and the art of relating with other people (Ibid).

It remains true that children navigate the developmental stages more easily when they are raised by both parents. They are more solid in their gender identity, perform better in school and have fewer emotional disorders (Popenoe, 1996). For this reason then, the parents need to be understood and given the skills they need to raise children with desirable human values like family identity, moral code, self control as well as a meaningful understanding of the world. The parents are warned that there is no escaping parental duty in the sense that if they do not perform their duties well with their children they will find themselves stuck parenting grandchildren (Ibid).
There are desirable identifiable directions that seem necessary for successful parenting today. For example, there is a movement towards parent partnership and inter-parental agreement in the raising of children. This is a situation that requires fathers and mothers to parent together and coordinate their roles (Fitzgerald, 2004). The modern home should be egalitarian where parents accept responsibility, cooperate and compromise (Kinnon, 2001). This is a major departure from the traditional practices and it has the promise of making both parents relevant and useful in the home.

2.3.2.4 Summary of modern child rearing practices

Modernization of the family has been associated with many negative trends, namely:

- A break up of the traditional value system, resulting in shattered family life.
- Families are characterized by neglect of parental duty.
- Cases are reported where the women have silently taken over the home alienating the men from participation in family responsibility.
- Emergence of a section of young people who no longer value marriage and parenthood.
- Loss of the innocence of children and the escalation of cases of child abuse and neglect observed in various pockets of the society.
- Little parental supervision resulting in children's drug use and non-conformity to social norms.
2.3.3 Parent-child shared activities

For wholesome psychological development, authorities agree that children need to engage in shared activities with both parents. Such shared activities are believed to enhance connectedness and bonding between children and their parents and are associated with the promotion of the psychological well being of the family as a whole. Bean and Rolleri (2005) posit that the parent-child shared activities are enabled if there is communication, understanding, availability, respect, trust and love in the family. According to Biller and Lopez (1997), fathers who engage in shared activities with their children enhance their social and emotional development. Engagement in such shared activities requires availability on the part of both the parents and the children.

The shared activities could include spending time together engaging in activities like: playing games, engaging in educational activities, watching television and eating together, reading books or helping with practical issues (Bean and Rolleri, 2005). Parent-child shared activities are said to be positively related with the development of emotional intelligence (Mayers & Salovy, 1997). Emotional intelligence is the ability to perceive access and generate emotions as well as to understand and to regulate emotions, which in turn promotes emotional and intellectual growth influencing important life outcomes (Baron and Parker, 2003).

The time parents share with their children has been shown to influence academic achievement and mental health. According to Finnegan (1998), interaction between parents and their children is positively related to the later outcomes like, competency in
the work place and success in life. The amount of time parents spend with their children and the things they do together are considered to influence the children's self control. 

Baumrind (1995), sociability van den Boom (1994), social competence (Kuczynski & Kochanska, 1995), conduct problems (Webster-Stratton, 1998), optimism, peer competence (Gottman et al., 1997), depression symptomatology and coping strategies (Mesters and Muris, 2004).

Research has shown that shared activities between the fathers and their children are related with important developmental outcomes in the lives of their children. According to Pruett (2001), the amount of time fathers spend with their children and the activities they engage in influence psychological development of the children. When the father is involved and responsible, his physical and emotional presence and closeness with the child is related to cognitive development, social competence, capacity for attachment and empathy. In the light of the above, the pertinent questions in the context of the present research are: What percentage of students under study agrees that their parents adequately meet their various psychological needs? What percentage of modern Kenyan fathers devotes sufficient attention to doing things together with their children? And what things do they do together with these children?

Personal disclosure in the family is very crucial as it determines the quality of parent-child interactions. According to Jourard (1971), disclosure refers to verbal communication about self, including personal states, dispositions, and events in the past and plans for the future. Disclosure is important in relationships as it helps to rate the
quality of the closeness between people. Rubin (1973) perceived disclosure as the heart of relationships because it helps people to develop and maintain relationships. When people have greater emotional involvement with each other they tend to have high level of disclosure which has been found to promote relationship satisfaction (Laurenceau, Fieldman and Pietromanaco, 1998).

In the family setting disclosure can take several levels like adolescents disclosing to their parents and parents disclosing to their children (Dolgin, 1996). There is also disclosure in sibling relationships (Hawe, Aquan-Asse, Bukowiski, 1995). According to research, children disclose more to their mothers than their fathers and they also feel closer to the parent they disclose more to (Miller & Lane, 1991). The nature of disclosure within the family is considered to be an important determinant of the emotional climate at home. A healthy emotional climate in the home is characterized by horizontal relationship where the parents disclose to each other and interact on an egalitarian and reciprocal basis (Dindia, Fitzpatrick and Kenny, 1997). In a healthy vertical relationship children disclose to their parents in complementarities seen when children turn to their parents for help, support and guidance, and where there is respect for generational boundaries. Research shows that girls disclose more than boys and the highest disclosure is among females.

Disclosure can also occur in family situations where parentification of children occurs. In parentification, children and adolescents are assigned roles and responsibilities that are normally reserved for parents (Dindia et, al., 1997). Parentification may include the error of assigning to older children the task of intensive caring for young children, making
children to assume a lot of household responsibilities, and make them to take on emotional relationship with a parent like taking up the role of advisor, confidant, and peacemaker (Chase, 1999). According to Miller and Lane (1991), parents disclose to their children because they consider them as equal partners and use them as emotional confidants. This kind of disclosure is considered harmful to the children, as it is likely to put them at the risk for psychological problems because of burdening the children with parents' own worries and concerns (Lehman & Silverberg – Koerner, 2002). Parents may disclose to their children about health, finances, positive things that happen during the day, disappointments and setbacks, other family members, future plans, friends, secrets, fears and insecurities. The question this study addresses is the following: What are the levels of adolescent disclosure obtaining in modern Kenyan families? To what extent does parentification of children take place in modern Kenyan families?

2.3.4 Provision of psychological and educational needs

According to Duck (1988) and Rohner (1994), life's major satisfactions and pain revolve around personal relationship with others. For children, parents are the most powerful influences on the quality of personal growth and psychological functioning across the lifespan. The parents promote the children's growth in the various ways they meet their psychological needs which can be measured by the warmth, supportiveness, comforting, care, nurturance and affection that they avail to their children.

The psychological needs to be investigated in this study are those to do with the subjects' perception of the parents as loving, meets needs adequately, expressing love outwardly,
and spending enough time with the respondent as well as raising children without favoritism. The key concept here is that children develop wholesomely when both parents fulfill the needs of children adequately. According to Popenoe (1996), psychologically healthy children navigate developmental stages more easily and they are more solid in their gender identity, perform better in school in academic tasks, have fewer emotional disorders, and become better functioning adults when both parents meet their psychological needs. Children need both mother and father love in order to develop wholesomely. According to Pruett (1993), mothers and fathers love differently. A father's love is characterized by instrumentality and more expectancy and adolescents who have affectionate relationship with their fathers have better social skills, are more confident and are more secure in their competencies. The mother’s love is more nurturing, expressive and integrative.

In concurrence with this view Baumrind (1991) observes that the most effective parenting is highly expressive and provides children with inclusiveness and connectedness. This kind of parenting requires fathers who are involved in the lives of their children for optimal development. The father's role in meeting the psychological needs of the children is considered crucial as children who have a close relationship with their father become more stress resistant and use more coping strategies. According to Rohner (1998), when children’s perception of the father is as loving, it is associated with healthy social, emotional and cognitive development and functioning. The amount of time fathers spend with the children is positively related to gender role development Lamb and Pleck (1997). According to Pleck & Masciadrelli (2004), the development of competence and
empathy in the child is related to the father's engagement, accessibility and responsibility towards the child. This is to say that greater recognition of the father role in parenting is no longer perceived as unnecessary exterior something of marginal importance to the psychological of the child, a challenge to Mead's view of the father as a social accident.

The time parents spend with their children is deemed very important in the promotion of psychological health of the children. Father hunger has been associated with the declining well-being of children in the society as well as social problems like teenage pregnancies, child abuse and domestic violence against women. Pruet (1987), Parke (1981), Biller (1993) and Pruet (1993) are all in concurrence that the father's role in meeting children's psychological needs is crucially important stating that children whose fathers spend time with them become more socially responsive and are better able to withstand stress than infants deprived of their fathers. They further stress that men who were father-deprived when they were growing up are more likely to engage in rigid, over compensatory masculine, aggressive behaviour later in life.

In the provision of educational needs, research indicates that the more actively involved and interested a father is in his children's care and education, the more intellectually developed the children become (Radin, 1981). When fathers are involved, they tend to provide better economic support, access to more educational resources, and give children better opportunities to learn. Thus, father's involvement with the children's academic life translates to academic success. It predicts success in the child's life (Radin, 1981). One study found that the amount of time fathers spend with their children has a direct link with mathematics skills (Snarey, 1993). According to Snarey (1993), when fathers are
supportive, their children have fewer problems at school such as excessive absence or poor results.

According to Reuter and Biller (1993), father’s involvement in children’s education makes them easily adjust to new experiences, have stable emotions, and know how to get along well with others. Children are also well behaved in school, that is, rule following-moral development. Boys who do not identify with their fathers tend to have problems with self-control and are more aggressive in school Michael (1981). And so the present research asks: What percentage of students agrees that both parents, presently as in the past, collaborate in the psychological and educational support of their children?

2.3.5 Parental child-control

Parents exert their control on children in a vast number of issues at home including the use of television, kind of language; settling of disputes, peer interactions, and homing time. Furthermore, there are gender differences in this control. According to Zuzanek (2000), the increasing time that children spend watching television is negatively related to the time they spend with their parents and siblings. They also reported that adolescents spend much of their free time either interacting with peers or watching television. Vandewater and Parke (2005) conducted a research in Canada and their results indicated that, for young children heavy television watching interferes with developmentally appropriate activities. Specifically it is related to reduced reading time, homework, creative play and it is also related to increased violence. Children who spend a lot of time
watching TV are exposed to violent images, which is associated with the development of antisocial behaviour.

Parental monitoring of the TV watching by children is a crucial factor in reducing media violence. Children may learn negative behaviour patterns and values from TV programs, hence, parental guidance is needed to help children sort out these influences and develop the ability to make sound decisions on their own. If parents can review the program content can help, but the many children come home before their parents and they are left without parental supervision, hence they are exposed to violence, nudity, and offensive language, among other badly behaved characters.

In fact, teenagers may watch TV up to 22 hours per week. They spend more time on TV than they spend in classroom. They may watch TV alone, co-view with one or more parents or other adults. In deed, 90 percent of the time children watch TV programs is not specifically designed for them. Children miss out on play time, the need to meet real people and learn to build friendship and to resolve real life issues, to develop their own imaginations and abilities, and to develop talents and physical abilities.

Ideally, adolescents desire autonomy as they establish their identities in the face of increasing peer pressure. Parents fear the consequences of this adolescent independence and attempt to retain control over the many of adolescent behaviours. Parental control is then prominent on issues such as doing chores, choice of friends, clothes, activities, doing home work and academic achievement in total. This is because there is a strong value
placed on academic achievement and educational attainment, especially in the African American communities (Wilson, Cooke and Arrington, 1997).

Conflicts over the choice of friends are common during adolescence. In one study (Cauce, Cauce, Ryan, and Groove, 1996), African American mothers were found to be extremely close to their daughters and controlled the type of friends their daughters had. Researchers have also assessed how closely the parents monitored the child’s activities, how much time parents and children spend together and how many of the child’s friends the parents knew personally (Steinberg, Mounts Lamborn and Dornbusch, 1991). The results have indicated that more often adolescents would conflict with their parents. In fact, Cauce (1996), indicates that parents’ conflict much with their adolescents over curfews, clothing and homework in the exertion of child control. Fang and Wark (1998) and Szapocznik and Kurtines (1993) also indicate that parents and adolescents will have conflicts over discipline, social interaction, and curfew, and activity choices. The youth may internalize these conflicts and become depressed and sad.

Discipline typically involves guidance and teaching children what the rules are as well as enforcing them. There are right and wrong approaches to parental discipline of children identified by Irwin & Simons (1994) and Hoffman (1975) as: power assertion, love withdrawal and induction. In power assertive discipline, parents use their overwhelming power over the children to control them. Examples of power assertion are:

- Bodily removal of children from a situation
- Shouting or yelling at them
• Threatening children
• Ordering children to do or stop doing something
• Physical punishment.

Power assertion is based on children's fear of punishment. Parents, who rely on this style, produce children who develop a pattern of punishment-avoidance behaviour (Brody & Shaffer, 1982). Love withdrawal discipline is based on children's fear of losing parental emotional support, approval and affection. Love withdrawal discipline occurs when parents physically, verbally or emotionally withdraw from their children. Children learn to suppress their emotions and to administer self-punishment by not loving themselves when they disapprove of their behaviours.

Inductive discipline is a teaching style and involves directing attention to children reasoning, pride, concern for the others and desire to be mature. In this type of discipline parents inform their children about the harmful consequences of behaviour. Children raised by inductive discipline are the most likely to internalize their parents' standards and to develop high levels of pro-social behaviour. Typically, authoritarian parents use mostly power assertion. Rejecting-neglecting parents use no discipline and when they do they use inconsistent power assertion. Authoritative parents use both power assertion and induction, whereas permissive parents use largely inductive style (Baumrind, 1966).

Generally, discipline involves guidance and teaching. Parents use various methods to train their children in the expected ways to behave and they also use several methods to deal with misbehaviour. They can use physical punishment or even withdraw privileges.
Some of the methods parents use is likely to affect the psychological well being of the child. Some parents believe that discipline equals physical punishment. While physical punishment has the goal of reducing undesirable behaviours, it fails to teach the child what to do. To be effective in instilling discipline in the children, parents must pair punishment with reasons and giving children constructive alternatives to the unwanted behaviours. They must also be role models of the desirable behaviour. Physical punishment breeds negative emotions like fear and anger. Children subjected to physical punishment may learn physical aggression.

