

**INFLUENCE OF PARENTING STYLES ON DELINQUENCY AMONG JUVENILES  
IN REHABILITATION CENTRES IN NAKURU TOWN, KENYA**

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A Research Project Report Submitted to Graduate school in Partial Fulfilment of the  
Requirements for the Award of the Degree of Master of Arts in Guidance and Counselling of  
Egerton University

**EGERTON UNIVERSITY**

**JANUARY, 2015**

## **DECLARATION AND RECOMMENDATION**

### **Declaration**

This research project report is my original work and has not been presented for an award of a degree in this or any other university.

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### **Recommendation**

This research project report has been submitted for examination with my approval as University Supervisor.

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## **DEDICATION**

This work is dedicated to my adoring wife and children for their love, encouragement and understanding throughout the study. To my loving mother who always inspired me to overcome challenges and remain focused. Lastly, to God Almighty who is the source of all wisdom and knowledge for granting me unfailing health.

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## ABSTRACT

Families are one of the strongest socializing forces in life. They teach children to control unacceptable behaviour, to delay gratification, and to respect the rights of others. Conversely, families can teach children aggressive, antisocial, and violent behaviour. The study aimed at determining the influence of parenting styles on delinquency among juveniles in rehabilitation centres in Nakuru town, Kenya. The *ex post facto* research design was applied since the Juveniles have already left their homes. The study was conducted in the Juvenile Institutions in Nakuru town, Kenya. Nakuru town has three juvenile delinquent institutions composed of 209 juveniles. The sample size of 161 juveniles aged between ten to nineteen years was drawn from the three institutions. Purposive sampling method was used in selecting these Juvenile Institutions. The researcher administered questionnaire to the juvenile delinquents in order to collect information on their previous parental experiences. Validity of the instruments was verified using expert opinion while the reliability was measured using a pilot study at Molo Probation and Aftercare Centre. Cronbach's Alpha method was applied to test internal consistency of the instrument. A reliability coefficient of 0.707 was realised. Descriptive statistics frequency tables and percentages were used to analyse data with the aid of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 16 for windows. Results revealed that parenting styles influence juvenile delinquency. Parents need to adopt authoritative parenting style, high in warmth and high in control, in order to reduce juvenile delinquency trends. Parents need to spend more time with their children and encourage interpersonal communication. The findings from the researcher suggest further research on the influence of modern society on juvenile delinquency.

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## **LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS**

GoK- Government of Kenya

SPSS- Statistical Package for Social Sciences

UNICEF- United Nations Child Education Fund

## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 Background of the Study

Many Parents struggle on how to appropriately raise their child in the best manner in a contemporary society. Baumrind (1993) asserts that a parenting style is a psychological construct representing standard strategies that parents use in their child rearing. There are various differing theories and opinions on the best ways to rear children, as well as differing levels of time and effort that parents are willing to invest. Parental investment starts soon after birth. This includes the process of birth, breast-feeding, affirming the value of the baby's cry as the parent. O'Connor (2002), argues that many parents create their own style from a combination of factors, and these may evolve over time as the children develop their own personalities and move through life's stages. Parenting style is affected by both the parents' and children's temperaments, and is largely based on the influence of one's own parents and culture. Most parents learn parenting practices from their own parents — some they accept, some they discard depending on how the parents related to their children.

According to Brown and Brown (2006), in England 70% of juveniles in state operated institutions came from fatherless homes. This pattern of juvenile crime ranges from robbery, assault, rape and homicide. Prevalence rates show a sharp rise from the mid 80's and 90's about 50% to the year 2000 85% of crime (McLeod, 2012). In America legislative laws govern the parental responsibility; this includes the physical supervision, preventing the child from hurting themselves and others; the media supervision that protects the child from violent and pornographic imagery which may challenge their value system. For instance internet has content control software that censors obscene materials from juvenile consumption. A child found in the street is picked up by police or other citizen and followed up to their home to establish the real cause of being in the street. Heaven and Newbury (2004) assert that in Europe the process of divorce and separation is clearly spelt out by the couples conceding to a consent decree where they provide adequate financial support, child custody for one partner and visiting rights for the other where separation is imminent all these cushion the child against the effects of marital turbulence. Besides, there are various state run organisations and civil society groups that deal with marital and children rights. All these efforts are aimed at ensuring that children are not left to suffer indignation due to parental differences. Amazingly, in Japan, juvenile offender cases can be dismissed without hearing and the matter

handled at family level. Suffice to say, delinquency is a global problem but with proper family structures this situation can be alleviated

In Africa, the rate of juvenile delinquency is quite evident. Baumrind (1993) argues that the main contributing factor to delinquency in Africa is poverty and domestic violence. However, this can be challenged as some parents who are poor have managed to raise up functional families while some children from rich families end up as delinquents. In a violent society such as South Africa children learn that violence is an acceptable solution for problems. Together with an adverse economic situation, including unemployment, poverty and availability of guns, this resulted in South Africa being increasingly confronted with youthful criminals. The idealised image of the 'happy family' is also a social myth. Research shows that domestic violence is on the increase and that annually nearly three million children experience domestic violence (Fleisher, 1995). By a process of socializing with violence the child identifies with his or her violent parent and the child learns that violence provides an acceptable solution to problems.

In Kenya, there are 12 Children's Remand Homes all under the department of Children's services. According to Nakuru Probation Centre 2012 annual report, the remand homes in Kenya handled 1490, 3224 and 3340 children in 2005, 2006 and 2007 respectively. On the other hand, the children rehabilitation schools handled 2362, 1164 and 2490 children in 2005, 2006 and 2007 respectively (GoK, 2009). According to country response to Children Rescue Committee 44<sup>th</sup> session, 5113 children were involved in crime in 2005. Out of these, only 3,500 were handled by the remand institutions due to capacity constraints (GoK and UNICEF, 2006). An increasing trend is that children are being remanded in children remand homes in Kenya. Delinquency in children is as a result of various factors namely: poverty, broken homes, lack of education and employment opportunities, migration, drug or substance misuse, peer pressure, lack of parental guidance, violence, abuse and exploitation.

Nakuru Town, situated in Nakuru County of Kenya has two probation centres and one Juvenile Remand Home. Many puzzling questions have lingered on whom to blame on this rising trend. Can anything be done to arrest this sombre situation? Most of the studies that have been done have focused on theories of delinquency and the criminal justice system. They have proposed curative measures as opposed to preventive interventions. A survey done seven years ago by Mugo, Kang'ethe and Musembi (2006) recommended that there is need for a paradigm shift from curative to preventive measures or interventions. If the causes of juvenile delinquency were established, it can contribute greatly towards contributing to

prevention of delinquency if the right awareness is created. Family dysfunction could impede development as well as bringing in a lot of stress to the same family members. If the above trend continues, then we may end up having economic stagnation as well as wiping out the family unit, which is the foundation of protection, care and training of children. To prevent delinquency, the family needs to be preserved.

This study therefore aimed at establishing the influence of parenting styles on juvenile delinquency in Nakuru town. It focuses on how a dysfunctional family contributes to juvenile delinquency. The ability of a family to hold together in times of adversity helps in cushioning the children against delinquency trends. Henslin (1994) maintains that a significant consequence of broken homes is that children from them are more likely to become involved in delinquency and crime. The delinquency and crime of these children make them to be removed from their homes and local schools for residential treatment since their behaviour is considered criminal in nature.

### **1.2 Statement of the Problem.**

The perennial problem of juvenile delinquency has deeply affected the normal functioning of the society. Today, Parents, who bear the greatest responsibility in mentoring and raising their children, are not prepared for parenting obligations and they are not fully committed to their parenting roles. This is due to economic hardships that deprive them of quality family time and the cosmopolitan nature of modern society where people are unconcerned with others. When parents fail in their parenting responsibility then a family of delinquents is born that will engage in crime and disturb social order in order to survive. If this trend continues the society becomes an unsafe place to live in. Therefore, there is need to establish the influence of parenting styles on the juvenile delinquency.

### **1.3 Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study was to determine the influence of parenting styles on delinquency among juveniles in rehabilitation centres in Nakuru town, Kenya

#### **1.4 Objectives of the study**

The objectives of the study were:

- i. To establish the influence of Authoritarian Parenting Style experienced by juvenile delinquents in Rehabilitation Centres of Nakuru town.
- ii. To determine the influence of Authoritative Parenting Style experienced by juvenile delinquents in Rehabilitation Centres of Nakuru town.
- iii. To determine the influence of Permissive Parenting Style experienced by juvenile delinquents in Rehabilitation Centres of Nakuru town.
- iv. To establish the influence of Neglectful Parenting Style experienced by juvenile delinquents in Rehabilitation Centres of Nakuru town.

#### **1.5 Research Questions**

This study was aimed at answering the following research questions:

- i. What is the influence of Authoritative Parenting Style to the juvenile delinquents in Rehabilitation Centres of Nakuru town?
- ii. What is the influence of Authoritarian Parenting Style to the juvenile delinquents in Rehabilitation Centres of Nakuru town?
- iii. What is the influence of Permissive Parenting Style to the juvenile delinquents in Rehabilitation Centres of Nakuru town?
- iv. What is the influence of Authoritative Parenting Style to the juvenile delinquents in Rehabilitation Centres of Nakuru town?

#### **1.6 Significance of the Study**

The study is significant since it may add insight to the existing body of knowledge on the extent to which parenting styles contribute of juvenile delinquency. It may also provide useful information to the policy makers in the Ministry of Education and Ministry of Home Affairs in the development of appropriate interventions to address juvenile delinquency. It may be useful to the service providers within the criminal justice system such as the police,



children officers, probation officers as well as social workers, parents and the larger community on the proper parenting and disciplining of the children.

### **1.7 Scope of the Study**

The study was carried out to examine the influence of parenting styles on juvenile delinquency in Nakuru town. It targeted both male and female genders in the juvenile institutions. These are Nakuru Juvenile Remand Home, Nakuru Girls Probation Hostel and Nakuru District Probation Centre. These institutions were appropriate for the study as they are a home to a large number of juvenile delinquents in Nakuru town.

### **1.8 Limitations of the Study**

- i. Some of the respondents were afraid to disclose what happened and were nostalgic of their home situation. The researcher dealt with this limitation by assuring the respondents orally before administering the research instrument the anonymity and confidentiality of their shared information. The research instrument introduction also emphasized confidentiality, anonymity and the purpose of the study.
- ii. The study did not manage to get information from other family members, managers of these schools and teachers of these children. The findings of this study should be generalized with caution

### **1.9 Assumptions of the Study**

This study was based on the assumption that;

- i. All the respondents will give accurate and honest responses.
- ii. The findings and suggested solutions can contribute to effective parenting, planning and implementations of parenting programmes.

### **1.10 Definitions of Terms.**

The following are the terms used in this research

**Authoritarian Parenting:** Children are expected to follow the strict rules established by parents' failure to which results in punishment with little or no warmth

In this study, these are parents who prefer to utilize punishment and control more than love and understanding to their children. They are high in control and low in warmth. They are also referred to as autocratic parents.

