Abstract

Growing in conflict ridden family is very distressing to the members because it angers them and interferes with their interpersonal relationships. These conflicts trigger gender based violence (GBV), such as husbands beating their wives and parents battering their children. Harsh, cruel parents are hostile and need little provocation to be violent to their spouses and children. When adolescents demand for autonomy it is usually met with such parents’ resistance. They are more restrictive to their daughters than to their sons. Moreover, misbehaviour for boys and girls is treated differently, parents to tend to be more punitive to the girls than to the boys. Objectives of the study were: (i) Investigate adolescents’ perceptions their parents’ child rearing practices or parenting styles. (ii) Find out which family interactions are likely to trigger GBV. (iii) Establish whether parental monitoring their adolescents’ whereabouts, social contacts and handling the teenagers’ ideas and judgments may be associated with GBV. Participants were 672 stratified and randomly selected students from 6 secondary schools in Nairobi County. They responded to a questionnaire to collect data on the variables of the study. Findings showed adolescents’ perceptions of their parents’ child rearing styles to be: from 63.2% authoritative, 17.4% permissive, 14.5% disorganized, and 1.6% from uninvolved or neglecting parents. Approximately 44.8% adolescents experienced GBV due to conflicts on clothing and hair styles, 6.9% adolescents suffered GBV during family conflicts and 6.2% were victims of GBV when parents disagreed on family rules. Parents were more punitive to girls than boys. Intervention is necessary to suppress GBV and to educate parents to maintain harmonious family interactions and good relations with their children.