Research findings indicate that children who are subjected to physical punishment are affected emotionally and they are likely to be angrier, more aggressive and more stressed than other children. The negative reactions of these children include escape from as well as avoidance of the punishing parents (Gershoff, 2002). Parental use of punishment has also been shown to interfere with the parent-child attachment processes and emotional regulation, which puts a strain on the parent-child relationship (Hutchinson, 1977). Parental use of punishment has been associated with the development of antisocial behaviour as well as the interference with many mental processes (Caspi, McClay, Moffit, Mill, Martin, Craig, Tailor, and Poulton, 2002).

There are gender differences in parental approach to discipline. The disciplinary approach of the father tends towards fairness and reliance on rules and principles whereas mothers’ approach tends towards responsiveness, involving more bargaining more adjusted towards the child’s mood and context as well as taking into account the child’s needs and
emotions. Gilligan (1982) concluded that the difference between paternal and maternal approaches to discipline is rooted in the fundamental difference between men and women in their moral sense. In issues of discipline men stress justice, fairness and duty based rules while women stress understanding, sympathy, care and helping based on relationships. And so, to what extent are modern Kenyan parents engaged in the exercise of disciplining their children using appropriate methods that go beyond the excessive dependence on physical punishment and power assertion?

2.3.6 Decision making and house keeping in the family

Traditionally, the father was the head of the family, hence, the chief decision maker in the family. Kenyatta (1938) asserts that the father was respected and obeyed by everybody. In every family the father acted as judge who settled minor disputes between the members of his family. He maintained the traditional roles as the final authority and the disciplinarian who is respected and feared (Omari, 1982). Kenyatta depicts the mother as one who fed the children, looked after their clothing, defended them when they were in trouble and acted as the go-between them and their father. She reconciled the children and their father by doing everything she could to avoid conflict.

In Laye (1954), the father is depicted as the head of the family who is respected by all the people in the home. He gave orders and was the symbol of authority that none dared question. On the other hand, the mother was depicted as loving and strongly attached to the child, as she was responsible for protection, caring for and feeding the child. Mead (1968), on her part asserts that among the Ngoni of Malawi, the father made important
decisions regarding the child’s life and showed outward manifestation of affection to the young child by carrying them about, helping them to take their first steps, teaching them how to speak correctly and sitting with them at the veranda. The father was consulted when the child fell sick and he had to make decisions what steps to take depending on the gravity of the problem.

On the contrary, due to the modern set up the mother tends to be closer to the children and therefore more in charge of operations at home. Indeed, today the changing societies are affected by the departure of the father from the family scene leaving the mother as the parent closer to the child. The mother is depicted as the parent who is in closer physical and psychological contact with the child than the father is (Omari, 1982). She is responsible for childcare as well as being the key person who socializes the child. The father is the breadwinner who works away from the home for most of the day or the week. He is depicted as a person who is always away from home either because he is at work or has gone for leisure. The current study intends to explore the following question: Are these depictions true to reality? To what extent will the students under study corroborate them as applicable to their parental behaviours of the fathers and mothers?

Because of modernity, the traditional calm is said to have since disappeared and in its place unending upheaval, with characteristic features of a break up of the value system as new values are established and the neglect of parental duty all catalyzing the breaking up of the traditional family set up Adei & Adei (1991). In many modern families, the status
of husband and father has been greatly challenged. Many women are more economically empowered and in many homes they have silently taken over as the head of the family.

Power struggles in the home have created adverse conditions for parenting (Kinai, 2002). Some researchers have found the centrality of the mother’s role on the domestic situation as a major source of the child’s developmental problems. This holds true particularly if the father is partially or totally missing from active child rearing activities. Michael (1981) cites juvenile delinquency as a protest against female domination, inadequate child rearing supervision and lack of a male role model as well as the loss of family cohesion. Gibbs (1996) emphasizes that the mother should not dominate child rearing in exclusion of the father. When the father’s parental role is marginalized child suffers deficits in development. These deficits manifest themselves in problems like crime, drug abuse, depression, and school failures.

According to Hawkins and Dollahite (1997), the emerging family structure has not always encouraged the fathers to be involved parents. Renowned anthropologist, Mead (1955) dismissed the father as a biological necessity but a social accident. The father is now being perceived as a luxury or as the Sunday institution (Allen & Hawkins, 1999). Omari (1982) explains that in many families the father is seen as distant and away from home most of the time.

Paternal deprivation leads to father hunger in children and it associated with the development of pathological (Michael, 1981). Father hunger has been seen as the primary
cause of the declining well-being of children (Acock & Demo, 1994). The subsequent father absence that results is negatively related to sex-role, moral, cognitive development including social adjustment. McLanahan and Sadefur (1994) assert that children brought up by single parents mostly women are more likely to drop out of school, get a child out of wedlock or even develop psychiatric problems. McClelland (2001) reports that boys raised by a mother alone have a difficult time shifting away from the maternal orbit while the girl who is lacking a father is more likely to become sexually active early. In fact, some of the many developmental problems seen in many homes could be attributed to increasing mother domination in decision-making processes in the family. It would be interesting to find out that a large percentage of students reported increased mother domination in decision-making process in the modern Kenyan families.

On the part of housekeeping, in the traditional set up, the mothers used to be the chief house-keepers. This is reflected in most of the African writers’ views regarding the traditional roles of women in most African societies. In Kenyatta’s (1938) *Facing Mount Kenya*, children got attached to the mother because she was their nurse who kept closer contact with them than the father did. She fed the children, looked after their clothing, defended them when they were in trouble and acted as the go-between them and their father. She reconciled the children and their father by doing everything she could to avoid conflict. In circumstances where the family was polygamous the mother was the immediate head of her household. The mother assumed the responsibilities of training of young children, teaching them all things concerning domestic duties, home management, agriculture, the laws and customs of the people as well as the etiquette of the people.
Ngugi Wa Thiongo (1965), in the *The River Between* depicts a sharp division of labor in which the mother’s and the girl’s roles are those of bringing the food stuffs home, cooking and giving both the men and children food, while the husband and the boys brought in the cattle and goats. Issa Omari (1982), in his book *Psychology and Education in Changing Societies* also recognizes mothers as the key role model in the home. Nukunya (1992), in *Tradition and Change* asserts that traditionally there was division of labor according to the sex and age of the person. Last but not least, is Camara Laye (1954), in his book *The African Child* who identifies the mother as loving and strongly attached to the child, as she was responsible for protection, caring for and feeding the child. The question asked in this study is: To what extent are maternal behaviours as chief house keeper still obtainable in the modern Kenyan environment?

2.4.0 Summary of the literature

The reviews suggest that adequate parenting in the modern age must involve parents being able to:

- Do things together with their children.
- Adequately meet the various psychological needs of their children.
- Engage in inductive discipline of their children through guidance and teaching, and through various disciplinary methods.
- Take part in making decisions that affect the home.
Become expressive, providing children with inclusiveness and connectedness by spending quality time with the children.

The reviewed literature seems to concur that:

(i) Parents promote the children’s growth in the various ways they meet their psychological needs which can be measured by the warmth, supportiveness, comforting, care, nurturance and affection that they avail to their children (Duck, 1988; Rohner, 1994).

(ii) Children develop wholesomely when both parents fulfill the needs of children and they will navigate developmental stages more easily and become more solid in their gender identity, perform better in school in academic tasks, have fewer emotional disorders, and become better functioning adults when both parents meet their psychological needs (Popenoe, 1996).

(iii) Adolescents, who have affectionate relationship with their fathers, have better social skills, are more confident and are more secure in their competencies. The mother’s love is more nurturing, expressive and integrative. By mothers mostly assuming the role of providing for the psychological needs of the children, it is an indication of the remnants of traditional trend, in which fathers less participate in child rearing.

Children need both mother and father love in order to develop wholesomely. According to Pruett (1993), mothers and fathers love differently. A father’s love is characterized by instrumentality and more expectancy and adolescents who have affectionate relationship with their fathers have better social skills, are more confident and are more secure in their
competencies. The mother's love is more nurturing, expressive and integrative. By mothers mostly assuming the role of providing for the psychological needs of the children, it is an indication of the remnants of traditional trend, in which fathers did not participate in child rearing activities.

The key omission or gap existing in the literature reviewed is the critical neglect by previous inquirers about the extent to which these conclusions from the literature, particularly those from foreign theories and researchers can be corroborated when the views of the students who benefit from these parenting behaviours in modern Kenya are studied. And it is this gap which the present study plans to close.
CHAPTER THREE
METHODOLOGY

3.1.0 Introduction
This chapter describes research design, study location, study population, sample and sampling procedures, research instruments, piloting, data collection procedures and data processing and analysis.

3.2.0 Research design
This study adopted a descriptive survey design. It was relevant because it is used to assess attitudes and opinions about events, individuals or procedures (Fawler, 2001). The design is in agreement with the views of Converse & Pesser (1986) and Orodho (2004, 2005) contend that descriptive research studies are designed to obtain pertinent and precise information concerning the current status of phenomena and whenever possible to draw valid conclusions from the facts discovered.

Descriptive survey research is a social scientific investigation whose purpose is to discover the relative incidence and distribution of sociological and psychological variables. The aim of the research is to obtain information from a large number of people called the population. According to Converse and Presser (1986), from the population the researcher then selects a representative sample through appropriate sampling procedures. The researcher administers the research instruments to the sample and analyzes the results. The major strength of a descriptive survey research is the generalizability of research findings to the larger population (Fawler, 2001).
Survey methods are non-experimental and deal with situations as they exist without trying to manipulate variables. Since the events or conditions have already occurred or exist the researcher selects the variables relevant for the study being conducted and analyses their relationships (Peterson 2000).

Descriptive survey design was appropriate because it enabled the researcher to collect information concerning the adolescents' perceptions of the parenting behaviours employed by their parents. It also helped to describe the parenting behaviours prevalent among the subjects under study as well as to get insights into the extent to which the current Kenyan families have been affected by globalization. The parenting behaviours investigated were:

- Family background
- Facilities and their use.
- Activities shared with the parents.
- The experience of love.
- Provision for basic needs
- Time spent with parents.
- How parents treat a well behaving child and a misbehaving child.
- Expression of outward manifestation of warmth.
- Decision making process in the family
- Parental involvement in educational life of the adolescent.
- Parent – adolescent disclosure issues.
- Parent-adolescent control.
3.3.0 Study location

The study was carried out in Nairobi province with the rationale that the Nairobi community is heterogeneous almost representative of the globalization culture under investigation.

3.4.0 Target population

The target population is defined as all the members of a real or hypothetical set of people, events or objects to which a researcher wishes to generalize the research study (Converse and Presser (1986). According to Kombo and Tromp (2006), a population is a group of individuals, objects, or items from which samples are taken for measurement. The target population of this study consisted of parents of form two students in public secondary schools in Nairobi province. The form two students were used in this study because by that time they have settled in the school environment and therefore lack the timidity of form ones and they are in a position to understand and explain their internalization of their parent behaviours, unlike form ones who have not yet settled and form three and four who are more concentrating on preparation for national examinations.

Although the central goal of the present study was to appraise the parenting behaviours of modern Kenyan parents, the design of the study was planned not to approach these parents directly but rather to ascertain what the parents do through the prism eyes of their children. Form two students in some selected secondary schools in Nairobi province were selected for this purpose. The justification for this indirect approach to data collection arises from the idea popular in family therapy literature that when a researcher wants to
know if parents are discriminatory or not among any of their children, we do not have to ask these parents themselves but rather the children, the so called beneficiaries and possible victims of the parents executive services or actions. When this indirect approach is used, the technique availed of, is the internalized-other interviewing procedure, in which through a circular questioning one can gain access to what obtains among members of a given family asking members who are directly related to those concerned. Hence, in this study the subjects were expected to report the image cast by the mother and the father in their respective parenting behaviours. The justification of using this method lies in the fact that if the parents themselves are asked to report their own parenting behaviours they might report the ideal situations of good parenting the way they know them and not what they actually do. Also the subjects of the study are the recipients of the parenting behaviours in question and are therefore the people best placed to report what actually happens.

At the time of collecting the data there were 45 public schools in Nairobi province, which are categorized as follows: boys boarding, boys day, girls boarding, girls day, mixed boarding and mixed day.

3.5.0 Sample size

According to Converse & Presser (1986) and Kombo & Tromp (2006), the greater the diversity and differences that exist in the population, the larger the sample should be. Data for this study were collected from ten schools with a form two population of 5,673 students. The sample size consisted of 195 girls representing 40 percent of the sample.
and 284 boys representing 60 percent of the sample. The age of the female respondents ranged from 14 to 18 years while the male respondents age ranged from 15 to 19 years.

3.6.0 Sampling technique

A list of all registered public secondary schools in Nairobi Provincial Education was obtained from the director's office. Then, stratified random sampling was used to select the schools in order to ensure that each school category was represented. According to Fink (2002a, 2005) and Kombo & Tromp (2006), stratified sampling involves dividing the population into homogeneous subgroups and then taking a simple random sample in each subgroup. This sampling yielded two boarding schools for boys, two boarding schools for girls, two day schools for boys, two day schools for girls and two mixed schools. For the actual selection of subjects to participate in the research, simple random sampling was used. In this method no complexities are involved since the researcher may simply obtain a list of people from which to derive the sample (Ibid). In this study the form two class registers were used to select the subjects involved in the study.