**Authoritative Parenting:** Parents who set clear guidelines on their expectations and are responsive and nurturing to their children

For the purpose of this study, these are parents who are high in control and high in warmth. Also known as democratic parents, they are willing to listen and negotiate with their children

**Communication:** The ability to share ideas, thoughts and feelings with one another person

This is the process of parents unequivocally informing their children what their expectations are and listening to children concerns and perspectives.

**Discipline:** To teach a child to obey rules and codes of behaviour, using punishment to correct disobedience.

It's the parental way of correcting the behaviour of their errant child

**Dysfunctional Family:** A family where conflict and misbehaviour occur continually and regularly leading other members to accommodate such actions

A family where there is no clear flow of authority and communication from the parents to the children and vice versa. As a result, children among themselves as well as parents and children are in constant conflict

**Child Neglect:** This is the failure to provide child's basic needs

It refers to parents who fail to meet their parental responsibilities and are absent from home.

**Crime:** An illegal act in which one can be punished by the government

These are illegal activities committed by children individually or in groups

**Family:** A basic social unit consisting of parent(s) and their children

**Functional Family:** A family that has order and harmony; where there's proper flow of authority.

A family where children know and follow parental expectations and parents fulfil their parental obligations

**Gender:** A behaviour, culture or psychological characteristic typically associated with one sex.

The psychological construct between the boys and the girls that enables them to be resilience to parental upbringing

**Indulgent Parenting:** Parents who rarely discipline their children because they have low expectations of them

These are parents who are high in warmth but low in control. Also known as permissive parenting, they tend to meet the wants of their children to please them or to cover up for their parental failures

**Influence:** The process of producing effects on the behaviours or thoughts of a child

The different forces mainly from parents that affect children directly or indirectly as they grow up

**Juvenile:** A Person under the age of 18 years.

**Juvenile Delinquency:** This is participation in illegal behaviour by individuals younger than statutory age

**Neglectful Parenting:** Lack of attention to the basic needs of a child.

These are parents who are low in warmth and low in control. Also referred to as uninvolved parenting, these are parents who are detached from their families.

**Parent:** An organism that reproduces another

This is the biological father or the mother of a child or one who is responsible for the child's upbringing

**Parenting Styles:** Different ways of bringing up a child

**Punishment:** To impose a penalty on a child for a fault, offence, or violation of certain regulation.

It's the inflicting of pain on a child for the mistakes committed or failures made with the view of correcting and deterring the behaviour.

**Rehabilitation:** The process of restoring one back to useful life

These are the efforts undertaken mainly through correctional facilities to reform a juvenile delinquent back to productive life

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.1 Introduction**

The model or style that parents employ depends partly on how they themselves were reared, what they consider good parenting, the child's temperament, their current environmental situation, and whether they place more importance on their own needs or whether they are striving to further their child's future success. Moffit (2006) asserts that one of the biggest effects on parenting is socio-economic status, in reference with ethnicity and culture as well. For example, living in a dangerous neighborhood could make parents more authoritarian due to fear of their environment.

#### **2.2 Parenting Styles**

Parents are interested in trying to find effective, practical strategies for child rearing. Martin and Colbert (1997) suggest that parents evolve a style of interaction with their children based on two dimensions: parental warmth or responsiveness and parental control or demand. Based on these two major dimensions of responsiveness (warmth) and demand (control), Baumrind (1993) identified four main patterns of parenting namely: authoritative, authoritarian, permissive and neglectful. In general, high levels of support and warmth are associated with low levels of delinquency and that low levels of support or even rejection are linked to high levels of delinquency.

##### **2.2.1 Authoritarian Parenting**

In authoritarian parenting, parents are high in control but low in warmth. Martin and Colbert (1997) maintain that authoritarian parents have an absolute set of standards and expect obedience without any questions or comments; they are highly demanding, controlling and punitive, they often use forceful measures to control behaviour. They tend to be in the working class and teach their children to respect authority, work, order and traditional structure. Though not all working class parents fit this description, it should be noted that even jobless parents may be authoritative mainly provoked by job search frustrations. They are not responsive to their children's needs and project little warmth and supportiveness. Suffice to say, the verbal give and take is not encouraged and parents make all decisions.

Autocratic control produces a combination of rebellion and dependency. Such children are taught to be submissive, to obey and to be dependent upon the parents. They less often do not show initiative and or autonomy nor do they show adult independence. Such adolescents

are more hostile to their parents, deeply resent their control and domination and less often identify with them. When they succeed in challenging parental authority, youths become rebellious, overtly aggressive and hostile especially if discipline has been harsh and unfair and administered without love and affection. Those who rebel often leave home as soon as they can and some of them are likely to become delinquents. Macie (2003) argue that both the meeker and stronger children show emotional disturbance and have more problems. Children who are routinely treated in an authoritarian way tend to be moody, unhappy, fearful, withdrawn, un-spontaneous and irritable. According to Moffit (2006) authoritarian parenting is associated with children social incompetence, such children are often anxious about social comparison, fail to initiate activity and have poor communications skills. Authoritarian parents have strict standards and discourage expressions of disagreement.

In the autocratic style, parents make all decisions without asking the opinions of their adolescents. Autocratic parents are the most resented by adolescents. Such adolescents with highly dominant parents are much more likely to feel unwanted and to consider their parents unreasonable. Autocratic parenting always induces either dependences or low self-confidence. Adolescents with autocratic parents are less likely to conform to rules of conduct in the absence of parental surveillance. Autocratic parenting can produce either compliance or rebellion in adolescents. Restrictive parenting discourages creativity in children. Authoritarian behaviour is generally perceived as dictatorial and adolescents are less responsive to authoritarianism. Wissink and Meijer (2006) argue that adolescents who perceive their parents as either very strict or very permissive tend to be less close to their parents and are more rebellious than youth with democratic parents. Authoritarian families emphasize on preventing children from behaving unacceptably and respecting authority. The emotional tone of the family is often cold and rejecting. Such children may end up by rebelling or developing maladjusted behaviour. Ngwiri (2008) agrees that authoritarian parents bring up children who run away from home and school, are fearful and angry, are aggressive and fight at the slightest opportunity, are bullies irritable and underachievers. There is need to be moderate in rewarding and punishing the children in a firm yet a loving way. This is the authoritative parenting.

### **2.2.2 Authoritative Parenting**

In authoritative (democratic) parenting, parents are high in control and high in warmth; these nurturing yet demanding parents set clear standards that are developmentally reasonable and then enforce them by setting limits. Martin and Corbert (1997) maintain that warmth, affection and explanation are also part of this democratic approach, which is respectful of the

rights and needs of both parents and children. Children of authoritative parents tend to be socially competent, energetic, friendly and curious. Authoritative parents are demanding and controlling but also responsive and supportive. They encourage autonomy and self-reliance and tend to use discipline. They encourage verbal- give and take and believe that the child has rights. They expect discipline conformity but don't intimidate the child with heavy-handed restrictions. They are open to discussing and changing rules in particular situations when the need arises. Moffit (2006) contend that healthy child development is likely in authoritative family setting where parents combine nurturance and discipline. Children from authoritative household have better psychosocial development, higher school grades, greater self-reliance and lower levels of delinquent behaviour than children raised in authoritarian or permissive homes.

In a democratic home, decisions are made jointly by parents and adolescents; this has the most positive effect upon adolescent. Parental concern expresses itself through guidance but also encourages individual responsibility, decision making, initiative and autonomy. Similarly, Mc Cart and Priester (2006) agree that adolescents should be involved in making their own decisions while listening to and discussing the reasoned explanations of parents. Adolescents are encouraged to detach themselves gradually from the family. This home atmosphere is one of respect, appreciation, warmth, fairness and consistency of discipline as associated with conforming, trouble-free non delinquent behaviour. In a democratic home, both the adolescents and parents contribute freely to discussion of relevant issues, but the final decision in one which is made by the parents or meets with their approval. Adolescents of democratic parents are most likely to identify with their approval. Adolescents of democratic parents are likely to identify with their parents. They are much more confident in their ideas and opinions and independent in decision-making particularly if the parents explained, rather than merely enacted the rules. Children of such parents are the most highly motivated academically. Democratic parents are considered the most fair. The parents who encourage their children to be independent but still retain an interest in/and responsibility for the young person's decisions are the most likely to produce autonomous, well-adjusted adolescents. Authoritative behaviour is firm and sometimes commanding but does not carry dictatorial overtones. Authoritative parents have firm boundaries and expectations for their children's behaviour. Such parents realize their responsibility is to be authority figures, but they are also responsive to the special needs and abilities of their children. Behaviours that are typical of authoritative relatively democratic families have emerged repeatedly in research findings in connection with what is considered "healthy" or "normal" behaviour in

adolescence. Macie (2003) attests that adolescents from authoritative family environments are typically more positive and responsible in their behaviour and lower in drug use and psychological problems than adolescents from other types of families. Adolescents from authoritarian families were also low in drug use but were less competent and pro-social than those from authoritative families. Adolescents from neglectful families show the lowest levels of competence and highest likelihood of behavioural and psychological problems including drugs use. This is because they yearn for an identity that was deprived at home which they subsequently find easily among their peers. Parents are also faced with an imminent danger of providing all the children demands leading to permissive or indulgent parenting which is injurious to the children too.

### **2.2.3 Permissive Parenting**

Permissive parents are high in warmth but low in control. These parents are generally non-controlling and non-threatening and therefore allow children to regulate their own behaviour. They are nurturing but avoid making demands on the child. Martin and Colbert (1997) conclude that the problem is too much freedom is developmentally inappropriate for young children as it encourages behaviour that is more impulsive and aggressive; such parents give children lax or inconsistent direction and although warm, require little of them. They may not provide clear guidelines appropriate to the age and experience of the adolescent. Ngwiri (2008) affirms that in these families, there are no rules and regulations and children do as they wish. The adolescence has more influence in making decisions than does the parent. The adolescents receive very little guidance and direction, few restrictions from parents and are expected to decide things for themselves. If overindulged, but not guided or properly socialized, the pampered adolescent will not be prepared to accept frustrations of responsibility or show proper regards for others with whom they associate. They often become domineering, self-centred and selfish, and get in trouble with those who would not pamper them the way their parents have. Without limits on their behaviour, they often feel insecure, disoriented and uncertain. If they interpret the parent's lack of concern, such children become immature, moody and dependent and have low self-control.

Permissive parents make few demands and rarely use force of power to achieve their child-rearing goals. Uninvolved parenting is low in control and low in warmth. This parent is believed to be the most unsuccessful. It consists of extremely lax, un-controlling parents who have either rejected their children or don't have the time or energy for children because of their own life problems and stresses. Modern parents find themselves at a disadvantaged position in this era of Information Technology where uncensored information has filtered



every fibre in the society. Parents have been left helpless in this regard not to mention the knowledge of operating these gadgets. Since most parents did not have the opportunity of accessing these telecommunication devices in their prime days they have given up on the battle and resigned to fate. The message these parents give is uncaring and naïve, children respond by becoming resentful and hostile. Moffitt (2006) asserts that children of uninvolved parents tend to be lacking both socially and academically. This is the onset of social ills in society as they feel society has relegated and forgot them altogether and hence the desire to reaffirm their recognition. In a similar way, children of neglectful parents are more likely to engage in delinquent antisocial acts during adolescence.