3.7.0 The Sampling unit

The sampling unit

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School Type</th>
<th>Number of schools</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Boy's Boarding</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boys Day</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Girls boarding</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Girls Day</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mixed Day</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mixed Boarding</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total number of Schools</strong></td>
<td><strong>45</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Provincial Education Office, Nyayo House, Nairobi*
### Table 3.2 Public boys boarding secondary schools and the form two population

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of School</th>
<th>Number of students in form Two</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lenana School</td>
<td>235</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nairobi School</td>
<td>263</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Starehe Boys Center</td>
<td>216</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moi Forces Academy</td>
<td>172</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dagoretti High School</td>
<td>184</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Provincial Education Office, Nyayo House, Nairobi*

### Table 3.3 Public boys day secondary schools in Nairobi province

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of School</th>
<th>Number of Students in Form Two</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aquinas High School</td>
<td>161</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jamhuri High School</td>
<td>240</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eastleigh High</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Highway Secondary</td>
<td>196</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parklands Secondary</td>
<td>124</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pumwani Secondary</td>
<td>160</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Theresa Boys</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Upper Hill Secondary</td>
<td>160</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ofafa Jerico Secondary</td>
<td>136</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nairobi Milimani</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>1541</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Provincial Education Office, Nyayo House, Nairobi*
Table 3.4 Public girls boarding secondary schools in Nairobi province

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of School</th>
<th>Number of Students in Form Two</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Kenya High</td>
<td>219</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pangani Girls</td>
<td>262</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moi Nairobi Girls</td>
<td>144</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Precious Blood</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State House Road Girls</td>
<td>125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buru Buru Girls</td>
<td>95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. George</td>
<td>144</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Number of Students.</strong></td>
<td><strong>1079</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Provincial Education Office, Nyayo House, Nairobi*

Table 3.5 Public girls day secondary schools in Nairobi province

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of School</th>
<th>Number of Students in Form Two</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Parklands Arya</td>
<td>138</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Huruma Girls</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muslim Girls</td>
<td>126</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ngara Girls</td>
<td>160</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Our Lady Of Mercy</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Teresa Girls</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Number of Students</strong></td>
<td><strong>651</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Provincial Education Office, Nyayo House, Nairobi*
Table 3.6 Total showing public mixed secondary schools in Nairobi province

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of School</th>
<th>Number of Boys in F. 2</th>
<th>Number of Girls in F. 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aga Khan High</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Langata High</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kangemi High</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kamiti High</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ruthimitu Secondary</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hospital Hill Sec.</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ruaraka Secondary</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nembu Secondary</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kayole Secondary</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uthiru secondary</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maina Wanjigi Sec.</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Our Lady of Fatuma Sec.</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dandora Secondary</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kamukunji Sec.</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nile Road Sec.</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mutu-ini Sec</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Number of Students</strong></td>
<td><strong>757</strong></td>
<td><strong>575</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Provincial Education Office, Nyayo House, Nairobi*
### Table 3.7 Schools selected for the current study

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of School</th>
<th>School Type</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lenana High School</td>
<td>Boys Boarding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moi Forces Academy</td>
<td>Boys Boarding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eastleigh High School</td>
<td>Boys Day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pumwani Secondary</td>
<td>Boys Day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kenya High School</td>
<td>Girls Boarding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State House Road Girls</td>
<td>Girls Boarding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Huruma Girls</td>
<td>Girls Day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ngara Girls Secondary School</td>
<td>Girls Day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kamiti High School</td>
<td>Mixed Day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hospital Hill</td>
<td>Mixed Day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Number of Schools</strong></td>
<td><strong>10</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table 3.8 Form two students selected for the current study

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of School</th>
<th>No of Students in F.2</th>
<th>Selected Sample</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Boys</td>
<td>Girls</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lenana High School</td>
<td>235</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moi Forces Academy</td>
<td>172</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eastleigh High School</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pumwani Secondary</td>
<td>160</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kenya High School</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>219</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State House Rd. Girls</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Huruma Girls</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ngara Girls</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>160</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kamiti High School</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hospital Hill</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Number of Students</strong></td>
<td><strong>846</strong></td>
<td><strong>504</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3.8.0 Research instruments

The research tools were designed along the model of the Internalized-Other Interviewing Technique. The internalized-other interviewing is a technique used in counseling, in which the subject reports his or her perception of another person based on the mirror image that person casts (Draper & Dallos, 2000).

The students’ responses were used to explore and describe the parenting behaviours of parents under study and to investigate the extent to which modernization has influenced the way parents behave towards their children. Do the parents under study cut the image of modern parents or are they still hanging on traditional modes of parenting? Was the key question of the current study. According to Fawler (2000) and Kombo & Tromp (2006), description plays a very important function in research. It helps in the formulation of important principles of knowledge and solution of significant problems. Description is more than a collection of data as it involves measurement, classification, analysis, comparison and interpretation of data.

3.8.1 Content of the questionnaire

The researcher employed a questionnaire on the pertinent issues to the subject of the research:

- Demographic information - The respondents were expected to give personal details such as age, sex and school.
- Facilities available at home - The subjects were to give information regarding the facilities available at home and how they use them.
- Parental behaviours - Questions in this category targeted specific paternal and maternal behaviours experienced by the students.

3.8.2 Piloting

According to Converse and Presser (1986), the researcher should pretest the questionnaire to be used in the study. The pretest size should be between twenty-five and seventy-five respondents. In this study the questionnaire was piloted to a sample of thirty students in two schools in Nairobi Province not included in the actual sample. The purpose of piloting was to check whether the questionnaire met the necessary criterion as well as to gauge whether it catered for the objectives of the study. Necessary modifications were made by removing ambiguous items from the instruments.

Mugenda and Mugenda (1998) describe validity of a research instrument as the degree to which it measures what is intended by the researcher. This is a judgment made better by a team of professionals or experts in the particular field. In this connection, the researcher established content validity by seeking expert judgments from his university supervisors while developing and revising the research instruments. This was done by holding discussion, obtaining relevant comments and suggestions that were synchronized. Reliability of the items of the questionnaire were ascertained by running frequencies and editing errors. The pre-testing was also used to help in establishing the length of time that was needed to administer the questionnaire to the real sample.
3.8.3 Data collection

Data was collected over a three month period. Every school was visited twice. The first visit was to introduce the researcher to the respective principal’s office where permission to conduct research within the school was obtained. The legality of the research was proved by the production of the research permit. In each school the researcher was then introduced to the teachers who helped her to access the class registers. From the registers subjects of the study were selected through random sampling. In all the schools the subjects were put in one class or in the hall and the researcher and her team was introduced. The students were then guided on how to respond to the questionnaires. After the completion of the exercise the researcher and the assistants collected them. The success of the study depended on the students indicating the parenting behaviours of both, their parents, that is, what the mother does and what the father does for them at a personal level and at home.

3.9.0 Data analysis

Items from the questionnaires were arranged and grouped according to individual research questions then analyzed descriptively using the statistical package for the social sciences and then presented using tables and figures. Descriptive statistics have a considerable advantage over more complex statistics (Fink, 2005).

Regarding items on parental behaviours respondents were required to respond to the three-likert scale rated Always, Sometimes and No, scored as 1, 0.5 and 0, respectively, in order to get a final statistical mean weight of those who agreed with the items. In this case therefore, the frequency of Always was multiplied by 1 and added to the frequency
of Sometimes multiplied by 0.5 and finally added to the frequency of No multiplied by 0 (i.e. [Always x 1] + [Sometimes x 0.5] + [No x 0] = Weighted mean).
CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS OF THE STUDY

4.0.0 Introduction

In this chapter the results of the study are presented. The presentation is organized along the lines of the research questions focusing the study. Using this procedure the results of the study will be presented research question by research question. In this way, the relevant research question will be first posed and then the data relating to that question will be presented. This will be followed by a summary statement of the conclusion of the study in regard to the question.

4.1.0 Research Question One: Are the demographic factors influencing parenting behaviours in Nairobi province indicative of the conflict between traditional and modern trends in parenting?

Data relevant to this question are summarized in frequencies in Table 4.1 and Figures 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.4, 4.5 and 4.6 below.

Table 4.1 Age of distribution of respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Female Percentage</th>
<th>Male Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>13.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>45.5</td>
<td>41.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>6.3</td>
<td>35.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>8.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In figure 4.1 above, the mean age was 15 years. The age distribution shows that a few students in form two are very young (14 years) while the majority is between the ages 15, 16 and 17. The findings reveal that some students in form two are 19 years old and a few in their early 20’s. It was interesting to note that some of the youngest respondents were girls (14) while some of the oldest respondents were boys (22).

Figure 4.2 Respondents gender
As shown in Figure 4.2 above, the sample consisted of 196 girls representing 40 percent of the total sample and 288 boys representing 60 percent of the total sample.

**Figure 4.3 Kind of family**

![Bar chart showing the percentage of respondents from different family kinds.](chart.png)

In Figure 4.3 above, the majority of the respondents (69 percent) came from two-parent family. This was followed by those who came from single parent family, represented by 11 percent in the total sample of the respondents. The rest of the family kinds were represented by less than ten percent each of the respondents in the total sample.
In Figure 4.4 above, the middle rank were the majority representing 50 percent for female respondents and 61 percent for the male respondents in the total sample, they were followed by the first-born (28 percent girls and 25 percent boys) and the last-born followed with 20 percent for girls and 11 percent for the boys in the total sample. Only child was represented by 1 percent in both cases.
From Figure 4.5 above, the highest numbers of siblings represented were up to two siblings. Forty percent of the girls led the list by indicating they have two brothers, followed by 35 percent of the girls indicating that they have one sister. Thirty four percent of the boys indicated that they have three sisters and also another 34 percent indicated that they have one sister. Less than 20 percent of the respondents said that they have from three to eight siblings. This indicates a nuclear family set up with few numbers of children (i.e. 1 to 4)
Figure 4.6 above, shows decreasing trends in the numbers of relatives staying with respondents’ families. According the figure 4.6 only a small percentage of the girls and boys live with relatives in their families (17 percent of boys and 18 of girls live with one male relative, and 15 percent boys and 18 percent of girls live with one female relative). The percentage of families that live with more than one relative is significantly few. This trend is a clear indicator that the families have shifted away from the traditional mode to modern lifestyles where extended relatives are not part of the family any longer.
4.2.0 Research Question Two: Are the major facilities/resources for modern parenting available in the homes of the subjects' pointers to the conflict between traditional and modern parenting behaviours? Data related to this question are shown in figure 4.7 below.

Figure 4.7 Media facilities at homes

From Figure 4.7 above a great majority of the families studied have all the media facilities investigated. This is indicated by 99 percent for the girls and 95 percent for the boys having the radio at home. Also 94 percent for the girls and 82 percent for the boys have television in their homes. High percentages of the families have the newspapers (93% of the girls and 82% of the boys. Video took the fourth position overall with 69 percent for the girls and 53 percent for the boys. Home library was least recorded media facility with less than 50 percent for both girls and boys.
These findings are indicative of families that have clearly shifted from the traditional lifestyle and have espoused modernity.

In order to establish the amount of time respondents spent on the media facilities, they were asked to indicate the number of hours in a week they use the facilities. Figure 4.8 below shows the summary of their responses.

**Figure 4.8 Hours spent using media facilities in a week**

As shown in Figure 4.8 above, the respondents are avid users of the media facilities spending an average of 4 hours every day of the week watching television. Female respondents tended to use the facilities more than male respondents, that is, they spent on
average 6 hours against 4 hours for male respondents on using these facilities per day. This could be due to the fact that girls spend more time in the house than the boys, reflecting a traditional pattern of girl child upbringing.

4.3.0 Research Question Three: In what ways do the patterns of parent-child activities indicators of the conflict between traditional and modern trends in parenting?

Data related to this question are shown in Figure 4.9 below.

Figure 4.9 Parent-child shared activities patterns

Figure 4.9 above, indicates that most parent-child interaction in the sample of respondents studied occurs between the mothers and the daughters (with a weighted mean of 78 percent), followed by the interaction between the mothers and the sons (weighted
mean of 73 percent). Meals time formed the main activity during these interactions. Performing school homework with the fathers (weighted mean for girls 63 percent and boys 60 percent), sharing talks with mothers (girls weighted mean 63 percent and boys weighted mean 57 percent) and fathers (girls weighted mean 47 percent and boys weighted mean 56 percent), followed each other in that order as the other main activities that determined parent-child interactions in the sample of the respondents studied.

These findings reflect the fact that there are still traces of traditional parent-child interaction patterns in the sample of respondents studied because daughters-mother interaction during meal time and mothers sharing talks with their daughters were the most outstanding activities in the distribution of the activities that formed parent-child interaction.

Respondents were asked about the degree of disclosure in their families. Figure 4.10 below reveals that the highest degree of disclosure occurs between girls and their mothers (74 percent). This is a trend that resembles the traditional and is actually expected. What is out of tradition is the fact that disclosure between sons and their mothers is also quite high at (67 percent). The degree of disclosure towards the fathers is low as reported by 41 percent of girls and 51 percent of the boys (although more boys disclose to the fathers than girls).
As shown in the Above figure 4.10 above, the findings of the present study also reveal that both boys and girls discuss their problems with their mothers more than with their fathers. (51% of boys and 66% of girls discuss with mothers) while (39% of boys and 22% of girls discuss with their fathers). When the mothers have financial problems they highly disclose to children of both sexes. Few fathers disclose when they have financial difficulties (61% of mothers disclose to girls and 53% disclose to boys while (33% of fathers reveal to their daughters and 27% of fathers revealing to their sons).
The lowest so far issue of disclosure was children's sex matters, in which 47 percent of girls disclose to their mothers and only 19 percent of boys do so to their mothers. Still on the same issue only 19 percent of boys disclose to their fathers than girls at 13 percent.

The results above indicate a higher disclosure between children and their mothers than their fathers. This is more of a modern set up since mothers and their children live under the nuclear family structure where the closest people are their children. Traditionally, parents used not to let their children know their issues especially when it regarded disagreements amongst themselves.

4.4.0 Research Question Four: Does the way the parents meet the psychological and educational needs of their children reflect the conflict between traditional and modern methods of parenting?