#### **2.2.4 Neglectful Parenting**

Neglectful parents are uninvolved in the child's life. This style is associated with the child's social incompetence especially lack of self-control. Halonen and Santrock (1999) postulate that neglected children tend to show poor self-control and do not handle independence well; they are erratic. In this style, control is inconsistent, sometimes authoritarian, democratic or permissive. Erratic, inconsistent parental control has negative effect upon adolescence. Lacking clear, definite guidelines, they become confused and insecure. Such youths show evidence of antisocial, delinquent behaviour. Adolescents who receive inconsistent discipline and whose parents disagree in their expectations of them are more externally than internally oriented in their behaviour meaning that they show less control and therefore need more external control of their behaviour.

In, permissive parenting, parents are uninvolved with their children, place few demands or restrictions on them. This is associated with children social incompetence especially lack of self-control. Halonen and Santrock (1999) agree that since children do what they want, the children never learn to control their own behaviour and always get their way, they never learn respect for others and have difficulty controlling their behaviour positive parenting involves interactions between parents and child that have positive effects in interpersonal, academic and work skills for the child and that reinforce conventional values and norms. Positive parenting requires a consistent approach to the child as well as positive feedback when the child behaves as desired. To prevent delinquency therefore, parents need to use appropriate parenting styles. Aspects of parental control such as normative regulation, monitoring and punishment have the same impact on delinquency as parental attachment. Of central concern is the manner in which the parent effects out the punishment and discipline to the errant children.

### **2.3 Discipline and Punishment**

Discipline and punishment involves helping children see the possible consequence of their actions, helping them learn self-control and helping them find alternatives to unacceptable behaviours. Children must learn that discipline and self-control is not innate. Mulford and Redding (2008) recommend non-physical methods of punishment that have better long term results such as removing temptation for misbehaviour, making rules simple, being consistent, setting a good example, praising good behaviour and disciplining with love instead of anger. Some believe corporal punishment is damaging and increases a child's risk of developing problems because it is frequently administered inconsistently and is accompanied by parental disregard or disinterest in the child general well-being. Corporal punishment, however, may not have a negative psychological effect if the child perceives the punishment as just, not harsh and administered by a caregiver who is affectionate and loving. Harsh physical punishment is associated with more disciplinary problems and aggression. Discipline has the most effect when it is accomplished primarily through clear, verbal explanations to develop internal controls rather than through external, physical means of controls; when it is fair and avoids harsh punitive measures and when it is democratic rather than autocratic. Macie (2003) argues succinctly that effective discipline measures involve rewards, joint decision-making when possible, consistent parenting, special times together and parental supervision or monitoring of children. Discipline should be consistent. Erratic parental expectations lead to an ambiguous environment and also to poor learning, anxiety, confusion, inability, restlessness, disobedience and sometimes hostility and delinquency in the adolescent. Inconsistent discipline is significantly more common among parents of aggressive hostile youths. The combination of a harsh restrictive father and an overindulgent, lenient mother is especially damaging. If parents are inconsistent, harsh and rejecting, the effect is more damaging. Depending on the nature of level of warmth and control adopted by the parents the children may end up as morally upright persons or delinquents.

### **2.4 Juvenile Delinquency**

Juvenile delinquency crimes are typically classified into two categories, overt and covert delinquency. Overt juvenile delinquency refers to violent offences such as attacking someone with or without a weapon, threatening, murder and rape. Covert juvenile delinquency refers to non-aggressive actions such as shoplifting; pick pocketing, arson, vandalism and selling drugs. Overt aggressive and more serious offences are more common in early onset delinquents. Moffit and Caspi (2001) contend that delinquents are furthermore characterized by problems in their childhood such as poor family functions. They lacked a solid role model

that would secure their base as they grew up facing life's turbulence. This implies that there is a stronger link between poor parenting and overt delinquency compared to covert delinquency. Loeber et al (2008) studied antecedents of violence and theft and found many unique factors that differentially predicted violence and theft especially at old age. This shows a direct moderation on parenting delinquency link. Parenting –delinquency association may be different because family members experience their interaction differently and therefore have dissimilar views on parenting and parent child relation (Lanz et al, 2001). Adolescents tend to overestimate the negative aspects of their parents because they want to express their uniqueness and independence.

#### **2.4.1 Truancy Trends**

Adolescents may run away from homes, where demonstration of love is lacking and affectionate ties between parents and adolescents are weak. Conflict intensifies to the point at which youths result to fight. Mulford and Redding (2008) insist that adolescents who reject their parents do so as a defence against the hostility and rejection their parents have shown them. Parents who rely on clear, rational, verbal expectations to influence and control behaviour have a more positive effect than those who use external controls, primarily because cognitive methods result in the internalization of values and standards especially if explanations are combined with affection so the adolescent is inclined to listen and accept them. This is what Macie (2003) confirms when he asserts that reasoning or praise used to correct or reinforce behaviour enhances learning whereas physical means of discipline, negative verbal techniques such as belittling and nagging or infrequent explanations are more often associated with antisocial behaviour and delinquency. In the adolescent stage, teenagers are confronted with the question of identity and parents need to understand them well and guide them appropriately.

#### **2.4.2 Physical Punishment**

Physical punishment aims at teaching unreasoned obedience and to keep children out of trouble rather than to internalize controls through cognitive means. Moffit (2006) contend that parents who rely on harsh, punitive methods are defeating the true purpose of discipline which is to develop a sensitive conscience, socialization and cooperation. Cruel punishment especially when accompanied by parental rejection develops an insensitive, uncaring harsh rebellious cruel person. Instead of teaching children to care about others, it deadens their sensitiveness, so that they learn to fear and hate others and no longer care about them or want to please them. They may obey but when the threat of external punishment is removed, they are anti-social. Many criminal types fit this description. This is the underlying factor when

children brought up by harsh parents suddenly turn misfits when parental influence withers away.

Parents who are overly permissive also retard the socialization process and the normal developments for children, for they give children no help in developing inner control. Without external authority, the child will remain amoral. Adolescents want and need some parental guidance. Without it, they may grow up as “spoiled brats”, disliked by their peers because of their lack of consideration for others and lacking of self-discipline, persistence and direction. When a parent punishes his child physically for having aggressed towards peers for example, the intended outcome of this training is that child should refrain from hurting others. The child however, is also learning from parental demonstration how to aggress physically. According to Drowns and Hess (1997) parents seldom accomplish the positive results they hope for by spanking. Children who are spanked are much more likely to be aggressive with other children. They are more likely to grow up to be aggressive adults. Spanking can inhibit the development of self-confidence and leaves children feeling powerless and depressed. Children who are spanked a lot are from two to five times more likely to be physically aggressive as children, to become juvenile delinquents as adolescents and as adults to suffer from depression. In parenting, most people tend to agree that people raise their children the way they were raised, whether good or bad and that extreme levels of physical punishment are bad. Thus in order to break this cycle of juvenile delinquency parents need to be trained on effective parenting strategies since most act on a point of ignorance.

Children learn better by modelling their parents. Physical punishment sends the message that hitting is an appropriate way to express one’s feelings and to solve problems. Mulford and Redding (2008) consent that physical punishment gives the message that it is okay to hurt someone who is smaller and less powerful. Children get the message that it’s appropriate to mistreat younger or smaller children and when they become adults, they feel little compassion for those less fortunate or less powerful than they are. No human being feels loving towards someone who deliberately hurts her or him. Children endure their family situation painstakingly as they are helpless but when the time comes calling they unleash themselves, acting out and they are classified as delinquents.

Unexpressed anger is stored inside and may explode later. The good behaviour produced by punishment in the early years may disappear overnight. Physical punishment deprives the child of opportunities for learning effective problem solving. It teaches a child nothing about

how to handle similar situations in the future. Loving support is the only way to learn true moral behaviour based on strong inner values. Physical punishment deprives the child of opportunities for learning effective problem solving. Macie (2003) observes that youths sometimes become overt, aggressive and hostile especially if parents discipline has been harsh and unfair and administered without much love and affection. Thus, the effects of growing up in autocratic homes differ. The meeker ones are cowed and the stronger ones are rebellious. Both show emotional disturbances and have more problems. Parental over-control has been found to be related to low scholastic and educational performance. Having said this, parents should be able to manage their juvenile's behaviour.

### **2.4.3 Juvenile's Behaviour Management**

Identification and communication with parents, usually thought to inhibit delinquent behaviour, do not inhibit aggressive behaviour to families where the father used harsh physical punishment. Martin and Colbert (1997) maintain that the more adolescents identified with a father who modelled aggressive behaviour and the more quality interaction they had with a father who encouraged aggression, the more they took part in aggressive behaviour themselves. When there is extreme inequality in parental authority (one parent exercising more authority than the other), the result is confusion for adolescents. They react by evidencing a great amount of rebellion against their parents. Adolescents who receive inconsistent discipline and those whose parents disagree in their expectations of them are more externally than internally oriented in their behaviour, meaning that they show less self-control and therefore need more external control of their behaviour.

Punishment is not usually recommended as a disciplinary strategy. Although it is sometimes effective in stopping behaviour, there may be negative effects. Aggression, passive helplessness, or avoidance may result when harsh physical or verbal punishment occurs. This is especially true when the child perceives the parental behaviour is unpredictable, as when parents who are out of control yell and hit when punishing children. If parents decide to use punishment as a disciplinary strategy, timing and providing an explanation are important considerations. O'Connor (2002) suggests that punishments are more effective when very little time passes between the misbehaviour and the punishment. It is more effective if it occurs during the unwanted behaviour as opposed to afterward; a brief explanation given along with the punishment increases effectiveness because it involves reasoning with the child. This reasoning enables the child to understand parental love amidst the punishment.

Discipline requires clear communication and flexibility on the part of parents. Disciplinary strategies should match the child's age, development level and individual personality. Parents must be able to use many different strategies in response to situations that arise in parenting. Irritable explosive discipline, inflexible rigid discipline and low supervision and involvement are inadequate. Patterson and Yoerger (2002) maintains that inconsistent discipline occur in an individual parent when he or she has a standard for child behaviour but then gives in to child demands or doesn't follow through with consequences. A parent who is unpredictable in expectations and consequences when the child inhibits the same behaviour is inconsistent. Since mothers and fathers are different people with differing points of view, it is sometimes difficult for them to agree on specific child-rearing matter this is another source of inconsistency. When parents disagree on basic rules, the consequences of irritable explosive indiscipline by the children, is characterized by long harsh episodes of loud, high intensity strategies such as hitting and yelling, which is accompanied by escalating punishments. It also occurs when parents rely on a single disciplinary strategy for all transgressions. Parents who use inflexible methods do not usually use any verbal reasoning in their discipline.