The responses given by the respondents to this question are summarized in Figure 4.11 below.
In Figure 4.11 above, mothers are rated higher than the fathers by both boys and girls in the provision of psychological needs. The mothers meeting needs was rated the highest with a weighted mean of 90 percent for girls and 84 percent for boys, while in the case of fathers meeting needs of the respondents was rated at 83 percent weighted mean for female respondents and 74 percent for boys. Mothers were still rated higher than the fathers on the provision of love as a psychological need, in which case the female respondents still rated higher than the male respondents (that is, 92 percent and 89 percent, respectively). The provision of love by fathers came second in this context where it was rated as 85 percent for girls and 80 percent for boys. In the case of the psychological need of care, mothers too became outstanding by being rated at 94 percent by girls and 89 percent by the boys, while the fathers were rated at 84 percent by the girls.
and 80 percent by the boys. The least rated was discrimination by both the mothers and fathers, which was less than 15 percent in both female and male respondents.

In addition to the general love expressed by parents, there is the modern way of expressing the love in terms of hugging, kissing and playing with the child. The behaviours of parents in these contexts are summarized by Figure 4.12 below.

**Figure 4.12 Outward display of parental love**

![Bar chart showing the outward display of parental love](image)

In Figure 4.12 above, mothers were rated higher than fathers in the outward demonstration of affection outwardly noted in hugging, kissing and playing with their children. Furthermore, this hugging and kissing is done more to their girl children than boy children. In hugging mothers were rated by 75 percent of girls (compared to only 34 percent of boys), followed by kissing (48 percent of girls and 17 percent of boys), and finally, playing with the children (36 percent of the boys against 21 percent of the girls).
The overall observation that can be made in the above distribution is that all the respondents rated their mothers higher than their fathers in the provision of the psychological needs. And in these ratings the female respondents are higher in both mothers and fathers ratings. The narrowing of this gap may be due to modernization factors of nuclear family set up in which both parents tend to be closer to the children regardless of their gender.

Figure 4.13 Parental educational support

![Bar chart showing parental educational support]

The trends presented show that mothers’ encouragement to girls’ hard work at school was ranked the highest at 90 percent for girls, while the mothers’ encouragement to the boys ranked at 82
percent. Fathers’ encouragement was ranked at 78 percent by the girls and 72 percent by the boys. The mothers were still ranked high in checking on the girls’ progress at 88 percent and 72 percent on the boys’ progress. While the fathers were ranked at 78 percent in checking for girls’ progress, they were ranked at 72 percent for checking boys’ progress. The third ranked educational support was attendance of school meetings in which mothers were still ranked higher than the fathers at (69 percent by the girls and 61 percent by the boys) while the fathers were ranked at (55 percent by the girls and 52 percent by the boys).

The results indicate that there is more support given to the girls’ education by both parents, although the mother stands out than the fathers in the support of both girls and boys. This is a modern trend where more educational support is given to the girls than the boys. It is also modern in that the mother is seen to be giving more support to the boy than the father does.

4.5.0 Research Question Five: Is the nature of parent-child control a pointer to the conflict between traditional and modern methods of parenting?

Figure 4.14a gives a summary of responses concerning misconduct and Figure 4.14b summarizes responses on good behaviour as measures of discipline.
Figure 4.14a Parents' responses to misconduct

Figure 4.14a above, indicates that parents' response to misconduct by talking calmly to their children was the most outstanding. In this particular parents' response fathers' calm talk towards their daughters was rated high (weighted mean of 66 percent), followed by mothers' calm talk to their daughters (weighted mean of 63 percent). Parents' calm talk to their sons was ranked second overall with mothers being rated at 62 percent and fathers at 54 percent.

The results of analysis in Figure 4.14a also indicate that mothers respond to misconduct by scolding their daughters more than their sons (44 percent and 35 percent, respectively). In addition, fathers administer physical punishment to their sons more than their daughters (38 percent and 19 percent, respectively); mothers also punish their sons
more than their daughters (37 percent and 31 percent, respectively). Ignoring as a responding to misconduct was least rated with less than 12 percent in both mothers and fathers and for both boys and girls.

Parents’ response to their children’s misconduct by calm talking, which became outstanding in the sample of the respondents, is a modern phenomenon that seems to have replaced the traditional responses to misconduct by physical punishment, scolding and withdrawal of privileges. Additionally, mothers responding to misconduct of their sons by physical punishment and fathers doing the same to their daughters is a modern trend, because traditionally during adolescent period children underwent initiation in which case contact with their opposite sex parents was limited.

Besides assessing parents’ response to their children’s misconduct, it was also essential to assess their responses to their children’s good conduct. The responses given in this case are summarized in Figure 4.14b below.
From Figure 4.14b above, it is clear that parents’ praise and rewarding of their children’s good conduct was highly rated. In these findings mothers’ praise of their daughters was slightly higher than that of their sons (73 percent and 71 percent, respectively). The fathers’ praise of their daughters was higher (70 percent) than the praise of their sons at (65 percent). The findings further indicated that both fathers and mothers rewarded their daughters more (60 percent and 59 percent, respectively) than their sons (53 percent and 56 percent, respectively). The findings also indicated that both parents least ignored their children’s good conduct (rated at less than 14 percent).

The above findings are a confirmation that the families have shifted from the traditional mode and are showing modern trends in the way parents respond towards their children’s
behaviour. In a traditional family good behaviour was demanded and bad and misbehaving children were severely punished.

Overall, the findings on parents’ response to children’s behaviours suggest heavy inclination towards modern parenting trends with the respondents’ families noticing and rewarding the good behaviour displayed by both boys and girls.

Other ratings of the nature of child control included language use, homing time, and dispute settlement and gender differences in child control. The responses to these items are summarized in Figures 4.15, 4.16, 4.17, 4.18 and 4.19 below.

Figure 4.15 Control of language at home

Results in Figure 4.15 above, indicate that mothers control language use at home more than fathers and do so more to girls (78 percent) than to boys (73 percent). Fathers’
control of children's language at home came second with almost equal percentage to both boys and girls (65 percent and 66 percent, respectively).

**Figure 4.16 Homing time**

In Figure 4.16 above, 73 percent of girls said that their mothers usually eat with children against 68 percent of boys. Fathers were ranked at 54 percent by girls and 53 percent by boys, on the same issue. Seventy two percent of girls also indicated that they had fixed time to be at home against 58 percent of the boys. Boys slightly led girls on the issue of being allowed to be at home during late hours (20 percent and 17 percent, respectively).
Figure 4.17 Modes of dispute settlement at homes

![Bar chart showing modes of dispute settlement by gender and type of conflict]

The chart above indicates that mothers lead in settling brother-sister conflicts especially for girls (48 percent and 39 percent, respectively). This is followed by fathers settling brother-sister disputes ranked at 45 percent by girls and 36 percent by boys. The findings indicate that only a few parents encourage their children to fight as a means of settling disputes. However, the percentage of boys who were encouraged to fight was higher than that of girls (15 percent for boys and 8 percent for boys, respectively).
The findings in Figure 4.18 above, show that mothers lead in controlling the places and peers that their daughters visited (rated by 66 percent of girls) than they do for their sons (51 percent). Fifty five percent of boys indicated that there are strict family rules for them concerning the choice of friends, against 51 percent of girls. Although a slightly higher percent of girls (54 percent) than boys (52 percent) indicated that more mothers than fathers reinforce these rules. Mothers also led in the control of friends visiting their children than fathers as rated by 51 percent of girls and 45 percent of boys.
Figure 4.19 Gender differences in parental control

Figure 4.19 above, shows that both parents control their sons and daughters almost equally, as evidenced by 69 percent girls and 63 percent boys who reported that their mothers control boys and girls equally and 69 percent girls and 62 percent boys who said that their fathers controlled boys and girls equally. However, in comparing fathers control over daughters and mothers control over their sons, it emerged that fathers control their daughters more than mothers do to their sons (30 percent in both girls and boys, and 17 percent for girls and 21 percent for boys, respectively).

Overall, the results of analysis under the nature of child control in terms of language use, homing time, dispute settling, peer interaction, and gender differences in the child control, indicate that mothers assume more role in child control for both sexes than do
fathers, hence there is more modern outlook to this as the nuclear family set up has put mothers in the most position to be closer to their children than fathers hence they exert more control than fathers do.

4.6.0 Research Question Six: Is the conflict between traditional and modern methods of parenting evident in the way parents make decisions regarding house keeping and child rearing in the families of the respondents?

The summary of the findings to this question are indicated in figure 4.20 below

Figure 4.20 Decision-making process

![Decision Making Issues](image-url)
From Figure 4.20 above the decision making issue of expecting strict obedience ranked high in both parents, but with mothers ranking much higher (Weighted mean of 83 percent for girls and 80 percent for boys) than fathers (74 percent for girls and 75 percent for boys). The second ranked decision making issue was dealing with discipline in which mothers still ranked high with a weighted mean of 70 percent for girls and 59 percent for boys, while fathers dealing with discipline was ranked relatively low (weighted mean of 31 percent for girls and 46 percent for boys).

Results on decision-making on homing time reveal that mothers were ranked high (67 percent for girls and 53 percent for boys) than fathers (51 percent for girls and 54 percent for boys) in deciding the time children should be home. Decision making regarding making of rules at home showed that mothers were still ranked higher than the fathers with 57 percent for girls and 60 percent for boys, while fathers were ranked very low at 22 percent for girls and 28 percent for boys.

This distribution clearly indicates that mothers were the most outstanding in decision-making, thus coming out as authority figures in the homes of the respondents than fathers. This implies the there was more modernity in the homes of the respondents since in the traditional sense the father used to be the overall authority figure and decision maker than the mother. But due to the modern set up the mother tends to be closer to the children and therefore more in charge of operations at home.
Information regarding housekeeping roles was also solicited in the questionnaire and the summary of responses is shown in Figure 4.21.

**Figure 4.21 House-keeping ratings**

As shown in Figure 4.21 above, the housekeeping tenet of feeding children, cooking, washing clothes and cleaning the house was ranked high on the part of mothers at 68 percent by boys and 65 percent by girls, against the fathers who were reported at 14 percent by both the girls and the boys. Mothers allocating household duties was also ranked higher than the fathers by 64 percent of the boys and 60 percent of the girls while the fathers ranking very low at (20 percent of the girls and 35 percent of the boys). The mother is still the parent who makes decision regarding the food to be prepared higher than the father at 59 percent of the girls and 62 percent of the boys while for the children
deciding the type of food to be prepared was ranked low at 43 percent by the girls and 33 percent of the boys.

Children, especially girls, also ranked higher than the rest in the family members on decisions to switch on the TV (44 percent) and on the type of the TV program to be watched (44 percent). This suggests that the girls spend a lot of time in the house.

The above results suggest that the mothers and also girls are still the chief housekeepers than the fathers and the boys, suggesting that tradition is still prevailing in the homes of the respondents of the present study.
CHAPTER FIVE
CONCLUSION

5.0.0 Introduction

In this chapter the results of the study are discussed. The discussion of the results is organized according to the six research questions investigated. This was followed by a presentation of the summary of the results. Then a brief examination of the implications of the results to counseling practice has been instituted for the parents and young people in modern Kenya shall be highlighted. Eventually, the recommendations of the study with regard to the general public policy and practice will be proffered. This will finally be followed by recommendations for further research along the lines.

5.1.0 Discussion of results

5.1.1 Research question one: Are the demographic factors influencing parenting behaviours indicative of the conflict between traditional and modern parenting?

Results for this question are found in tables 4.1a and table 4.1b figures 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.4, 4.6 and 4.7. The examination of the data relevant to this research question reveals that a great majority of the students under study came from families that have adopted the modern family structures and lifestyles as indicated by the following:

(i) A great majority of the respondents came from monogamous families which is a major indicator of modernism. This is proof that the polygamous family described by Kenyatta (1938), and Laye (1954) is on the decline and thus it does not characterize many Kenyan families.
(ii) The existence of one parent families which may result when there is divorce, desertion, or death of a spouse is indicative of the changing trends that characterize modernization as in the past there were social structures put in place to ensure that members of the community lived in an extended family set up where all women were put under the protection of their husbands or fathers. Also if a man lost a spouse through death, he never became a single parent as he had other wives to take care of all his children.

(iii) There is a higher percentage of families with few children as figure 4.5 suggests, as majority of the families of the subjects studied did not have more than three siblings which is a hallmark of the changing values. The traditional family was one that valued many children because of their economic usefulness as well as the prestige accorded parenthood (Kenyatta 1938; Laye, 1954). The modern Kenyan family has shown a departure from traditionalism and as such, having many children may not be considered as a prestige symbol since today children are very expensive to raise and to educate as only the parents and older children work.

The examination of the possible carry over from the traditional past where families lived in extended households catering for many relatives the students indicated that they lived with either one or two relatives, who may be construed to mean that the majority of the families of the respondents studied, have succumbed to the alienation effects of modernization. This trend runs contrary to the traditional family described by Kenyatta (1938), Ngugi (1965), Mead (1968) Omari (1982) and Kithinji & Kithinji (2005) which
was characterized by extended family structures. It may also mean that the strong kinship support of yester years Shaffer (1996) and Kithinji & Kithinji (2005) has been threatened with extinction. This trend may also be a confirmation that the majority of modern Kenyan families have suffered alienation from the traditional roots to the extent that they have been left alone to figure out how to raise their children without the benefit of experienced hands or even social support Gachukia (1989), Acock and Demo, (1994); and Garcia, Mayers and Brillon, (1995). As such the modern Kenyan family is likely to experience the same problems experienced by the families in the Western world. The Kenyan parents are likely to be over-burdened with issues of parenting and working at a time as the dual career family takes root resulting to the crisis of over-worked families (Jacobs and Gerson, 2001). This situation consequently leads to reduced time with children as well as less reduced control over the children who may subsequently be drawn to destructive habits like drug use and abuse Ndirangu (2004) and Waithaka, (2006).

Family size as well as the number of children is a good indicator of the movement towards modernity or resistance to change. In this respect the data analysis shows a very small remnant of the traditional family types meaning that the transition towards modernity is not yet total as indicated by trends in figures 4.3, 4.5, and 4.6. The existence of polygamous as well as extended family types is indicative of families that are resistant to change and in fact if this research was conducted in some rural areas in Kenya may be the percentage of polygamous families might have been higher. The results may make one to wonder whether these families that seem to have resisted change still continue to
be functional as those of past as described by Kenyatta (1938), Laye (1954) and Mead (1968).