In low supervision and involvement, parents are unaware of their child's activity and peers and rarely engage in joint activities with their children. Poor supervision has been linked with problem behaviours, such as aggression, delinquency and substance abuse. Low self-esteem boys have parents who are sometimes permissive but occasionally harsh when their children go beyond the limits they will tolerate. Sometimes, they are too restrictive or inconsistent in their discipline or they reject their children. Holford (2003) maintains that since discipline is an important part of the parenting role, identifying these patterns of inadequate discipline can be helpful in planning and implementing more effective discipline methods for families. Parents can be taught effective ways of communicating and more constructive ways to handle behaviour instead of using hostility and coercion. Parents' belief in their own effectiveness may enhance the quality and skills of their care giving. Teaching children self-discipline is a demanding task that requires patience, thoughtful attention, cooperation and understanding of the child. But above all, how communication in the family is handled and the time that it is done really counts.

## **2.5 Communication in the Family**

A major factor causing problems in families is lack or breakdown in communication. Communication is the hearing of all intimate human relationships. It is the foundation on which all else is built. It is the way humans create and share meaning. Ngwiri (2008)

expounds that communication in the family should be open, that is, the ability to share ideas and feelings with one another. Families need to espouse frequent communication not only when there is a crisis but as a mode of deeper interaction and understanding among the members. Mulford and Redding (2008) contrasts that in dysfunctional families, a distinctive interaction pattern is likely to persist over time and become the members' characteristic way of dealing with each other. Ultimately, the expression of family dysfunctionality with pathological communication patterns is evident. Good and effective communication centres on highly developed individual awareness and differentiation. Good communicators are aware of internal process within them and processes in others (Bradshaw, 1996). The ability to translate words into sensory-based experience requires listening both to the content and the process involved in speaking. Good communication involves good self-awareness and self-differentiation. Good self-differentiation allows us to have very clear boundaries. We take responsibility for our own feelings, perceptions, interpretations and desires. We express these in self-responsible statement, using the word "I". A communication skill that makes a healthy and fully functioning family is the courage and ability to give good feedback. Clear and consistent communications are keys to establishing separateness and intimacy. Clear communication demands awareness of self and the other, as well as mutual respect for each other's dignity. This is the blueprint for effective communication. In a dysfunctional family, there is confluence of conflicted communication. Bradshaw (1996) maintains that the communication style in dysfunctional families is either open conflict or the agreement never to disagree (confluence). In dysfunctional families, members make speeches at each other in place of conversation or turn away and avoid eye contact when someone is speaking. Others engage in other activities, for example, watching television and walking in and out thus interfering with clear and direct communication. Mulford and Redding (2008) affirm that poor communication is by far the most frequent problem reported by couples seeking family counselling. In order to realise adequate communication channels families should set their salient governing rules that they can refer to in case of differences. Once the family members have learnt the art of proper communication internalized the skills therein most of the challenges will have already been nipped in the bud. Like any other skill family members should keep practising for them to be effective. Counsellors have an obligation to support families mainly on effective communication. Good communication is catalysed by functional family rules and regulations.

## **2.6 Family Rules**

A family is a rule-governed system. Its interactions follow organized, established patterns. Mulford and Redding (2008) concede that in a well-functioning family, there are rules that allow for changes with changing circumstances as well as rules that maintain order and stability. The rules in a functional family are overt and clear. Functional rules allow for flexibility and spontaneity. Mistakes are viewed as occasions for growth. Healthy shame is validated whereas toxic shaming is strongly prohibited. Our parenting rules primarily shame children through varying degrees of abandonment. Good functional rules promote fun and laughter. Each person is seen as precious, unique and unrepeatable. In a functional family the laws are open and flexible. They allow for mistakes and can be and are negotiable. However, in a dysfunctional family there are irrevocable rules. They are rigid and unchanging. The dominant rules are control, perfectionism, and blame, denying individual freedoms, no-talk, no-listen, incompleteness and unreliability. Some families forbid discussion of certain topics, and consequently fail to take realistic steps to alleviate the problems. For example, a mother is becoming an alcoholic, or father does not come home some nights. Some parents may want to withhold vital information from their children for fear of 'spoiling the child' or are ashamed to discuss life issues such as sex and contraceptives with their children. In the end, children scavenge for this information from any available source including the media. Other families forbid expression of anger or irritation with each other. Children are reprimanded when they cry; parents are fast to shut them up and not listen to what is agitating them. As a result the pent up emotions continue to corrode the child's well-being. Dysfunctional families follow dysfunctional rules. This is what Mulford and Redding (2008) once identified as irrelevant rules that can be revised or discarded as a means of improving the family's functioning. This mutual agreement sets the stage for dealing with any emerging family conflict which is an indispensable prerequisite for functional families.

## **2.7 Family Conflicts**

Emotional sustaining parenting partnerships are characterized by mutual respect, where each partner values the parenting abilities of the other. Some evidence suggests that parent who agrees on basic child-rearing attitudes and practices have children with better development outcomes. Parent's general approach to handling conflict and disagreement may contribute to children's wellbeing with effective communication and constructive conflict management skills between spouses leading to more positive outcome. Martin and Colbert (1997) simply upholds that overt conflict between parents may interrupt effective parenting



There are typical problems encountered in co-parenting relationships. Inconsistency between parents, non-communication about significant issues, confusion and uncertainty about what the rules should be in a particular situation, and overt conflict between parents, are all difficulties co-parents may face. The husband-wife subsystem is basic. Any dysfunction in this system reverberates through the family as children are used as scapegoat or co-opted into an alliance with one parent against the other because the couple is in conflict. The spousal subsystem teaches the child about the nature of intimate relationships between a man and a woman, both of which are likely to affect the child's relationships later in life. Parental subsystem serves functions of nurturance and control. Mulford and Redding (2008) concludes that through interaction with problem solving, the child learns to deal with authority, people of greater power before increasing his or her own capacity of decision-making and self-control.

Some families show evidence of prevailing mood of gaiety, joy, optimism and happiness. Others reflect climate of fear, depression, cynicism and hostility. The happier the parents and more positive the home climate is, the more beneficial the effect on the growing children. The best-adjusted children are those who grow up in happy homes where adolescents and parents spend pleasurable time together. When youths see their parent's marriage as unhappy rather than happy, they are more likely to rebel. Macie (2003) contends that very restrictive or very permissive children rearing practices together with an unhappy marriage produce the most rebellion of all. Children from broken families manifest behavioural problems including an abrupt decline in academic performance, aggressiveness, acting out at home and school, drug abuse, truancy, running away, sexual acting out and group delinquent behaviour. Adolescents from happy broken homes show less psychosomatic illness, less delinquent behaviour and better adjustment to parents than youth from unhappy homes. Broken homes do not necessarily have the adverse effects on adolescence as sometimes supposed.

### **2.7.1 Influence of Family Conflict on Juvenile Delinquency**

Self-esteem is lower for children with higher levels of family conflict regardless of family type. Macie (2003) maintains that it is the quality and harmony of interpersonal relationships that are important factors, not the type of family structure alone. One issue that is usually critical for adolescents, who are already undergoing multiple changes, is parents' divorce which can add to already stressful situation. Family conflict and separation from one parent often involves economic need, changes in housing, neighbourhoods, and schools, continuing emotional distress in parents and reorganization of family roles and relationships. Research findings indicate that boys and girls tend to feel anger and moral indignation toward their

parents. Hetherington (1989) postulates that some adolescents react by pulling away from the family and behaving with aloofness towards both parents, a withdrawal that seems to help them adjust to parent's divorce. Adolescents who aligned with one parent or the other experienced more difficulties in achieving independence in the teen years than did those who remained aloof and dealt with the divorce on their terms. Studies of adolescents in intact families indicate that parents' conflict and lack of harmony in the family have negative effects.

Youths with poor self-concept are likely to engage in delinquent behaviour. Successful participation in criminality actually helps to raise their self-esteem. If the child feels threatened, rebuked or belittled, they develop self-rejection. Because of this rejection they may meet their need for self-esteem by turning to deviant groups made up of youths who have similarly been rejected. Although conventional society may reject them, their new criminal friends give them positive feedback and support. Moffit (2006) contends that youths who maintain the lowest self-image and the greatest need for approval are the ones most likely to seek self-enhancement by engaging in criminal activities. While Macie (2003) argued that a strong self-image insulates a youth from the pressure of criminogenic influences in the environment. The family therefore must help the child develop positive self-image if it has to mitigate against delinquency.

There seems to be correlation between father absence and delinquency. Adolescents from father-absent homes have a higher incidence of delinquency, but this does not mean that father absence causes delinquency. This may be because their mothers have fewer resources to fall back on when the children are in trouble than those from intact families. Furthermore, it may not be the family conflict that led to the disruption in the first place, that causes the trouble. Levels of family conflict are better predictors of delinquency than family type. Macie (2003) claims that; adolescents' who become delinquents are more likely to have had fathers who were cold, rejecting, punitive, neglecting and mistrusting. The quality of the relationship between parents may influence how well they can successfully work together in their parenting. Emotionally sustaining parenting partnerships are characterized by mutual respect, where each partner values the parenting abilities of the other. Parenting can be a difficult job, and the support of another caring adult may increase parental confidence and enable parents to better deal with the stresses of parenting more successfully. Parents who agree on basic child rearing attitudes and practices have children with better development outcomes. Boys may be adversely affected when parents disagree about child-rearing strategies, both with regard to inconsistent parenting and agreements about child-rearing practices parents' general

approach to handling conflict and disagreement may contribute to children's well-being with effective communication and constructive conflict management skills between spouses leading to more positive outcome. Ngwiri (2008) postulates that when a family is undergoing problems such as parental quarrels, family violence, separation and divorce, alcoholism and economic distress, the emotional growth of the child is affected

## **2.8 Child Neglect and Abuse**

Child neglect refers to the deficit in the provision of a child's basic needs. There are many types of neglect such as physical, educational and emotional. Heaven, Newbury and Mak (2004) maintained that child neglect lead to many negative effects such as deficits in pro-social behaviour, display of physical aggression, delinquency, hostility and anger among others (Physical maltreatment may be the most destructive and pervasive form of maltreatment. It is embedded in all major forms of child abuse and neglect. It has many subtypes including rejecting, degrading, terrorizing, isolating, dissocializing and exploiting the child. There is a link between child abuse, neglect, sexual abuse and crime. Siegel (2000) argues that there is a significant association between child maltreatment and serious self-reported or official delinquency; children who are subjected to even minimal amounts of physical punishment may be more likely to use violence themselves in personal interactions. In more violent societies, there are links among corporal punishment, delinquency, anger, spousal abuse, depression and adult crime. Victims of abuse may suffer significant social problems and emotional stresses related to criminal activity. Families which provide firm support inhibit delinquency whereas families in which one or both parents are deviant are more likely to have children involved in deviant activities.