The results in figure 4.5 showed existence of a few families with as many as five to eight children. Again, it seems that some families have resisted the influence of modernization and still value many children just like in the past. It would be interesting is to find out whether these children are still considered as a prestige symbol as Zastrow (1984) had indicated.

There were families that lived with as many as four to eight relatives as indicated by trends in figure 4.6. This provides evidence of resistance to the forces of change. May be a further investigation of these families may reveal whether the relatives assume similar roles with those played in the families of the past.

5.1.2 Research question two: Are the major facilities/resources for modern parenting available in the homes of the respondents under study pointers to the conflict between traditional and modern parenting practices?

Data relevant to this question are found in figures 4.7, and 4.8. According to trends in figure 4.7 it is evidently clear that all the families of the students studied have media facilities. A large majority of the students have the radio, television, video, and they also access newspapers and nearly half of them have a home library. The media facilities are heavily used judging from the results presented in figure 4.2 with the girls topping the boys in the extent of the use. It was also evident that the heaviest use of the media
facilities fell on the weekends and again it is interesting to note that there is heavier use by the girls over the weekends. It was therefore apparent that the girls spent a lot of time glued to the television on weekends which may mean that true to tradition, the girls spend a lot of their time in the house while the boys were allowed to venture out. However, in a traditional family set up the girls took part in house-hold chores. There was neither television nor books to read then. Another notable fact and one which went contrary to the tradition described by Kenyatta (1938), Laye (1954), Ngugi (1965) was the emergence of indoor entertainment where-by the adolescents used modern electronic facilities to entertain themselves as opposed to communal traditional entertainment of the past. The traditional methods of entertainment used vigorous body movements and therefore induced health as opposed the use of the electronic devises that have the potentiality of promoting obesity among the youth (Kraut et, al., 1998).

These findings are in concurrence with the literature reviewed on heavy use of electronic devices by children, which is a major characteristic of modern family set ups. The reviewed literature points out the following:

(i) The electronic and print media cultivate children by having a tremendous impact on their behaviour, attitudes, way of dressing, methods of relating with each other, as well as the overall approach to life (Huesmann, Moise and Podolski, 2003), including influence on sex-role development (McGhee & Fruech, 1980).
(ii) The media is very important as a modernizing agent because it moulds world views from childhood onward McGhee & Fruech (1980) and Gerbner, Gross, Morgan, Signorelli and Shanahan (2002). In as much as the media has known benefits for children, it has a great deal of disadvantages too, if not used with proper guidance. Atwell and Battle (1999) indicated that when children are exposed to the media they may show improvement in mathematics and reading.

By and large greater use of the media as indicated in this study raises concerns as excessive watching of television has been associated with isolation effect on children Kraut, Petterson, Lundmark, Kriesher, Mukhopadyay and Scherlis (1998), reduced physical activity, which is likely to cause many health hazards associated with obesity Southern (2004) and the risk of exposure to pornography and other unsuitable material (Valentine & Hollaway, 2001). This may indicate that parents are not able to institute rules on the media use by their children as advised by Vandewater, Park, Huang and Wartella (2005).

A major issue of concern in this study is the fact that the parents do not seem to regulate the amount of television watched by their children. Looking at all sheer time adolescents spent glued on the television, one is bound to wonder about the negative effects this trend has on all areas of adolescent development. The trend observed is indicative of how much the family has changed as a consequence of modernization. The image of the traditional African family depicted by Kenyatta (1938), Laye (1954), and Ngugi (1965) is one where
all the members of the family participated actively in the economic activities of the home and where the children were socialized communally through rigorous physical activities. At the time, all children were trained by their parents as well as the larger community to participate in the work being done according to ones age, gender and status. Then, children had no room to be lazy as any irresponsible behaviour was thoroughly punished (Laye, 1954).

The modern family as depicted by the findings of this study is one where the parents are out working while the children do not play any economic roles. This can be interpreted to mean that the adolescents studied had a lot of time on their hands which they used in any way they chose and those in the study spent their time watching television. When we examine the remnants of the traditional behaviours still present among the subjects, it is interesting to note that girls are watching the television more than the boys probably because they were confined to the house now as in the traditional past, while the boys were pursuing personal interests outside the house. This situation may not auger well with the psychological development of the boys as the activities that occupied them in the traditional lifestyle are no longer there. The consequence of this trend may be the engagement in destructive behaviour by the boys Ndirangu (2004), Waithaka (2006) and Valentine & Hollaway (2001).
5.1.3 Research question three: Are the patterns of parent-child shared activities as reported by the respondents indicative of the conflict between traditional and modern methods of parenting?

Data relevant to this question were derived from figures 4.9, 4.10 and 4.11. These data have helped to illuminate many areas of parent-child interactions specifically showing the roles played by both parents in parent-child shared activities, and the degree of disclosure that currently exists in the families of the students under study. The results presented in figure 4.9 shows that the amount of parent-child interaction is rather moderate with only less than a half of the entire sample reporting that they watched television or listened to the radio with both parents. Several interesting findings have come up in the analyzed data, namely that:

(i) More mothers than fathers are reported to engage in activities with children of both sexes with more involvement between the girls and their mothers reported.

(ii) Of all the parent-child activities the meal times seem to be very significant and particularly between the mothers and children of both sexes with a slightly higher rating between the mother and the girl child.

(iii) The number of fathers who take meals with their children is about a third of the total sample.

(iv) More fathers than mothers help their children with homework.

(v) Less than half of the respondents engage in any leisure activities with their parents.
(vi) About half of the respondents of both sexes engage in general talks with their parents.

(vii) The number of the mothers who engage in talk with their children is much higher than the number of the fathers who do the same.

(viii) More fathers seem to engage in discussions with their sons than with their daughters.

According to the reviewed literature, it is important for children to engage in shared activities with both parents because this enhances connectedness and bonding with their parents, hence promoting the psychological well being of the family as a whole Amato (1994), Amato & Fawler, (1999) Bean & Rolleli (2005). However, the findings of this study indicated that the father figure is insignificantly present in the engagement with children in family activities. It is important that the engagement in shared activities requires availability on the part of both the parents and the children. But with modernity, there is less time for the fathers to be near their children due to preoccupation with work and leisure away from home (Omari, 1982).

In fact, research has shown that shared activities between the fathers and their children is related to important developmental outcomes in the lives of their children Biller (1993), Aldous, Mulligan and Bjarnasm (1998), Pruett (2001) since they influence psychological development of the children. When the father is involved and responsible, his physical and emotional presence and closeness with the child is related to cognitive development, social competence, capacity for attachment and empathy. The shared activities could
include spending time together engaging in activities like; playing games, engaging in educational activities, watching television and eating together, reading books or helping with practical issues. The absence of the paternal contribution is most likely to lead to long term deficits in psychological development.

Theoretically, according to Freud, the father is an important parent and his active participation in the child’s life is necessary in the facilitation of the resolution of both the Oedipus complex in boys and the Electra complex in the girl child. The father’s parenting role is very crucial to the development of sex role as well as the development of conscience (Super ego). In the case of the current study since the father is less involved with children in shared activities at home the children are likely to experience problems associated with paternal absence on non participation. These are problems relating to emotional, social, cognitive, and moral areas of children’s development (Glueck & Glueck 1966; Crockett et, aI., 1993; Booth 1998; Kyle, 2001).

According to Mayers and Salovy (1997), parent-child shared activities are positively related with the development of emotional intelligence, which is the ability to perceive, access and generate emotions as well as to understand and to regulate emotions. This in turn promotes emotional and intellectual growth influencing important life outcomes (Baron, 2003). Results of the present study also seem to agree with the reviewed literature in that the mother is perceived as the parent who is in close proximity with the children which is in great concurrence with both the traditional African cultures as depicted by Kenyatta (1938), Laye (1954), Ngugi (1965) and Omari (1982), as well as
the child development theories posited by the attachment theory by Bowlby (1969, 1973); the psychosexual theory by Freud (1905, 1928); and the psychosocial theory by Erikson (1968, 1980).

It appears like the role of the father as described nostalgically by both Laye (1938) and Ngugi (1965) is fast disappearing as few of the children in the modern families of Kenya today may experience the same tender loving relationship with their fathers. The increasing departure from the traditional set up may be observed in that the mother appears to share a great deal of activities with children of both sexes. In the traditional family set up the mother is seen sharing a lot of activities with the daughters while the father shares activities with the sons Kenyatta (1938), Ngugi (1965), Mead (1968), Omari (1982) and Kithinji & Kithinji (2005).

The degree of disclosure in the family is another variable studied in this research, which could be used to depict the extent of parent-child shared activities. The analyzed data in figure 4.9 indicates interesting patterns of disclosure in regard to the adolescents disclosing their personal problems, discussing their difficulties, sex matters, parental disclosure to the children in financial problems, marital issues, and social difficulties among the families of the sample, namely that:

(i) Disclosure is highest among the children and more so to their mothers as illustrated by the three quarters of the girls and two thirds of the boys.
(ii) The percentage of fathers who discuss with their children sex matters and marital problems is preciously few, those who do being only a quarter of the fathers of the sample.

(iii) The issues that recorded the highest disclosure trends between the children of both sexes and their mothers are to do with sharing personal difficulties, discussing of personal problems, and financial difficulties.

(iv) The lowest disclosure was recorded in the issues to do with discussion of personal problems between the girls and their fathers, discussion of sex matters between the boys and their mothers, between the females and their fathers and also between the males and their fathers. Very few fathers share with their children the problems they may experience with their spouses or friends.

In a nutshell, these results are in agreement with the reviewed literature as well as the social expectations. In Kenyatta (1938), Laye (1954), Omari (1982), the mother is depicted as the parent who is close to the child, she is the child's confidant and the go-between the child and the father. This trend is also in agreement with many theories of child development that perceive the mother as the most important person in the child's life (Freud, 1905, 1924; Winnicot, 1953; Bowlby, 1969, 1973, 1981; Shaffer, 1977; Erikson, 1980). These results also seem to indicate that there is the tendency of the men to be strongly bound by the traditional dictates that forbid them from expressing their emotions openly, hence they will experience problems without disclosing them to their children. Another important thing is that the men seem to keep their distance from their
children and will not get into any situation that will require them to be in a disclosure mood, it would not be manly to do so.

Disclosure for the fathers may actually seem to devalue them in the face of the children something the fathers will avoid at all costs. The results also show modernity as a great deal of disclosure seems to be occurring between the mothers and their children. Traditionally families lived in close proximity with extended relatives and many of them were polygamous and as such there were many mature people with whom one would talk about issues of concern. The modern family is uprooted from the home of origin and therefore there are fewer people to confide in. According to the findings of the current study the closest people in the families studied are the mothers and their children and therefore when there are issues of concern they are naturally disclosed by mothers to the children and vice versa.

The findings of this study also revealed that the mothers had taken over the key roles in the homes including decision making process, provision of physical and psychological needs to the children while the fathers had taken the position described by (Omari, 1982). Traditionally, parents did not let their children know their problems especially those regarding disagreements amongst themselves. In addition, parents in the traditional sense, especially fathers, were highly respected and obeyed by children (Kenyatta, 1938) a situation that made it difficult for children to openly disclose to them or solicit insight into their parents problems. But with the modern phenomenon of liberalization, the degree of disclosure in the family has gone at least high, however, there are some sex
differences with the boys' disclosure to their fathers being slightly higher than girls, and vice versa.

The results on disclosure are actually consistent with a number of related research findings. For example, according to Miller and Lane (1991), children disclose more to their mothers than their fathers and they also feel closer to the parent they disclose more to, in this case the mother, whom they are also physically and psychologically close to (Omari, 1982). The related research further indicates gender differences in disclosure in which girls disclose more than boys and the highest disclosure is among females.

Regarding parental disclosure to children, Miller and Lane (1991), assert that parents disclose to their children because they consider them as equal partners and use them as emotional confidants. Indeed, according to Lehman, Silverberg and Koener (2002), parents disclose to their children about health, finances, positive things that happen during the day, disappointments and setbacks, other family members, future plans, friends, secrets, fears and insecurities. However, other researchers caution that this kind of disclosure is harmful to children, as it is likely to put them at the risk for psychological problems because of burdening them with parents' own worries and concerns (Lehman & Silverberg-Koerner, 2002). This parentification of children may be indicative of signs of maladjustment of the families concerned (Bean& Rolleli, 1999). In psychologically healthy families only reasonable levels of disclosure occur. Healthy disclosure involves the right information disclosed to the right person.
5.1.4 Research question four: Does the way parents meet the psychological and educational support of their children reflect the conflict between the traditional and modern methods of parenting?

The results on this research question were given by trends in figures 4.11, 4.12 and 4.13. As evidenced in these figures, the following patterns come out from the analyzed data, that:

(i) Majority of parents are reported to meet the psychological needs of their children investigated adequately.

(ii) Parents, both fathers and mothers, are reported to love their children a lot, meet their needs well, and they are reported to care for the children well.

(iii) About half of the subjects in the sample reported that their fathers spend enough time while the number of mothers who spend enough time with their children is greater than that of the fathers.

(iv) Very few respondents feel discriminated against by parents of both sexes.

(v) Although majority of the students reported that both parents meet their psychological needs adequately, the numbers of the mothers who enjoy this rating outnumber that of the fathers in the same rating.

(vi) More mothers than fathers displayed affection openly as was noted in hugging and kissing between the mothers and their daughters.

(vii) The father seems to rate very low in the outward expression of love

These results lend themselves to several interpretations. First, they may strengthen the idea that the modern Kenyan families have fallen victim of the feminization of the
domestic scene as well as the marginalization of the father as a parent as put by Gibbs (1996). The findings are consistent with the trend in the study where the father figure as discussed under patterns of parent-child shared activities is still less available in the provision of the psychological needs of children. Secondly, it may mean that the fathers have remained in the traditional mode where by their provision of the children's needs is never direct but always through the mother who has always kept close proximity to the children. Another tenable explanation may be that, the fathers keep their emotion to themselves characteristic of their training in the African tradition where emotional expression is left for women and children.

Looking at these results one is bound to blame the father for all the apparent shortcomings, but before doing so it may be important to find out the possible reasons for this sorry state of affairs. One of the main reasons as to why the mother takes the center stage in child rearing could be explained by the Good-Enough Mother theory by Winnicott (1953). The theory suggests that the psyche of the child develops in relation to a real influential parent, in which case, it is the mother. For a child to develop psychological health the mother must be good enough. It is a modern expectation that both parents provide for their children in the family. But ironically, some modern factors have placed the father far away from children; hence, it is still the mother who remains in a position to psychologically influence the child.

Ideally, father's role in meeting the psychological needs of the children is considered crucial. Kyle (2001) demonstrated that children who have a close relationship with their father become more stress resistant and used more coping strategies. Also according to
Rohner (1998), when children perceive the father as loving, then this is associated with healthy social, emotional and cognitive development and functioning. The amount of time fathers spend with the children is positively related to gender role development. Lamb (1997, 2000) and Pleck (1997) asserts that the development of competence and empathy in the child is related to the father's engagement, accessibility and responsibility towards the child.

Myriad things do occur in our society due to the less involvement of the father figure in provision of psychological needs to children. This is a phenomenon referred to as father hunger. Father hunger has been associated with the declining well-being of children in the society. According to Fitzgerald (2004) father hunger is associated with social problems as teenage pregnancies, child abuse and domestic violence against women. Further research suggests that men who were father deprived when they were growing up are more likely to engage in rigid, over compensatory masculine, aggressive behaviour later in life Parke (1981), Pruet, (1987), Biller (1993) and Pruet (1993).

The findings concerning the role of parents towards educational support of their children showed that mothers' encouragement to children ranked high, with girls' hard work at school was ranked the highest at 90 percent by girl respondents, while the mothers' encouragement to the boys was ranked at 82 percent. Fathers' encouragement was ranked at 78 percent by the girls and 72 percent by the boys. Mothers still ranked higher than the fathers in attendance of school meetings (ranked at 69 percent by the girls and 61 percent by the boys) against the fathers (55 percent by the girls and 52 percent by the boys).
On overall, the results indicate that there is more support given to the girls’ education by both parents, although the mothers stand out more than the fathers in the support of both girls’ and boys’ education. This is a modern trend where more educational support is given to the girls than the boys. It is also modern in that the mother is seen to be giving more support to the boy than the father does. Traditionally, the father was responsible for the training of the boys teaching them many things among them; agriculture, wood carving, bee keeping, iron working, hunting as well as teaching the boy about the family and clan issues. Every father made sure that the boys knew every thing to be known about family lands and the boundaries. While the mother was responsible for the training of young girls teaching them all things concerning domestic duties, home management, agriculture, the laws and customs of the people as well as the etiquette of the people (Kenyatta, 1938). Traditionally the education of the children was the responsibility of the community with the family setting as the arena for the acquisition of the necessary package of knowledge, skills, values, and attitudes.

The parents were very crucial educators who ensured that every child received the share of necessary traditional knowledge. Then, education was given depending on the age and sex of the child. The mothers saw to it that their daughters received the knowledge required of them through observation and imitation of roles from infancy graduating to increased levels of responsibility as they came of age. The fathers ensured that their sons received the right education as they graduated through the various stages of development. The father was there as the vital teacher of the children as the person who modeled the
male roles for the sons. The requirements of modernity are that children attend school so that they can get an academic education which prepares them to enter various career fields. Thus, the parents’ role is to introduce the child to school and to give the necessary support. For best results both parents ought to show their support towards the academic life children of both sexes. The fact that the research findings of this study show less involvement by the father may have negative results in the overall adjustment of children of both sexes.

There are many research findings that indicate that the more actively involved and interested a father is in his children’s care and education, the more intellectually developed the children become Biller (1993), Croket & Eggbean (1993), and Radin (1994). This is because fathers tend to provide better economic support, access to more educational resources, and give children better opportunities to learn. They also tend to help their children with homework (Bean & Rolleri, 2005). Thus, father’s involvement with the children’s academic life translates to academic success. It predicts success in the child’s life Radin (1994). In one study Snarey (1993), the amount of time fathers spend with their children was found to have a direct link with mathematics skills. Additionally, father’s involvement in children’s education makes them to easily adjust to new experiences, have stable emotions, and know how to get along well with others. Children also become well behaved in school by following rules, that is, moral development Biller and Reuter (1993).
The above literature results most likely suggest that maternal domination extends to all areas of the child’s life, hence depicting a lop-sided approach to the provision of educational and psychological needs. This is bound to increase the cases of father hunger experienced by the children. The consequences of father hunger have all the likelihood of manifesting themselves in the maladaptive behaviour patterns outwardly manifested in the schools and which are observed when students engage in truancy, show poor academic performance, engage in precocious sexuality resulting in teenage pregnancy, fall in to the vices of drug and alcohol abuse, just to mention a few. These may be indicative of maternal gate-king Allens and Hawkings (1999) as well as the feminization of all the areas of child-rearing in exclusion of the father. It goes against all the research that finds a relationship between father involvement in the life of the child and the child’s wholesome development in all the areas of development (Hoffman, 1975).

5.1.5 Research Question Five: Is the nature of parent-child control a pointer to the conflict between traditional and modern methods of parenting?

The results to this question are found in figures 4.14a, 4.14b, 4.15, 4.16, 4.17, 4.18 and 4.19. The results of the analyzed data offer interesting insights into the issues regarding child control, especially parental response to the misconduct of their children:

(i) The highest percentage of parent, both fathers and mothers respond to misconduct by talking calmly to their children of both sexes as indicated by the two thirds of the mothers of the studied sample.
(ii) Fathers seem to be harsh to their sons as those who talk to them calmly are slightly more than half of the studied sample.

Parental response to their children’s misconduct by calm talking is a modern phenomenon that seems to have replaced the traditional responses to misconduct by physical punishment, heavy scolding and withdrawal of privileges. Additionally, more involvement of mothers in the discipline of their sons and the involvement of fathers in the discipline their daughters is a modern trend, because traditionally during adolescent period children underwent initiation in which case contact with their opposite sex parents was extremely limited. The use punishment exists among the families studied, and surprisingly, mothers seem to be involved in the punishment of both their sons and their daughters. The percentage of the fathers who punish their sons exceeds those who punish their daughters. A good number of parents are reported to scold the children when they misbehave. Few parents, less than a tenth are reported to ignore their children.

When these results were analyzed there were pointers to the elements of modernization. Although the parents respond when their children misbehave, the percentages of those who punished errant children and scolded them are far much fewer were expected. The talking calmly could be interpreted to mean that parents have become lax. The involvement of the mothers in the discipline of boy children is a phenomenon of modernization since in traditional parenting as described by Kenyatta (1938), Laye (1954), Ngugi (1965) the discipline of the boys was the preserve of their fathers. Even the
case where the father is involved in the discipline of the daughters is a deviation from the traditional parenting practices.

According to the literature, the traditional child rearing emphasized on the child’s obedience and respect in all forms of behaviour, that is, obedience, good manners and respecting the people according to their seniority, as well as, the authoritarian disciplinary methods (Omari, 1982). According to Omari (1982), parenting behaviours are as there is no standard model to guide child rearing as there are many influences that have embarked on the scene. In current times no parent can talk about raising children the African way any longer due to the social transformations taking place within the societies.

The harsh parental responses to misconduct in the traditional sense (that is, physical punishment, scolding and withdrawal of privileges had the consequence of affirming the parental authority and power over the children invoking owe and fear Kenyatta (1938) and Laye, 1954). Parental authority was never questioned as it was unheard of for a child to try to challenge parental discipline no matter how harsh or extreme it would be. Needless to say that child compliance was reinforced by a long list of taboos that spelled out fear inducing woes that would befall any tendency to deviate. Hence traditional methods of discipline produced children who did their best to comply as well as conform to parental dictates. Psychologists to day have examined the consequences of using very harsh disciplinary methods and reached certain conclusions.

According to modern research findings, children who are subjected to physical punishment are affected emotionally and they are likely to be angrier, aggressive and
stressed out. The negative reactions of children who are subjected to physical punishment also include escape from as well as avoidance of the punishing parents (Gershoff, 2002). Parental use of punishment has also been shown to interfere with the parent child attachment processes and emotional regulation, which puts a strain on the parent – child relationship (Hutchinson, 1977). Parental use of punishment has also been associated with the development of antisocial behaviour as well as the interference with many mental processes (Caspi, MacClay, Moffit, Mill, Martin, Craig Taylor and Poulton, 2002).

Assessment of parents’ response to their children’s good conduct was also investigated in this study and the results showed that a high percentage of the parents use praise when their children have engaged in good conduct as illustrated by over two thirds of fathers and mothers who praise both boys and girls. The use of rewards by both parents and to both boys and girls is reported by over half of the families of the study sample. Consistent with other findings in this study, few fathers and mothers ignore their children as reported by less than ten percent of the girls and boys and for both parents. This trend of rewarding children is an indication of the changing practices since in the traditional family set up children were expected to do well regardless of being praised or rewarded. The practice of rewarding and praising children is consistent with the behavioral theories of behaviour modification that rely on positive reinforcement procedures.

The current study has pointed to some deviation from the traditional disciplinary methods in the sense that modern mothers seem to be involved in the discipline issues of their sons
directly which is a major departure from the African traditional past where by physical proximity between the mothers and sons was culturally prohibited and particularly when the son had already undergone the puberty rites of passage as prescribed by the culture Kenyatta (1938), Laye (1954) and Ngugi (1965). After the rites of passage the son was accorded adult status and made decisions that the mother would not directly question. Departure from the past also seems evident in the cases where fathers seem to be directly involved in the discipline of adolescent daughters. Traditionally the fathers were not allowed physical proximity with the daughters and any issues that related to the direct governance of the daughters was in the mothers’ domain.

Parental control of the child’s language use reveals that there was higher control for both boys and girls with majority of mothers controlling both boys and girls. Although the fathers are rated high in language control of both sons and daughters, they are rated second to the mothers. An interesting finding is that the fathers tend to control both sons and daughters equally.

Focusing attention to the parental control over dressing codes, peer interaction, homing time and gender differences in the child control the results reveal interesting patterns as follows:

(i) The results indicated that mothers were rated higher in controlling their children’s language use at home than fathers (and do so more to girls, 78 percent than to boys, 73 percent);
(ii) Mothers were leading in settling brother-sister conflicts.

(iii) Mothers were on the forefront in controlling the places and peers that their daughters visit (rated by 66 percent of girls) than they do for their sons (51 percent).

It is indeed obvious that with the mothers being at the center stage in parent-child shared activities, provision of psychological needs to children, disciplinary roles, family chief decision maker, family key housekeeper, enjoying more of children’s disclosure and in contributing towards children’s education, it then follows that mothers assume more hand in child control than the fathers.

These findings concerning mother’s domination in child control agree with Cauce’s et al., (1996) study findings in which African American mothers were found to be extremely close to their daughters and controlling the type of friends they have. In the current study the findings indicated that 55 percent of boys said there are strict family rules for them concerning the choice of friends, against 51 percent of girls. Such strict family rules may contribute to parents-children conflicts. In fact, Cauce et al., (1996), indicate that parents, especially mothers, conflict much with their adolescents over curfews, clothing and homework in the exertion of child control.

Further more, Fang and Wark (1998) and Szapocznik and Kurtines (1993), indicate that parents and adolescents will have conflicts over discipline, social interaction, and curfew, and activity choices. In the present study, 72 percent of girls indicated that they have
been given fixed time to be at home than 58 percent of boys. Boys slightly led girls on
the issue of being allowed to be at home during late hours (20 percent and 17 percent,
respectively). Such gender differences in homing time may also breed conflicts between
children and parents, more so mothers as indicated in the studies above.

Nevertheless, the present study’s findings indicated that where the fathers were in
control, there was less gender difference in parents’ control of their sons and daughters,
which was almost equal, as rated by 69 percent girls and 63 percent boys for mothers’
equal control 69 percent girls and 62 percent boys for the fathers control. Traditionally
the family had its own methods of controlling the child’s life through socially organized
activities that were vetted. The friends the child had were from well known family
backgrounds and if it came to the notice of the parents that their child was moving in the
wrong company an aunt, grandmother or some other well intentioned adult could point
the problem before it went out of hand.

Due to the geographical mobility as well as the complexities of modern living the
adolescent will find himself or herself surrounded by many people who may be bringing
with them influences that could be damaging to the adolescent. The drug peddlers
looking for new victims, the pressures towards precocious sexuality, and even induction
towards the various sexual orientations among other worrying issues. Hence there is need
to control the lives of the adolescents today more than ever before. The friends, the places
visited, and the activities adolescents engage in have to be in check.
5.1.6 Research Question Six: Is the conflict between traditional and modern parenting methods evident in the way parents make decisions regarding house keeping and child rearing in the families of the respondents studied?

The results relevant to this question are found in figures 4.20, and 4.21. The trends of the results in relation to that question reveal the following patterns:

(i) Although both parents were rated very high in their contribution in decision making in the family, the mothers were the most outstanding in decision-making, thus coming out more as authority figures in the homes of the respondents than the fathers as evidenced by 83% of the girls and 80% of the boys against the fathers rating of 74% by the girls and 75% by the boys.

(ii) In dealing with discipline mothers still ranked higher than the fathers (70 percent for girls and 59 percent for boys) than fathers (31 percent for girls and 46 percent for boys).

(iii) Regarding the control of homing time (curfew) the mothers were still ranked higher than the fathers by the girls (67 percent) for girls.

(iv) It is apparent that the fathers tend to control the boys more than the girls as indicated by the results by about half of the girls and boys as well.