Parents compare their children and demand results. This can have implications to delinquency because children who do poorly in school, lack educational motivation, and feel alienated are the most likely to engage in criminal acts. Children who fail in school offend more frequently than those who succeed. Steinberg (2001) is convinced that people living in even the most deteriorated urban areas can successfully resist inducement to crime if they have a positive self-image, strong moral values and support from their parents, teachers and neighbours. The family has a critical role to play in helping the child develop positive self-concept and inculcating values acceptable in the society. Parents in their efforts to bring out the best in their children academic performance, they compare them with other siblings. This affects the child as he views the other siblings loved more than him. The same goes for the high academic achievement standards set that are unattainable for the child based on his abilities. They emotionally drain and frustrate the child. This is a perfect recipe for

delinquency. Parents should strive to encourage their children to be the best they can not as compared to others.

Child maltreatment (abuse and neglect) tend to increase in the likelihood of delinquency and adult criminality. Berger (1996) claimed that physical abuse in particular is associated with increased violence. In response to maltreatment, a child is likely to develop a sense of powerless and impotency leading to negative and often harmful adaptations, frequent delinquency and adult criminality (Regoli and Hewitt 2000). According to Fleisher (1995) parental brutality causes young children to suffer permanent, irreversible, cognitive and emotional damage. Cognitive and emotional damage suffered in early life expresses itself in adolescence when once-brutalized and neglected youngster's age, are expelled from natal families and are untreated by school teachers and administrators, join youth gangs and delinquency groups, commit street crimes and engage in alcohol and drug-abuse. Dilulio (1997) maintain that most of the kids who are violent, remorseless and had criminally violated others, were themselves severely abused and neglected, growing up in genuinely dire conditions of material deprivation, having absolutely no positive adult-child relationship in their lives. Maltreated children significantly become involved in delinquency and their frequency of delinquency is greater for all levels of delinquency (minor, moderate, serious, violent and general). Children exposed to more extreme maltreatment had higher rates of delinquency. They are more likely to exhibit multiple problem behaviours such as serious delinquency teen pregnancy, drug abuse, low academic performance and mental health problems. Wonder no more as criminal gangs are mainly comprised of young men and women in their teens that are willing to stop at nothing to accomplish the gangs deal. They feel they are not only getting identity with a group but also unleashing their anger at the uncaring community. The basic unit of the community is the family hence the need to secure the foundation of the family structure.

## **2.9 Family Structure and Status**

Children from non-traditional (broken home) families have higher rates of delinquency. Berger (1996) affirms that research has established that life stress and family economic hardship are associated with less nurturance; harsher, more explosive approaches to parenting and those individuals who work at tightly controlled, routinized jobs tend to employ an authoritarian style of parenting; since these circumstances are more prevalent among low-income families, youths in these households are more at risk for delinquency. However, the impact of social class on delinquency is substantially mediated by ineffective parenting practices. There has been little support for the view that mothers' employment increases

delinquency, provided that adequate supervision for children is arranged. Children who are left unattended may be at a greater risk of delinquency. The crux of the matter is that regardless how parents may be busy struggling to fend for their families, they should remember that their core mandate is the wholeness and wellness of their families that demand their presence.

Large families were found to have greater rates of delinquency. These families were highly associated with low social-economic status, limited interaction and communication between parents and children, less supervision by parents of each child and more disruption and conflict. Regoli and Hewitt (2000) agree that the broken home refers to a family structure broken by divorce, separation, or the death of a spouse. Much research exists reporting that children from single-parent families are more likely to become delinquent than children from two parents families. However, there exists a body of research, which suggests that the most important determinant of whether a child will be involved in delinquency is with the quality of the parent-child relationship rather than family structure alone. Regardless of family structure, time spent with father and the perception of father's emotional support is associated with lower levels of delinquency. On the same note the size of the family is immaterial as long as parents are committed to their parental responsibility. There are children from small families who ended up as juveniles and children from large families who are morally well.

### **2.9.1 Parents Marital Status**

Divorce affects women more, which in turn may heavily affect children. They are overloaded from work and childrearing, face financial strain and likely to be socially isolated. It may produce "family wars" in an attempt to "win" by attacking the former spouse. Children are caught in the middle, often being defined as victims or expected to accept new definitions of the former spouse. In either case, the stress produced for the child may manifest itself in many ways. Davidson (1990) conducted some studies and found out a relationship between father absence and a host of social and emotional ills, including decreased school performance and self-control and increased rates of psychological disturbance, drug use, gang affiliation and involvement in violent crime. Such children have an own anxiety about their ability to sustain close relationships and make happy marriages. According to Smith (1995) these children feel deprived of the things they had been accustomed to. They express feelings and anger in different ways. They hurt people; break things damage their own bodies or suffer depression. They are also vulnerable to delinquency.

Many criminologists today discount the association between family structure and the onset of criminality that family conflicts and discord determine behaviour more than family structure. However, not all experts discount the effects of family structure on crime. Even if single parents can make up for the loss of the second parents, the chance of failure increases. For example, single parents may find it difficult to provide adequate supervision, and children who live with single parents receive less encouragement and help with schoolwork. Poor school achievement and limited educational aspirations have been associated with delinquent behaviour. Siegel (2000) holds that the children from single families receive less attention as a result of having just one parent, these children may be more prone to rebellious acts such as running away and truancy since their incomes may decrease substantially, divorced mothers may be forced to move to residences in deteriorated neighbourhoods, which may place children at risk of crime and drug abuse. Lower socioeconomic status families tend to be hierarchical, evidencing rigid parental relationships with adolescents. The parents are seen as closed and inaccessible to adolescents' communication. The result according to Macie (2003) is that the atmosphere is one of imperatives and absolutes, physical violence and distance if not rejection of adults; this is recipe for delinquency.

According to Henslin (1994) a significant consequence of broken homes is that children from them are likely to become involved in delinquency and crime. All else being equal, one parent is probably sufficient. The problem is that all else is not equal. The single parent (usually a woman) must devote a good deal to support and maintenance activities that are at least to some extent shared in the two parent family, she may do so in the absence of psychological or social support. As a result, she is less able to devote time to be involved in negative, abusive contacts with her children. The essential problem appears to be defective discipline, in direction, excessive leniency or excessive control.

Family factors that have predictive value on delinquency include inconsistent discipline, poor supervision and the lack of warm, loving parent-child relationship. Children who have affectionate ties to their parents report greater levels of self-esteem beginning in adolescence and extending into adulthood. High self-esteem is inversely related to criminal behaviour. Conversely, when parents exhibit deviant behaviour, their children are likely to follow suit. Adler Muppler and Laufer (1995) maintains that inadequate maternal affection and supervision, parental conflict and mothers lack of self-confidence is related to the commission of crimes against persons and or property. There is also a strong relation between crime and childhood deprivation. In order to form a successful attachment, a child needs a warm, loving and interactive caretaker. A child needs to experience a warm, intimate

and continuous relationship with a mother in order to be securely attached. When a child is separated from the mother or is rejected by her, anxious attachment results and the capacity to be affectionate and to develop intimate relationships with others is reduced. Habitual criminals typically have an inability to form bonds of affection. The strength of attachment bond depends on the depth of parent-child interaction. The parent-child bond forms a path through which conventional ideals and expectations can pass. This bond is bolstered by the amount of time the child spends with parents, the intimacy of communication between parents and the child and the affectionate identification between child and parents (ibid). Parents should take caution to avoid indulging their children which can turn counterproductive. This can be achieved through mutual understanding between the child and the parent.

The father's unique interaction is critical to balanced social and emotional development of the child. Boys need fathers to model manhood. Being fatherless involves more than just physical absence of the father. It can mean a father who is physically present and emotionally detached. Brown and Brown (2006) assert that fatherless is a condition caused by violence, neglect and abandonment created in the absence of the loving, compassionate, secure, and nurturing father. Children from fatherless homes are 9 times more likely to drop out of school, 20 times more to have behavioural disorders and 32 times more likely to run away

## **2.10 Theoretical Framework**

This study was guided by two theories namely; Attachment Theory and Psychosocial Developmental Theory. These theories assisted in understanding how parental influence especially in the childhood years influences the behaviour and future life of the juvenile.

### **2.10.1 Attachment Theory**

Attachment means a tie that comes between an individual and an attachment figure, usually a caregiver. Such bonds may be reciprocal between two adults but for a child and a caregiver these bonds are based on the child's need for safety, security and protection, paramount in infancy and childhood. According to John Bowlby (1988) the proponent, children attach to caregivers instinctively, for the purpose of survival and ultimately genetic replication. The biological aim is survival and the psychological aim is security. In child-to-adult relationships, the child's tie is called the "attachment" and the caregiver's reciprocal equivalent is referred to as the "care-giving bond". Steinberg (2008) argues that infants form attachments to any consistent caregiver who is sensitive and responsive in social interactions

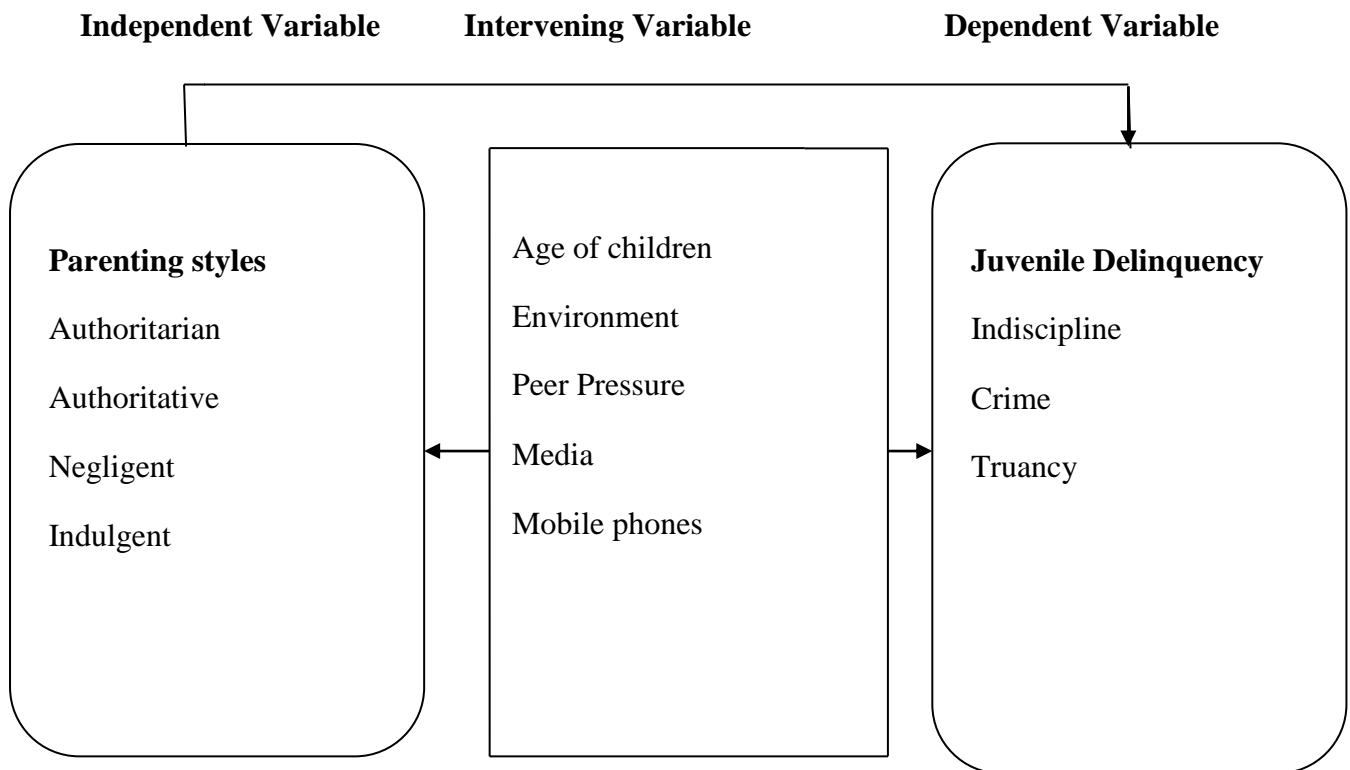
with them. This means that the quality of the social engagement is more influential than the amount of time spent. The biological mother is the usual principal attachment figure, but the role can be taken by anyone who consistently behaves in a "mothering" way over a period of time. This emphasizes the paramount importance of the quality time spent between the children and parents which creates and fosters intimate bond for a family. It provides the parent with the unique opportunity to understand the child's temperaments and the child to understand the parent's objectives. This emotional attachment nurtured will form the benchmark in the later developmental psychology of the child.

### **2.10.2 Psychosocial Developmental Theory**

Erick Erickson formulated eight major stages of development. Each stage poses a unique developmental task and simultaneously confronts individual with a crisis. It's in this crisis that an individual has the opportunity to struggle through. According to Erickson (1968) a crisis is not 'a threat of catastrophe' but a turning point, a critical period of increased vulnerability and heightened potential. Individuals develop a 'healthy personality' by mastering "life's outer and inner dangers". Infants, who are cuddled, fondled and whose needs are met and are shown genuine affection deriving the sense of the world as a safe place. If this trust is established early then later in life the individual will be able to interpret temporal relations between people and events. In contrast when childcare is chaotic, unpredictable and rejecting, children approach the world with fear and suspicion. Such individuals become distraught and angry when people show up late to a social gathering. As they start to learn how to crawl, walk, climb and explore the world around them, caregivers should give them time to do so without much restriction. The parents should encourage them by letting them be while keeping a watchful eye to avoid fatal injuries. This is imparting independence, competence and autonomy to the child's development. In contrast to this a child may be overprotected, reprimanded for the wrong doing and prevented from exploring the world as a result it becomes ashamed and consequently doubtful of current and even future undertakings. Erikson recognizes the indispensable role that the parents and caregivers play in shaping their children personality.



## 2.11 Conceptual Framework



**Fig 1: Relationship between the Parenting Styles and Juvenile Delinquency**

This research aims at studying the effects of parenting styles on Juvenile delinquency. The Independent variable is the four parenting styles, Authoritative, Authoritarian, indulgent and Negligent. These have a direct impact on the thinking and behaviour of the children such as truancy, indiscipline, crime, poor relationships among other deviant behaviour. However, there are intervening variables that may affect the outcome of the research. These are age, the younger the child the more affected it becomes due to parenting styles. This is because at their age they have little understanding of whatever goes on in the family and have complete surrender to the parental authority. The environment at home or school contributes greatly to the child upbringing. When the environment has prevailing crime and other social ills the child will most likely perceive this as the way of life. On the same vein, the boarding schools environment where the child spends most of the time away from parental surveillance will teach the child most of the behaviours. The child may be influenced by the peers. The peers have a greater influence on the child than the parents especially at their early years. This has been further compounded with the advent of mobile phones where the children are able to communicate and access any information freely. Parents oblivious of what's happening have been locked out making it difficult for them to monitor their children. In addition, the media has also played its role both in mentoring and parenting in their own way. Icons viewed as

celebrities but with socially maladaptive behaviours have been adored by the children making parenting a challenging feat. Amidst all this, parents are still largely responsible for their juvenile moral stance.

## CHAPTER THREE

### RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

#### 3.1 Introduction

In this chapter, the researcher presents a description of research design, which was adopted during the study. The chapter also defines the design, target population, sample size and sampling procedures, research instruments, reliability and validity of instruments and the data analysis procedures.

#### 3.2 Research Design

The research design adopted in this study was *ex post facto* design that is defined as a systematic inquiry in which the researcher does not have direct control of independent variables because the manifestations have already occurred or inherently not manipulated (Kerlinger, 2000). This is a survey that relies on individuals; their knowledge, attitudes and behaviours. Survey research gathers data with the intention of describing the nature of existing conditions or determining the relationships that exist between specific events. The researcher will not have direct control of the independent variable because their manifestations have already occurred but will only be studied retrospectively to establish the possible causal relationship with juvenile delinquency.

#### 3.3 Location of the Study

The study was carried out in Nakuru town in Nakuru County, Kenya. The town has two probation centres and one remand home. These are; Nakuru Girls Probation Centre, Nakuru District Probation Centre and Nakuru Juvenile Remand Home respectively.

#### 3.4 Population of the Study

In the study, the groups of people under study were the juvenile delinquents in rehabilitation institutions. Mugenda and Mugenda (1999) define target population as that population to which the researcher wants to generalize the results. The target population was 209 juvenile delinquents in the selected rehabilitation centres.

Table 1

*Juvenile Delinquency Population within institutions in Nakuru Town*

<b>Institutions</b>	<b>Boys</b>	<b>Girls</b>	<b>Total</b>
Nakuru Girls Probation Centre	0	38	38
Nakuru District Probation Centre	36	13	49
Nakuru Juvenile Remand Home	85	37	122
<b>Total</b>	<b>121</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>209</b>

**Source:** Nakuru District Probation Office- December, 2011

**3.5 Sampling Procedures and Sample Size**

A sample is a small part of a population, which is a representative of the larger population. Purposive sampling procedure was used to select respondents aged between 10-19 years. The total sampled population was 161 juveniles. The Table 2 below presents a distribution of sample of juvenile delinquents sample by centre.

Table 2

*Distribution of Sample of Juvenile Delinquents by Centre*

<b>Institution</b>	<b>Boys</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Girls</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Nakuru Girls Probation Centre	-	-	31	84.21
Nakuru District Probation Centre	24	75	8	69.23
Nakuru Juvenile Remand Home	74	90.59	24	75.68
<b>Total</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>60.87</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>39.13</b>

Majority of the sampled juveniles were boys (60.87%) while 39.13 % were girls. This was a fair representation since there were more boys (57.9%) than girls (42.1%) in both Nakuru District Probation Centre and Nakuru Juvenile Remand Home. Nakuru Girls Probation Centre which is a girls' only centre.

### **3.6 Instrumentation**

The Researcher used the self-administered questionnaire as the instrument in data collection. Each item of the questionnaire was developed to address a specific objective under the study. This questionnaire was provided to the respondents in order to get desired information for further analysis. The questionnaire was used to collect data on demographic and background characteristics of the respondent and how the parenting styles experienced influenced the delinquency. The instrument is appropriate because it is easy and fast to administer to a group of students. The perceived anonymity guaranteed by instrument, tend to make the participants to give truthful responses to the items asked. Interpretation of the questions was done as need arose.

#### **3.6.1 Validity of Instruments**

Validity of the instruments is the degree to which an instrument is able to measure what it purports to measure. Frankel and Wallen (2000) refer to validity as the defensibility of the inferences that the researcher makes from the data collected using the said instruments. The research instrument was subjected to validation by research experts at the Faculty of Education, Department of Psychology, Counselling and Educational Foundations, Egerton University. Then, the researcher incorporated their recommendations in the final instrument. A pilot study was conducted at Molo District Probation Centre to ensure the same validity was achieved.

#### **3.6.2 Reliability of Instruments**

The piloting of the instrument was conducted at Molo District Probation Centre to determine its reliability as the juvenile delinquents. This institution share similar characteristics with those under study. Cronbach Alpha co-efficient of 0.707 was realised from the questionnaire. This was considered acceptable for the study (Nachmias & Nachmias, 1996)

### **3.7 Data Collection Procedure**

The researcher obtained introductory letter from the Department of Psychology, Counselling and Educational Foundations in the University. The researcher also obtained permission from the Ministry of Home Affairs and Director of Probation Service. The researcher then administered the questionnaire to the respondents giving translation and support where necessary. The respondents were given time to complete answering the items of the instruments and collected immediately at the end of the response time. The procedure was appropriate as a high response rate of 100% was realised. The researcher had the opportunity

to explain the goals of the study and answer the questions that the respondents had before they complete filling the instruments (Frankel & Wallen, 2006).

### **3.8 Data Analysis**

The data collected was accurately and consistently scored, encoded and analysed with the aid of Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 16 was used for processing and analysis using descriptive statistics to facilitate addressing the research objectives. Frequency tables were used to summarize and organise data and to describe the characteristics of the sample population. From the findings, the researcher was able to make conclusions and recommendations on the influence of parenting styles on juvenile delinquency. The study revealed that parents influence juvenile delinquency.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

#### **4.1 Introduction**

This chapter presents results and discussion of the research findings which were analysed according to the following research objectives

- i. To establish the influence of Authoritative Parenting Style experienced by juvenile delinquents in Rehabilitation Centres of Nakuru town.
- ii. To determine the influence of Authoritarian Parenting Style experienced by juvenile delinquents in Rehabilitation Centres of Nakuru town.
- iii. To determine the influence of Permissive Parenting Style experienced by juvenile delinquents in Rehabilitation Centres of Nakuru town.
- iv. To establish the influence of Neglectful Parenting Style experienced by juvenile delinquents in Rehabilitation Centres of Nakuru town.

#### **4.2 Demographic Characteristics of Respondents**

This section describes the demographic characteristics of the respondents. There was one group in the study. These are the juvenile delinquents aged between ten to nineteen years. They are discussed under gender and age. These variables are important in providing a clear understanding of the respondents as well as presenting a good foundation for a detailed discussion

##### **4.2.1 Gender of the Students**

This section sought to categorize the sampled juveniles according to their gender. Such information was essential in understanding the respondents and helps in analysing the findings of the study. This is an important variable because it defines behaviour, attitude and relationships in the society.

Table 3

*Frequency on the Distribution of Juveniles by Gender*

<b>Gender</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Male	98	60.87
Female	63	39.13
<b>Total</b>	<b>161</b>	<b>100.0</b>

The findings in Table 3 reveal that out of 161 juveniles studied, 98 (60.87%) were males while 63 (39.13%) were females. The variation in the gender distribution was attributed to more male juveniles in the rehabilitation institutions than their female counterparts.

**4.2.2 Distribution of Juveniles by Age**

As shown in table 4, children in the age bracket of 15-19 years contributed to 70.8% of the total juveniles while those in the age of 10-14 years had 29.2%. This indicated that the majority of juvenile delinquency took place in the late teenage years. Table 4 presents the distribution of Juvenile's age.