(v) The mothers were ranked high in the issue of making rules in the homes as reported by 57 percent for girls and 60 percent for boys, while fathers were ranked very low by a 1/4 of the girls and a 1/3 of the boys.
These findings suggest that modern influences in the homes of the respondents were very strong. In the traditional family the father was the overall authority figure and decision maker Kenyatta (1938), Laye (1954), Ngugi (1965), and Mead (1968). The traditional trend in this issue is clearly spelled out by the various authorities as discussed in the literature review. According to Kenyatta (1938) the father was respected and obeyed by everybody. In every family the father acted as judge who settled minor disputes between the members of his family. The father maintained the traditional roles as the final authority and the disciplinarian who is respected and feared (Omari, 1982). Kenyatta depicts the mother as one who fed the children, looked after their clothing, defended them when they were in trouble and acted as the go-between them and their father. She reconciled the children and their father by doing everything she could to avoid conflict.

In Laye (1954), the father is depicted as the head of the family who is respected by all the people in the home. He gave orders and was the symbol of authority that none dared question. On the other hand, the mother was depicted as loving and strongly attached to the child, as she was responsible for protection, caring for and feeding the child. Mead (1968) on her part asserts that among the Ngoni of Malawi, the father made important decisions regarding the child’s life and showed outward manifestation of affection to the young child by carrying them about, helping them to take their first steps, teaching them how to speak correctly and sitting with them at the veranda. The father was consulted when the child fell sick and he had to make decisions what steps to take depending on the gravity of the problem.
However, due to the modernization the mother tends to be closer to the children and is more in charge of operations at home. Indeed, today the changing societies are affected by the departure of the father from the family scene leaving the mother as the parent closer to the child. The mother is depicted as the parent who is in closer physical and psychological contact with the child than the father is (Omari, 1982). She is responsible for childcare as well as being the key person who socializes the child. The father is the breadwinner who works away from the home for most of the day or the week. He is depicted as a person who is always away from home either because he is at work or has gone for leisure.

Due to modernity, the traditional calm has since disappeared and in its place unending upheaval emerged with characteristic features of a break up of the value system as new values are established and the neglect of parental duty all catalyzing the breaking up the traditional family set up (Adei & Adei, 1991). In many modern families, the status of husband and father has been greatly challenged. Many women are more economically empowered and in many homes they have silently taken over as the head of the family. Power struggles in the home have created adverse conditions for parenting (Kinai, 2002). Some researchers have found the centrality of the mother's role on the domestic situation as a major source of the child's developmental problems. This holds true particularly if the father is partially or totally missing from active child rearing activities. Lynn (1959) cites juvenile delinquency as a protest against female domination, inadequate child rearing supervision and lack of a male role model as well as the loss of family cohesion.
Gibbs (1996) emphasizes that if the mother dominates child rearing in exclusion of the father, the child suffers important deficits in development, which may manifest themselves in problems like crime, drug abuse, depression, and school failures.

According to Honing (1988), the emerging family structure has not always encouraged the fathers to be involved parents. Renowned anthropologist, Mead (1955), dismissed the father as a biological necessity but a social accident. The father is now being perceived as a luxury or as the Sunday institution. Gibbs (1996) states that fathers are not trusted to be parents as they are kept away from their children by the mother’s gate-keeping role (Allen & Hawkins, 1999). Omari (1982) explains that in many families the father is seen as distant and away from home most of the time.

The escalation of paternal deprivation is associated with the development of pathological states in the children (Gibbs, 1996). According to Fitzgerald (2004) father hunger is the primary cause of the declining well-being of children and is associated with social problems such as teenage pregnancies, child abuse and domestic violence against women. Freiberg (1996) studied the family background of young criminals and found that about 70 percent of all juveniles in the state reform institution came from fatherless homes. Also in Lynn (1956), comparison of Norwegian boys whose fathers were out at sea from nine months to two years with boys whose fathers worked and lived at home, it was found that the father absent boys were more immature and dependent and they related poorly with peers than the boys whose fathers lived at home.
Father absence also relates negatively to sex-role, moral, cognitive development including social adjustment. McLanahan and Sadefur (1994) asserted that children brought up by single parents mostly women are more likely to drop out of school, get a child out of wedlock or even develop psychiatric problems. McClelland (2001) reports that boys raised by a mother alone have a difficult time shifting away from the maternal orbit while the girl who is lacking a father is more likely to become sexually active early. Therefore, some of the many developmental problems seen in many homes are as a result of the increasing mother domination in decision making processes in the family.

It was also in the interest of this question to investigate the housekeeping roles in the family and the results obtained are presented in figure 4.21. The results of this study established the following:

(i) That mothers were ranked high with regard to housekeeping tenet of feeding children, cooking, washing clothes and cleaning the house by 68 percent of boys and 65 percent of girls, against the fathers who were reported at 14 percent by both the girls and the boys.

(ii) Mothers were ranked higher than the fathers in allocation of household duties (by 64 percent of the boys and 60 percent of the girls) against fathers who were ranked very low at 20 percent by girls and 35 percent of the boys.

(iii) Mothers were still ranked high on decisions for the type of food to be prepared (by 59 percent of the girls and 62 percent of the boys).
(iv) The children, especially girls, also ranked higher than the rest of the family members on decisions to switch on the TV (44 percent) and on the type of the TV program to be watched (44 percent). This suggests that they spent a lot more time in the house than boys did.

The above results depict the fact that mothers (and also girls) are still the chief housekeepers than the fathers (and the boys), and this suggests that the traditional housekeeping role of mothers and their daughters still prevails in the homes of the respondents of the present study.

These findings concur with most of the African writers' views regarding the traditional roles of women in most African societies. In Kenyatta (1938), *Facing Mount Kenya* children got attached to the mother because she was their nurse who kept closer contact with them than the father did. She fed the children, looked after their clothing, defended them when they were in trouble and acted as the go-between them and their father. She reconciled the children and their father by doing everything she could to avoid conflict. In circumstances where the family was polygamous the mother was the immediate head of her household. The mother assumed the responsibilities of training of young children, teaching them all things concerning domestic duties, home management, agriculture, the laws and customs of the people as well as the etiquette of the people.

Ngugi (1965), in *The River Between* depicts a sharp division of labor in which the mother's and the girl's roles are those of bringing the food stuffs home, cooking and
giving both the men and children food, while the husband and the boys brought in the cattle and goats. Issa Omari (1982), in his book *Psychology and Education in Changing Societies* also recognizes mothers as the key role model in the home. Nukunya (1992), in *Tradition and Change* asserts that traditionally there was division of labor according to the sex and age of the person. Last but not least, is Camara Laye (1954) *The African Child* who identifies the mother as loving and strongly attached to the child, as she was responsible for protection, caring for and feeding the child.

The close examination of these results seems to indicate some very interesting occurrences namely that the majority of the fathers do not seem to have evolved with the modern times as they still think that the preoccupation with the house hold duties is still the preserve of the woman. The small percentages of men who were reported to be involved with house hold duties present compliance with the demands of modernity. Perhaps this issue needs to be seen from yet another very important perspective, that is, there is still the possibility that the mothers have tightened their grip in their gate keeping role that has prevented many would be willing fathers from participation in the house keeping duties.

Perhaps due to the modern factors that are increasingly making the fathers depart from the family scene, there is no doubt that mothers still remain chief house keepers in their homes.
5.2.0 Summary of Findings

From data presentation and analysis, the following findings emerged:

(i) The demographic findings show that the majority of the students come from modern families as indicated by the large majority coming from monogamous families which is an indicator that the polygamous marriages of the past are now out of vogue.

(ii) The number of children has also reduced from what it was in the traditional setting where the family got as many children as was possible since at the time many children were desired as they were of economic importance in the home. Having many children was something to be proud of on the part of the parents. The modern families today have two to three children per family which is a major departure from the past.

(iii) The number of relatives residing among the families has also reduced. This reduction of family size may be related to the challenges of parenting in modern Kenya that discourages having many children as was the case in the past.

(iv) The emergence of small families may have been necessitated by the need to pay attention to both boys and girls in terms of giving them equal opportunities in education as well as the ever increasing cost of living in modern times which does not favor having many children or even supporting many relatives.

(v) There is still evidence that some remnants of the traditional families still exists which seems to indicate that the transition to modernity is not yet total and
which may also indicate presence of resistance to change among some pockets of the Kenyan families.

(vi) The facilities and resources of parenting have shifted from what they were in the past as the heavy presence of the electronic devices in the families indicates.

(vii) There is also evidence that children raised in the modern family set-ups do not seem to be engaged in household chores for girls and the taking care of the goats and other animals for the boys as they appear to spend a lot of their time using the electronic devices in the homes.

(viii) The engagement in out-door games and group socialization of the past seems to have disappeared and in their place modern facilities like the radio, television and other electronic gadgets which have taken center stage in the socialization of the youth. Consequently, the young people are not engaged in active leisure time activities like was the case in the past.

(ix) The role of the mother as the parent who is close to the children of both sexes has remained unchanged as she is the one in close proximity with children of both sexes these days as ever before.

(x) It may be possible that the father continues to meet many needs of children indirectly through the mother.

(xi) Both parents seem to do quite well in the meeting of the psychological and educational needs of the children. However even in this area the mothers outshine the fathers.
(xii) Parental role of educating their children has been taken over by the school system which indicates the modern trends where the parental grip on the children appears to be slipping away.

(xiii) Of the two parents, the father’s role has been the one mostly affected by modernization as he is seen to be more distant from the children in every aspect of their lives.

(xiv) In matters of discipline and conflict management, the father was the principle agent in the traditional parenting practices. In modern times however, these roles seem to have shifted to the mother who controls both boys and girls.

(xv) The traditional disciplinary methods seem to have been replaced by modern ones where the parents speak calmly to errant children as opposed to the traditional harsh disciplinary methods.

(xvi) Emergent trends are seen in the way parents are reported to praise and reward good behaviour. In the traditional parenting practices, good behaviour was demanded without much fuss about its occurrence.

(xvii) In traditional parenting practices the father was the bread winner as well as the unquestioned authority figure who was responsible for all important decisions in the home. Contrary to this position, in the emergent modern families the mother seems to have taken over from the father in matters of decision making just like she seems to have taken over every thing else in the home.

(xviii) The new trends show a shift from, the father to the mother in many areas of family life. Consequently, she seems to be over-burdened with added
responsibilities as she is still the person responsible for the running of the home over and above every thing else she has to do.

5.3.0 Implications for counseling

Some practical implications can be made from the study and applied to the field of counseling. Such information can be useful to family therapists, counselors (i.e. adolescents and school counselors) and family advisors. Several counseling issues emerged from the findings of this study. They included the following:

(i) The results established that modern family trends have rapidly replaced the traditional ones, with the majority of the respondents in the sample studied hailing from two parents or single parents' families, and having fewer relatives. This has brought the conflict of the alienation effects of modernization, which makes individual families islands where the members are marooned without the benefits of the extended family members of the traditional past. These families may have to rely heavily on the counselors so that they can learn ways of solving their problems so as to become better functioning families that assurance all members psychological health.

(ii) For disclosure needs, the presence and availability of the counselor is crucial now that the uncles and aunts are not there. The counselor is an able person who has the knowledge and skill needed to give children help and support when they are encountering the challenges emanating from modern family life.
(iii) As a result of modernization, the parents are out working for long hours away from the children who are left all alone to the influences of the media facilities that they avidly use. It may become important to let the families know of the benefits as well as the damaging influences of these gadgets. The families will benefit from the knowledge of having children engage in active leisure activities and to use this information to reduce the time children spend glued on the television.

(iv) The parents may also learn the benefits of monitoring the children’s use of these gadgets. Importantly too the parents may be advised to schedule such activities for their children as will make them learn responsibility as the sheer amount of time children spend watching television may tell of irresponsibility on the part of the adolescents.

(v) Wholesome development of children requires the involvement of both parents. As such the parents will benefit from the counseling that empowers both the father and the father to be involved parties in the parent-child shared activities as there is need to bring the father on board. There is need for the parents to know that the maternal domination in this area may be associated with unwholesome development of children as they may experience problems in the areas of sex-role development, intellectual, social, moral, emotional functioning of children.

(vi) The parents will also benefit from counseling that helps them to realize the benefits of meeting the psychological and educational needs as a team. This ensues from the fact that when the contributions of a parent, either father or
mother, are missing in the child’s life, developmental deficits occur and these are likely to be manifested outwardly as maladjusted behaviours in the child. To prevent this from occurring, the mother may learn to let go of some of her gate-keeping role in order to allow the father room to play his parenting role. The father too may have to learn the modern requirements of parenting that call for more involvement in the child’s life because the current position is one where he is the outsider while the mother and her children are the insiders in a home that is only his by name only. From counseling services the father may learn how to be a co-parent in an egalitarian relationship.

(vii) Both parents will benefit from counseling in such things as, how to manage the home harmoniously in issues to do with child discipline decision making parent-child shared activities among others. In the traditional past discipline of the home was the left in the hands of the father while the mother was involved in house keeping duties. The change over which has since occurred does not portray a good image as it is likely to result in unwholesome psychological development of children. With this in mind, the modern father needs to learn how to take up his rightful role in the discipline of his children. The father should be aware that if his continued non-involvement in the lives of his children will be continually related to a myriad of psychological problems in the family, for example, parental conflicts, maladjustment on the part of children, among others.

(viii) Counseling in regard to the increasing trends of parents discriminating against some of their children.
5.4.0 Recommendations to parents, teachers, counselors and for further research

Basing on the data analyzed, discussions and conclusions made in this study, the following recommendations are considered with regard to parents, teachers, and counselors and for further research.

(i) Parents should learn how to engage in the modern parenting behaviours that call for egalitarian relationships as well as more involvement on the part of the fathers.

(ii) Mothers on their part should tone down their maternal gate keeping roles by allowing the fathers more space in the areas of child discipline and decision making at home.

(iii) The role played by the electronic devises in the life of children should be given more focus because if the parents are not careful, they will raise a generation of children who are lazy and a consequence obese as well as highly irresponsible.

(iv) Indeed, there is a great need for the modern families to recognize that for full psychological health of the home, the father should assume his rightful position in the family.