Table 4

*Distribution of the Juveniles' Age*

<b>Age</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
10-14	47	29.2
15-19	114	70.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>161</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**4.2.3 Marital Status of Juvenile Parents'**

From the results the marital status does not contribute significantly to juvenile delinquency. A major rate of juvenile delinquency 46.9% came from married families. It simply means that parenting is an indispensable responsibility that needs concerted effort from both parents which may be lacking. However, the juveniles may be facing identity crisis where the family is dysfunctional or raised up by a single parent. 53.1% of the parents were from broken families and single parents. A significant consequence of broken homes is that children from them are more likely to become involved in delinquency and crime (Henslin, 1994).



Table 5

*Influence of Marital Status on Juvenile Delinquency*

<b>Marital Status</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Married	76	46.90
Divorced	11	6.9
Single	26	16.55
Widow	21	13.10
Separated	20	12.41
Widower	7	4.14
<b>Total</b>	<b>161</b>	<b>100.00</b>

**4.2.4 Relationship between Parents and their Economic Activity**

All the parents of the participants under study were engaged in various economic activities to fend for their families. The popular economic activity engaged in was self-employed with mothers having 47% while the fathers had 43%. This in essence means that parents need to strike a delicate balance between their economic activity and their families. Most of the parents sacrifice their families' time in the name of earning a living. To this end, parents need to consciously decide which days and times are reserved for their families in order to bond more with their children irrespective of the attractive gains that could have been achieved at work place.

Out of the total number of respondents 78.3% of their mothers and 64.6% of their fathers were earning a living. This means that poverty plays an insignificant role in determination of the parenting styles to be effected by the parents.

Table 6

*Influence of Mother's Economic Activity on Juvenile Delinquency*

<b>Economic Activity</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Farmer	27	16.8
Labourer	27	16.8
Self Employed	47	29.2
Government Employee	23	14.3
Other ( Non-Government employees)	2	1.2
No Response	35	21.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>161</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 7

*Influence of Father's Economic Activity on Juvenile Delinquency*

<b>Economic Activity</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Farmer	14	8.7
Labourer	23	14.3
Self Employed	43	26.7
Government Employee	22	13.7
Other(Non-Government Employees)	2	1.2
No Response	57	35.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>161</b>	<b>100</b>

### **4.3 Influence of Authoritative Parenting Style on Juvenile Delinquency**

The first objective aimed at identifying the Authoritative parenting styles experienced by juvenile delinquents. The influence of the father and the mother to a child is critical to its survival. Mulford and Redding (2008) argue that through interaction with problem solving, the child learns to deal with authority, people of greater power before increasing his or her own capacity of decision-making and self-control. Therefore Parents' and the caregivers have the responsibility to nurture and model their children as this will have an impact in their future lives. This implies that the quality of social engagement is more influential than the amount of time spent.

#### **4.3.1 Relationship between the Father and the Juvenile**

The relationship between the father and the children is paramount to both the boy and the girl. The father models the male identity, the head of the family, and a provider. According to Smith (1995), without a role model, a boy can grow up believing that women are all powerful and on the contrary men are inferior, which is not a good basis to form male identity. Martin and Colbert (1997) maintain that the more adolescents identified with a father who modelled aggressive behaviour and the more interaction they had with a father who encouraged aggression, the more they took part in aggression themselves. The Table 8 below presents the relationship between the father and Juvenile.

Table 8

*Influence of Father's Relationship to Juvenile Delinquency*

<b>Relationship</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Very Close	12	7.5
Close	29	18.0
Not Close	44	27.3
Never Close	34	21.1
No Response	42	26.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>161</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Out of the total respondents who took part in the study 27.3% are not close to their fathers while 21% of them are never close. However, 7.5% of them admitted to be very close and 18% to be close to their fathers. There were 26.1% of the respondents who did not respond to this. This means that only 25.5% (close and very close) of the juveniles can attest to having a good parenting experience at home while 48.4% (not close and never close) failed to have proper parenting. Macie, (2003) postulates that adolescents who become delinquent are more likely to have had fathers who were cold, rejecting, punitive, neglecting and mistrusting; in this case having a father at home is a negative influence.

#### **4.3.2 Relationship between the Mothers and the Juveniles**

The biological mother is the usual principle attachment figure, but the role can be taken by anyone who consistently behaves in a mothering way over a period of time. Macie, (2003) argues that the quality of the relationship between parents may influence how well they can successfully work together in their parenting. The Table 9 below show how the juveniles attached to their mothers'.

Table 9

*Influence of Mother's Relationship to Juvenile Delinquency*

<b>Relationship</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Very Close	24	14.9
Close	22	13.7
Not Close	50	31.1
Never Close	35	21.7
No Response	30	18.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>161</b>	<b>100.0</b>

As shown in Table 9, there was 14.9% of the respondents who were very close to the mothers, 13.7% were close, 31.1% were not close while 21.7% were never close to their mothers. There were 18.6% of the participants who never responded to this question. Steinberg (2008) asserts that infants form attachment to any consistent caregiver who is sensitive and responsive in social interactions with them. A total of 28.6% juveniles were closely and very closely attached to their mothers while 52.8% were never close and not close to their mothers. This maternal deprivation at the prime age may have wounded the juveniles making them vulnerable to crime.

#### **4.4 The Influence of Authoritarian Parenting Style on Juvenile Delinquency**

The second objective aimed at determining the influence of authoritarian parenting styles on juvenile delinquency. Macie (2003) observes that youths sometimes become overt aggressive and hostile especially if parents discipline has been harsh and unfair and administered without much love and affection. The meeker ones are cowed while the strong ones become rebellious. Mulford and Reddings (2008) consent that physical punishment gives the message that it is okay to hurt someone who is smaller and less powerful. This means that children may endure the situation at home painstakingly as they are helpless but when the time comes calling they unleash themselves, acting out and they are classified as delinquents. Table 10 below indicates the different punishment methods used by parents

Table 10

*Influence of Punishment Methods to Juvenile Delinquency*

<b>Type of Punishment</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Spanking	83	51.55
Public Shaming	9	5.59
Verbal Abuse	25	15.53
Denying Food	19	11.80
Deny Privileges	9	5.59
Counselling	16	9.94
<b>Total</b>	<b>161</b>	<b>100.00</b>

Results from Table 10 indicate that spanking is the most preferred form of punishment at 51.55%, public shaming 5.59%, verbal abuse 15.53%, denying food 11.80%, denying privileges 5.59% and counselling 9.94%. Most parents prefer spanking as the easiest punitive measure as that is how they have been brought up themselves and hence find it an ideal form of punishment to deal with indiscipline. However, the children do not adequately understand the meaning of spanking they view it negatively as a form of torture thus making them even more stubborn. Some have developed resilience to spanking and do not care how much they are spanked. A small percentage of 9.94% engaged in counselling but still they ended in the juveniles. Essentially, effective discipline measures involve rewards, joint decision-making when possible, consistent parenting, special times together and parental supervision or monitoring of children (Mulford and Redding, 2008). According to Drowns and Hess (1997) parents seldom accomplish the positive results they hope for by spanking. Children simply become resilient to spanking and ultimately rebellious to the parents.

Table 11

*Influence of Frequency of Punishment on Juvenile Delinquency*

<b>Rate</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Always	69	42.9
Sometimes	62	38.5
Rarely	16	9.9
Never	1	0.6
No Response	13	8.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>161</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**4.4.1 Juveniles' Frequency of Punishment**

Out of the total respondents, 42.9% of the participants are always punished by their parents while 0.6% of them are never punished. Most parents for this case prefer to punish their children whenever they misbehave, a clear indication that these parents do not bother to get to the root cause of the matter so as to adequately support their children in their struggles and challenges. If they did then they could devise better methods of handling their children. Dilulio (1997) asserts that most of the children who are violent, remorseless and had criminally violated others, were themselves severely abused and neglected, growing up in genuinely dire conditions of maternal deprivation, having absolutely no positive adult-child relationship in their lives. The outcome of this is that children learn to view themselves as bad and a bother to their parents. In the end they start searching for love and acceptance from sources without the family. This explains why children escape from home and engage in criminal activities where they are readily accepted and it becomes a home away from home. Martin and Colbert (1997) agree that children who are routinely treated in an authoritarian way tend to be moody, unhappy, fearful, withdrawn, un-spontaneous and irritable. This vulnerable condition lures them to peer-pressure and parental control if any is rejected vehemently.

**4.5 The Influence of Permissive Parenting Style on Juvenile Delinquency**

The third objective aimed at determining the influence of permissive parenting styles on juvenile delinquency. Families are the strongest socializing forces. Children who have

affectionate ties to their parents report greater levels of self-esteem beginning in adolescent and extending into adulthood. Muppler and Lauffer (1995) assert that inadequate maternal affection and supervision, parental conflict and mothers lack of self-confidence is related to the crimes against persons and or property. This parent and child bond is determined by the amount of time that the child spends with the parents and the communication patterns. The Table 12 below shows the distribution of persons that live with the children at home.

Table 12

*Influence of Parent's Presence at Home on Juvenile Delinquency*

<b>Parent</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Father	21	13.0
Mother	53	32.9
Both father and mother	49	30.4
Other (Aunt, Uncle, Grandparents)	38	24.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>161</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Out of the total participants 53 live with their mothers while a significant 49 live with both parents. Mothers seem to be largely charged with the parenting responsibility. There were 21 of the respondents who live with their fathers. A significant proportion of 37 juveniles live with other such as aunt, uncle, grandparents or friends. This shows that a significant number of children come from dysfunctional families which contributes to juvenile delinquency. However, there were 30.4% who come from a family with both parents but still ended up as delinquents. This means there is a need to establish the nature of relationships within the families. Macie, (2003) asserts that it is the quality and harmony of interpersonal relationships that are important factors, not the type of family structure alone. Therefore, it's not the mere presence of parent at home that is required but the quality interpersonal relationship ant time with the juvenile is what counts.

Table 13

*Frequency of Time spent by Parents with Juveniles*

<b>Time Spent with Parents</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Always	19	11.80
Sometimes	46	28.57
Rarely	56	34.78
Never	40	24.85
<b>Total</b>	<b>161</b>	<b>100.00</b>

**4.5.1 Pleasurable time spent with Parents**

In respect to spending pleasurable time with the parents, 56 respondents rarely spend pleasurable time with the parents while 40 of them never have pleasurable time with parents. Significantly 46 respondents had sometimes had pleasurable time with parents while 19 had always had pleasurable time with parents. This in essence means that 96 respondents were not enjoying pleasurable time with parents while 65 of them had pleasurable time with parents. This could be attributed to high cases of indiscipline among the children as they do not invest their time and energy in understanding their children better. When a parent spends pleasurable time with a child he becomes both a parent and a friend. A child can confide to the parent easily. Through interaction with problem solving skills, the child learns to deal with authority, people of greater power before increasing his or her own capacity of decision-making and self-control (Goldenberg & Goldenberg, 1985).

**4.5.2 Parental Monitoring of Behaviour**

Both parents are to be responsible in bringing up their children and more so to listen to their fears and life's anxieties. Adler Mupller and Lauffer (1995) maintain that inadequate maternal affection and supervision, parental conflict and parents lack of self-confidence is related to the commission of crimes against persons and or property. However, due to parental need to advance their career through academic advancement and improving their economic status they relegate this responsibility to other unknown persons. The result is that parents are not aware what their children are up to. The Table 14 presents the frequency of parents monitoring their children behaviour.



Table 14

*Parental Monitoring of juvenile's Behaviour*

<b>Response</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Yes	91	56.5
No	69	42.9
No Response	1	0.06
<b>Total</b>	<b>161</b>	<b>100.0</b>

In respect to monitoring behaviour 56.5% of the parents are strictly monitoring the behaviour of the juveniles while 42.9% of parents are not monitoring juvenile behaviour strictly. This can be attributed not only to parents being busy earning a living but the high exposure that the children face today leaving the parents unsure on how to address children's concerns. Research suggests that children of uninvolved parents are more likely to engage in delinquent antisocial acts during adolescence (Martin & Colbert, 1997).

#### **4.6 The Influence of Neglectful Parenting Style on Juvenile Delinquency**

The fourth objective aimed at determining the influence of Neglectful parenting styles on juvenile delinquency. In every family there are salient rules and regulations that govern. Parents naturally are supposed to set these rules in order to guide their children appropriately. Proper functioning rules allow for flexibility and spontaneity. Inconsistency between parents, non-communication about significant issues, confusion and uncertainty about what rules to be followed in a particular situation; and overt conflict between parents are all difficulties that parents may face. Mutual consent on the rules to be followed promote greater harmony however when parents disagree on the family rules the children become disoriented and may follow the whims of the society. Martin and Colbert (1997) simply uphold that conflict between parents may interrupt effective parenting. Table 15 presents the distribution of persons who decide the rules to be followed at home.

Table 15

*Distribution on who decides on the Rules to be followed at Home*

<b>Parent</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Father	45	28
Mother	64	39.8
Both Father and Mother	22	13.7
Parents and Children	2	1
House Help	4	2.6
Others (Aunt, uncle, Grandparents)	24	14.9
<b>Total</b>	<b>161</b>	<b>100</b>

From the data collected, 39.8% of the participants reported that the rules to be followed at home are decided by the mother while 28% reported that the rules are decided by the father. 13.7% on the other hand are decided by both parents. As for this case therefore, most rules in the family are decided by one of the parents. There was a significant 14.9% who reported that other persons who take an active role in deciding what is to be followed at home. Where no mutual agreement is reached or parents seem to be in disagreement then a juvenile is confused on what is the right thing to do. The rules in a functional family are overt and clear (Bradshaw, 1996).

#### **4.6.1 Who enforces the rules at home?**

The importance of parents to mutually enforce rules collectively may underscore the gains achieved in the rules and regulations decided upon. In a case where only one parent seem to been enforcing the rules then the other parent is viewed as the ‘good one’; this eventually strains family interpersonal relationships and in effect harm the cordial working family pattern. Parents even when in disagreement should be seen to work in sync and support each other in enforcing the rules. The table below indicates the distribution of persons who enforce the rules at home.

Table 16

*Distribution of who enforces rules at home?*

<b>Parent</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Father	37	22.98
Mother	65	40.37
Both Father and Mother	14	8.70
Parents and Children	3	1.86
House help	17	10.56
Others( Aunt, Uncle, Grandparents)	25	15.53
<b>Total</b>	<b>161</b>	<b>100.00</b>

A significant 40.37% of the respondents reported that the mother is responsible in the enforcement of the rules to be followed at home while the fathers contribute 22.98%. Important to note is the low percentage of joint effort of parents and children amounting to 1.86% in enforcing the rules at home. There were 10.56% of juveniles that reported that the house help does the enforcing of rules meaning that this duty was relegated to the house help by either absentee or uninvolved parents. Where there is not concerted effort by both parents to read from the same script and enforce the rules in equal measures then children easily find an escape route from following the rules with a favourite parent. In essence it means that the juvenile should beware of the parental expectations and the consequences therein of failing to abide.

#### **4.6.2 Juvenile's Knowledge of Parental Expectations**

Out of the total population that took part in the study 58.39% did not know what exactly their parents expected on them while 39.75% understood what their parents expect of them. This implies that crux of the problem in most juvenile families is lack of clear communication between the parents and the children. Communication in the family should be open, that is, the ability to share ideas and feelings with one another (Ngwiri, 2008). In addition to this, in a dysfunctional family, there is confluence of conflicted communication. The communication style in dysfunctional families is either open conflict or the agreement never to disagree (confluence). There is rarely any real contact (Bradshaw, 1996). In order to achieve clear communication, family meetings are critical as family members are able to express their feelings, thoughts and actions and thereby solve any differences that may exist.

Table 17

*Juvenile's Knowledge of Parental Expectation*

<b>Knowledge of Parental Expectation</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Yes	64	39.75
No	94	58.39
No Response	3	1.86
<b>Total</b>	<b>161</b>	<b>100</b>

**4.6.3 Frequency of family meetings**

A total of 38.5% of the participants under study reported that they had frequent meetings at home to discuss family issues while 61.5% did not have such meetings. Family meetings are geared towards greater harmony, mutual understanding and ironing out differences that may be imminent in the family. Where a family is able to hold frequent meeting and social gatherings then greater bonding is achieved therein. Holford, 2003 argues that teaching children self-discipline is a demanding task that requires patience, thoughtful attention, cooperation and understanding of the child. Frequent Family meetings deepen mutual understanding hence greater cohesion.

Table 18

*Presence of Meetings to Discuss Family Issues at Home*

<b>Family Meeting</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Yes	62	38.5
No	99	61.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>161</b>	<b>100</b>

The reciprocal bond between the parent and the child is paramount for child's development. The behaviour modelled by the parent and mentorship experienced acts as a fundamental pillar to child's future character. Parenting factors such as the ability to communicate and provide proper discipline play a critical role in determining whether people misbehave as children and even later as adults. Siegel (2000) contends that even children living in high crime areas will be better able to resist the temptations of the streets if they receive fair discipline, care and support from parents who provide them with strong role models.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 5.1 Summary

Based on the objectives, research questions and the analysis of the collected data, the following findings were established.

- i. Authoritative Parenting style is the ideal in preventing juvenile delinquency. Parents show a high level of warmth and a high level of control which helps the juvenile to be morally upright.
- ii. Authoritarian parenting style trains the juveniles to be violent especially in getting what they want and in turn engage in criminal activities for the same. They become an easy target for peer pressure and criminal gangs as they yearn for affection. Put simply, 'violence begets violence'
- iii. Permissive Parenting style disillusion the juvenile to believe that they can get whatever they want at their will. Eventually, reality dawns on them that this is not the case and they become embittered and frustrated.
- iv. Neglectful Parenting styles influence juvenile delinquency as the juveniles lack a role model to learn from. They grow up with mixed information from peers and other significant persons. In the end, it's the peers' influence that guides the juvenile.

#### 5.2 Conclusions

Based on the objectives, research questions and the analysis of the collected data, the study made the following conclusions

- i. The quality of parental relationship with the juvenile is important in reducing juvenile delinquency trends. Parents' role model is paramount to juveniles. It should be noted that the boy child is more affected than the girl by the parenting style
- ii. Punishment by spanking does not necessarily instil discipline in children. On the contrary this is a contributing factor to delinquency as juvenile translate this to hatred.
- iii. Most parents do not monitor their juvenile behaviour appropriately. As a result they were unable to identify and curb behaviour before getting out of hand.

- iv. Some juveniles came from a family with both parents but still ended up as juveniles. This means it's not the mere presence of parents but the quality of interpersonal relationships experienced. In addition the family rules and regulations need to be developed by both the parents and children.

### **5.3 Recommendation**

Based on the research findings, a number of recommendations have been made which if implemented will improve parenting styles and reduce juvenile delinquency

- i. Parents should be present for their children in order to monitor their behaviour. This would also give them an ample time to relate to their children and support them in their challenges and confusion.
- ii. Parents should evaluate better punishment methods apart from spanking which seem to be preferred by most parents. Guidance on what to do should be exercised more often.
- iii. Parents should use discretion on what a child wants at any given time. Children should not be indulged in everything they ask for. Parents need to teach their children to postpone their immediate gratification
- iv. The rules and regulations that govern the family should be done in consultation with the juveniles in order to own them and have a chance to seek for clarification. It also instils a sense of responsibility in the juvenile.

### **5.4 Suggestions for Further Research**

This study recommends further research on the following areas.

- i. Effects of single parenting on juvenile delinquency
- ii. Challenges of parenting in the modern society

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## APPENDICES

### APPENDIX A: JUVENILE'S QUESTIONNAIRE

Dear respondent,

My name is George Warari Kimingiri, a student at Egerton University pursuing Master of Arts degree in Guidance and Counselling. I am conducting research on the effects of parenting styles on Juvenile Delinquency in Nakuru Town, Kenya. You have been selected as a participant in this research. The success of this research depends on your truthfulness and complete answers to the questions asked. Your name will not be used in the report and your response will not be linked to you. The information given is for academic purpose only and will be treated in utmost confidentiality. Please fill in the questionnaire according to the instructions given.

Yours Sincerely,

George Warari

### INSTRUCTIONS

This questionnaire is designed to collect information concerning the influence of parenting styles on juvenile delinquency. You are kindly asked to respond to all items correctly and honestly to the best of your ability.

#### Child's Background Information

##### Personal Details

1. (a) Gender .....

(b) Age .....

2 (a) Are your parents (*Answer if you know*)

Married..... Divorced .....

Single ..... Widow .....

Separated..... Widower.....

**Parent Economic Activity**

(Tick as appropriate)

2(b) What do your parent do for a living?

Mother: Farmer      Labourer      Self Employed      Government Employee

Other (Non-Government Employee)

Father: Farmer      Labourer      Self Employed      Government Employee

Other (Non-Government Employee)

**Relationship between the Parent and the Child**

3(a) Who do you live with at home

Father      Mother      Father and Mother      Other (Aunt, Uncle, Grandparents)

(b) How is your relationship with your Parents?

Father:    Very close      Close      Not Close      Never Close

Mother:    Very Close      Close      Not Close      Never Close

3. (c) Do your parents strictly monitor your behaviour?      Yes       No

(d) How often do you spend Pleasurable time with your parents?

Always       Sometimes       Rarely       Never

4 (a) Which of the following methods do the parents use in punishing (or correcting) you?

Spanking (beating).....

Verbal abuse.....

Denying food.....

Public shaming (embarrassing you) .....

Denying privileges e.g. watching T.V. going out .....

Counselling (discussing with them) .....

Any other (specify) .....

**Rules and Regulations in the Family**

5. (a) Who decides the rules to be followed at home?

Father    Mother    House Help    Both father& mother    Parents& children  
                  
Other (Aunt, Uncle, Grandparents)

(b) Who enforces the rules?

Father    Mother    House Help    Both father & mother    Parents & children  
                  
Other (Aunt, Uncle, Grandparents)

6. Do you know what your parents expect you to do?    Yes     No

7. Do you have family meetings at home to discuss family issues?

Yes     No