(v) Modernity may not require the father to be the supreme authority as such, but he should be perceived to play his rightful roles by his family; that of an active participant rather than a behind the scenes operator. He should be reconstituted in the family set up.
(vi) It will be important that teachers are made aware that the problem behaviours children may display in the school may be indicative of problematic home backgrounds. Hence, they should understand and help the children to become fully functioning adults. They could also involve the parents in the counseling of the children or identify cases that need to be referred to family therapists.

(vii) The counselors too should be conversant with the lives experienced by adolescents in their homes. This will help them understand the various aspects of home life which could be the genesis of the psychological problems that adolescents display. For example, the issue of maternal domination of almost every family process, the parental absence, and the problems to do with sex-role development in children.

(viii) Counselors are also recommended to run forums that are directly aimed at helping families with the training, especially on how mothers should loosen their grip on the gate keeping roles that keep fathers away from fully participation in the family.

(ix) The mothers should for once be advised on how to start to redefine themselves from a different light. The home making and running abilities are so heavy combined with the many other preoccupations of the woman outside the home. Allowing the father to be actively involved may be a healthy practice which can have healthy psychological benefits for the entire family and which will take away some of the responsibility off mothers’ back.

(x) There is need for the establishment of centers for family education and management at provincial and district levels which should be in charge of
organizing routine seminars and workshops to promote education for effective parenting in modern Kenya.

5.4.1 Recommendations for further research

This study set out to find out if conflict exists between the traditional and modern parenting trends. Further research is therefore recommended with regard to the following issues:

(i) The relationship that may exist between the parenting behaviours explored in the current study and the psychological adjustment of adolescents in terms of their social, moral, intellectual, emotional and physical development.

(ii) It may be important to discover why the traditional disciplinary methods worked better than the contemporary ones, because even with the extensive research work done in this area, containing children in today’s world has remained elusive.

(iii) Research should reach out to the parents and find out the challenges of parenting that they experience as mothers and fathers and ways in which they can be helped.

(iv) A similar study is to be conducted using parents as respondents to gauge the correspondent value of the views of the students recorded in the present study.

(v) Need for a similar study to be done, incorporating students from schools in the rural areas to find out if the findings of this study can be corroborated.

(vi) A similar study is to be carried out using university students as sample, to see whether the findings will remain the same with increase in age and education of the children of modern Kenyan parents.
REFERENCES


Fang, S., & Wark, L. (1998). Developing cross-cultural competence with traditional therapist Chinese Americans In Family Therapy. Background information and the initial contact. *Contemporary Family Therapy*, 20,59-75


and occupations, 28,40-63.


APPENDIX I

Parenting Behaviours Questionnaire

Introduction

Every human being is born and raised in a family setting. Each family setting is different from all other family settings. Some children are raised by both parents, father and mother, while others are raised by either the father or the mother. Each child has certain feelings towards the father or the mother and also towards the family as a whole.

In this questionnaire you are requested to respond to the items truthfully. There are no wrong or right answers, so choose the responses that represent the most honest feeling towards your mother, your father and your family. Confidentiality was assured.

1. Name of your school.................................................................
2. Age in years........................................................................

3. Tick the kind of family you come from:
   - Single parent family □
   - Stepfamily □
   - Polygamous family □
   - Divorced parents □
   - Two parent family □
   - Extended family □
   - One parent has died □
   - Any other □ (please specify) ..............................................

4. How many brothers and sisters do you have?
   Number of brothers..........Number of sisters......................

5. How many relatives live with you? Males ............ Females ..............

6. Do you have the following facilities in your home?
   - Radio? Yes □ No □
   - Television? Yes □ No □
   - Video? Yes □ No □
   - Home Library? Yes □ No □
   - Newspapers? Yes □ No □
7. For how many hours do you use these facilities when you are at home?
   Monday.................hours
   Tuesday.................hours
   Wednesday.............hours
   Thursday...............hours
   Friday..................hours
   Saturday...............hours
   Sunday..................hours

8. When you are with your mother do you watch television together?
   Always □ Sometimes □ No □
   Do you listen to the radio with her?
   Always □ Sometimes □ No □
   Do you do school work with her?
   Always □ Sometimes □ No □
   Do you eat meals together with her?
   Always □ Sometimes □ No □
   Do you go out for leisure activities with her? E.g. go to the movie, go for a walk, and visit friends, with her?
   Always □ Sometimes □ No □
   Do you share in talks with your mother?
   Always □ Sometimes □ No □

9. When you are spending time with your father do you watch television with him?
   Always □ Sometimes □ No □
   Listen to the radio with him?
   Always □ Sometimes □ No □
   Do you do school work with him?
   Always □ Sometimes □ No □
   Do you eat meals with him?
   Always □ Sometimes □ No □
   Do you go for leisure activities with him?
   Always □ Sometimes □ No □
   Do you share in general talks with him?
   Always □ Sometimes □ No □
10. Do you feel that your mother loves you a lot?
   Always □  Sometimes □  No □

11. Do you feel that your father loves you a lot?
   Always □  Sometimes □  No □

12. Do you think your mother provides for your needs well?
   Always □  Sometimes □  No □

13. Do you think your father provides for your needs well?
   Always □  Sometimes □  No □

14. Do you feel that your mother favors other children and discriminates against you?
   Always □  Sometimes □  No □

15. Do you think that your father favours other children and discriminates against you?
   Always □  Sometimes □  No □

16. Do you think your mother spends enough time with you?
   Always □  Sometimes □  No □

17. Do you think your father spends enough time with you?
   Always □  Sometimes □  No □

18. Do you feel your mother cares for your welfare very much?
   Always □  Sometimes □  No □

19. Do you feel your father cares for your welfare very much?
   Always □  Sometimes □  No □

20. When children misbehave different parents have their own methods of dealing with them. How does your mother deal with you?

   She punishes you?
   Always □  Sometimes □  No □

   She scolds you?
   Always □  Sometimes □  No □

   She talks to you calmly?
   Always □  Sometimes □  No □

   She ignores you?
   Always □  Sometimes □  No □
21. When you misbehave, how does your father behave towards you?

He punishes you?
Always □ Sometimes □ No □

He scolds you?
Always □ Sometimes □ No □

He talks to you calmly?
Always □ Sometimes □ No □

He ignores you?
Always □ Sometimes □ No □

22. When children engage in good behaviour, different parents have their own ways of treating them. How does your mother treat you when you have done something good?

She rewards you?
Always □ Sometimes □ No □

She praises you?
Always □ Sometimes □ No □

She ignores you?
Always □ Sometimes □ No □

23. When you do something good, how does your father treat you?

He rewards you?
Always □ Sometimes □ No □

He praises you?
Always □ Sometimes □ No □

He ignores you?
Always □ Sometimes □ No □

24. Sometimes brothers and sisters disagree with each other and fight. When you disagree with any of your brothers or sisters does your mother allow you to settle your own disputes?

Always □ Sometimes □ No □

25. Does your father allow you to settle your own disputes?
Always □ Sometimes □ No □
26. As a small child did your mother encourage you to fight back if other children bullied you?

Always □  Sometimes □  No □

27. Did your father encourage you to fight back if other children bullied you?

Always □  Sometimes □  No □

28. When you arrive home for your holiday or when your mother comes to visit you in school, Does she hug you?

Always □  Sometimes □  No □

Does she kiss you?

Always □  Sometimes □  No □

Does she play with you?

Always □  Sometimes □  No □

29. Does your father hug you?

Always □  Sometimes □  No □

Does he kiss you?

Always □  Sometimes □  No □

Does he play with you?

Always □  Sometimes □  No □

30. When you are at home during the holidays who decide what food will be prepared for the family to eat?

Yourself?

Always □  Sometimes □  No □

Your mother?

Always □  Sometimes □  No □

Your Father?

Always □  Sometimes □  No □

31. Who decides what time television should be watched?

Yourself?

Always □  Sometimes □  No □

Your mother?
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<th></th>
<th>Always</th>
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<td>Your father?</td>
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<td>32. Who decides what television programmes should be watched? Yourself?</td>
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<td>Always</td>
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<td>33. Who allocates the household duties you should do?</td>
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<td>Yourself?</td>
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<td>34. When there are issues in the family that need discussion, does your mother involve you in the discussion and decision-making?</td>
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<td>Always</td>
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<td>Does your father involve you in the discussion and decision-making?</td>
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<td>Always</td>
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<td>35. When there are issues that need disciplining, e.g. punishment, does your mother deal with it alone?</td>
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<td>Always</td>
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<td>Does your father deal with it alone?</td>
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<td>36. Each family has rules for example what time the family should wake up, when meals are served, allocation of duties like who should wash clothes, clean dishes, clean the house and cook. In your family, your mother makes these rules?</td>
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<td>Always</td>
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<td>Does you father make these rules?</td>
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</table>
37. In your family does your mother participate in child rearing duties, for example, feeding small children, cooking for the family, washing clothes, cleaning the house?
   Always ☐   Sometimes ☐   No ☐

38. Does your father feed small children, cook for the family, wash clothes or clean the house?
   Always ☐   Sometimes ☐   No ☐

In your family is there a fixed time when family members should sit and eat meals together?
   Always ☐   Sometimes ☐   No ☐

Do your parents sit with the children and eat meals together? Mother eats with us children.
   Always ☐   Sometimes ☐   No ☐

   Father eats with us children?
   Always ☐   Sometimes ☐   No ☐

In your family is there a fixed time when you must be home in the evening?
   Always ☐   Sometimes ☐   No ☐

   Who determines the time you must be at home in the evening? Myself?
   Always ☐   Sometimes ☐   No ☐

Mother does
   Always ☐   Sometimes ☐   No ☐

   Father does
   Always ☐   Sometimes ☐   No ☐

39. In your family who set the rules regarding how the family should dress?
   Mother does it.
   Always ☐   Sometimes ☐   No ☐

   Father does it.
   Always ☐   Sometimes ☐   No ☐

40. Who controls the kind of language family members use e.g. not to use insulting languages? To be respectful to others.
   Mother does this.
   Always ☐   Sometimes ☐   No ☐

   Father does this.
41. In your own opinion do you think that your mother plays her roles as a mother adequately well?
   Always ☐  Sometimes ☐  No ☐

42. Do you think that your father plays his role adequately well as a father?
   Always ☐  Sometimes ☐  No ☐

43. Does mother issue a threat and follow it?
   Always ☐  Sometimes ☐  No ☐

44. Does mother expect strict obedience from you?
   Always ☐  Sometimes ☐  No ☐

45. Does mother control the friends you keep?
   Always ☐  Sometimes ☐  No ☐

46. Does mother control the places and people you go visiting?
   Always ☐  Sometimes ☐  No ☐

47. In your family, are there rules that dictate the friends you should keep?
   Yes ☐  Sometimes ☐  No ☐

48. If there are rules dictating the friends you should keep and those you should not keep who enforces these rules?
   Mother does it
   Yes ☐  Sometimes ☐  No ☐

   Father does it
   Yes ☐  Sometimes ☐  No ☐

49. Who controls the friends you visit?
50. Who controls the friends who visit you?
   Mother does.
   Yes  ☐  Sometimes  ☐  No  ☐
   Father does.
   Yes  ☐  Sometimes  ☐  No  ☐

51. In your family are you allowed to be out late at night?
   Yes  ☐  Sometimes  ☐  No  ☐

52. Who checks on your school progress?
   Mother does.
   Yes  ☐  Sometimes  ☐  No  ☐
   Father does.
   Yes  ☐  Sometimes  ☐  No  ☐

53. When your academic performance is good, who rewards you?
   Mother does.
   Yes  ☐  Sometimes  ☐  No  ☐
   Father does.
   Yes  ☐  Sometimes  ☐  No  ☐

54. When you academic performance has declined or is poor, who scolds you?
   Mother does.
   Yes  ☐  Sometimes  ☐  No  ☐
   Father does.
   Yes  ☐  Sometimes  ☐  No  ☐

55. When your academic performance has declined, who encourages you to try harder?
   Mother does.
   Yes  ☐  Sometimes  ☐  No  ☐
   Father does.
   Yes  ☐  Sometimes  ☐  No  ☐

56. When there are school meetings in your school, who attends?
Mother does.  
Yes [ ]  Sometimes [ ]  No [ ]

Father does  
Yes [ ]  Sometimes [ ]  No [ ]

57. When you are having difficulties with your school life whom do you discuss your problems with?
With my mother.  
Yes [ ]  Sometimes [ ]  No [ ]

With my father.  
Yes [ ]  Sometimes [ ]  No [ ]

58. Do you discuss your personal problems with your father?
Yes [ ]  Sometimes [ ]  No [ ]

With your mother?  
Yes [ ]  Sometimes [ ]  No [ ]

59. Do you discuss sex matters with your mother?
Yes [ ]  Sometimes [ ]  No [ ]

With your father?  
Yes [ ]  Sometimes [ ]  No [ ]

60. Does your mother share the following problems with you:  
When she is experiencing financial difficulties?
Yes [ ]  Sometimes [ ]  No [ ]

When she is experiencing problems with your father does she discuss them with you?
Yes [ ]  Sometimes [ ]  No [ ]

When she is experiencing difficulties with her friends, does she discuss them with you?
Yes [ ]  Sometimes [ ]  No [ ]

61. Does your father share the following problems with you?
When he is experiencing financial difficulties?
Yes [ ]  Sometimes [ ]  No [ ]

When he is experiencing problems with your mother does he discuss them with you?
Yes [ ]  Sometimes [ ]  No [ ]
When he is experiencing problems with his friends does he discuss them with you?
Yes □ Sometimes □ No □

62. In your family, does your mother control boys more than girls?
Yes □ Sometimes □ No □

Does she control boys and girls equally?
Yes □ Sometimes □ No □

Does she control girls more than boys?
Yes □ Sometimes □ No □

63. In your family does your father control girls more than boys?
Yes □ Sometimes □ No □

Does he control both boys and girls equally?
Yes □ Sometimes □ No □

THANK YOU