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jeunesse dans le Kenya rural; région de Masaba en pays  
Kisii**

Joseph Akuma Misati

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# UNIVERSITE DE PAU ET DES PAYS DE L'ADOUR



Ecole Doctorale Sciences Sociales Et Humanites (Ed 481)  
Les Afriques dans le Monde (LAM)

## **LES DETERMINANTS SOCIO-ECONOMIQUES ET CULTURELS DE LA JEUNESSE DANS LE KENYA RURAL ; REGION DE MASABA EN PAYS KISII**

Thèse pour le Doctorat en Sociologie présentée et soutenue publiquement

Par :

**Monsieur AKUMA Joseph Misati**

Le 8 décembre 2016

**Thèse dirigée par Monsieur Christian THIBON et Monsieur Paul Nyaga MBATIA**

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## ABSTRACT

The subject of youth socialization is a concern for all societies worldwide. The future of communities rests, in part on how effectively they accomplish the tasks of preparing this important component of their population to become productive adults. In developing countries, characterized by rapid social change, the adaptation and unconventional life patterns of future generations, whose growth trajectories will occur in an entirely different context, calls for careful explication of the determinants of the socialization young people. In Kenya, the societal shifts and behavioral patterns, exacerbated by the unique developmental vulnerabilities often create a confluence of factors that put youth at great risk. Hence, the need to transform the ordinary institutions of society, as socializing contexts to make them relevant in preparing young people for the challenges of the future role taking is inevitable. Set in a society in rural Kisii, Masaba South – Wester Kenya, the study sought to establish how the changes in the family and that of other key social institutions such as education, religion and the media impact the socialization of the youth in the community. The ecological model for human development by Urie Bronfenbrenner (1994) and the life course framework have been adopted as the conceptual model for the study. The results of the study offer an unusually nuanced view of socialization challenges in a time of unprecedented change in Kenya's rural setting. It is shown that socio- cultural values and community norms that influence the socialization process are not constant, but always changing and sometimes contradictory and are perceived differently by young people and older members of society, thereby adversely affecting the capacity of parents and other elders to regulate the youth. In addition, it is shown that the adoption of new social structures though leading to the disruption of the transmission of specific behaviors, do not result to failure in effective socialization, but offers greater pathways for imparting positive behavior. At national level, the policy with regard to youth development is full of gaps, in terms of policy and reality, especially since the interventions are not predicated on informed assessment. Similarly, youth programs have consistently been guided by the philosophy of deficit and problem oriented approaches. Thus, the ideology that underpins the development of young people often focuses on projects focusing on imparting vocational skills and access to financial services for young people that have already "fallen off the cracks". More critical, the country lacks an explicit family policy on whose lenses issues affecting the family and its various population segments, especially the youth could be examined. The study makes an important contribution to the understanding of the emergent area of research aimed at understanding the structural obstacles to young people's transition to adulthood by creating new channels and orientation for seeking pathways to personal development based on new ways and attitudes of human interaction.

**Keywords: Socialization, Sociology of family, Cultural Change, Youth Development, Kenya**

## RESUME

Le thème de la socialisation des jeunes est un sujet de préoccupation pour toutes les sociétés du monde entier. Ceci est dû principalement au fait que l'avenir des communautés repose, en partie, sur l'efficacité avec laquelle elles accomplissent les tâches de préparation de cette

composante importante de leur population, à devenir des adultes productifs qui contribueront au bien-être de leurs communautés. Dans les pays en voie de développement, caractérisé par un changement social rapide, une adaptation à des modes de vie non conventionnelles de la part des générations futures, dont les trajectoires croisent des contextes entièrement différents, l'explication minutieuse des déterminants de la socialisation des jeunes est incontournable. Au Kenya, les changements sociétaux et les comportements, exacerbés par les vulnérabilités associées au développement, créent souvent une confluence de facteurs qui placent les jeunes devant de grands risques. Par conséquent, la nécessité de transformer les institutions sociales ordinaires de la société, en tant que cadres de socialisation, pour les rendre pertinentes dans la préparation des jeunes aux défis de l'avenir, est inévitable.

Portant sur une société du Kisii rural, Masaba Sud – Ouest, l'étude a cherché à établir comment le changement de la famille et celui d'autres institutions sociales clés, telles que l'éducation, la religion et les médias, ont un impact sur la socialisation de la communauté des jeunes. Le modèle écologique pour le développement humain (Urie Bronfenbrenner, 1994) et l'examen des parcours de vie ont été adoptés comme modèle conceptuel et méthodologique de l'étude.

Les résultats de l'étude offrent une vue particulièrement nuancée des défis de socialisation pour une période de changement sans précédent dans un cadre rural du Kenya. Il est démontré que les socio-valeurs culturelles et les normes communautaires qui influencent le processus de socialisation ne sont pas constantes, mais qu'elles changent toujours et d'une façon parfois contradictoire et qu'elles sont perçues différemment par les jeunes et les membres plus âgés de la société, affectant ainsi négativement la capacité des parents et des autres anciens de réguler les jeunes. En outre, il est démontré que l'adoption de nouvelles structures sociales, conduisant à l'interruption de la transmission de comportements spécifiques, ne donne pas lieu à l'échec de la socialisation, mais offre de plus grandes voies pour favoriser un comportement positif.

Au niveau national, la politique en charge du développement de la jeunesse est pleine de lacunes, en termes de politiques suivies, d'autant que les interventions n'ont pas été fondées sur une évaluation éclairée des problèmes. De même, les programmes pour les jeunes ont constamment été guidés par la philosophie du déficit et par des approches orientées. Ainsi, l'idéologie qui sous-tend le développement des jeunes, a souvent mis l'accent sur les projets centrés sur la transmission des compétences professionnelles et l'accès aux services financiers des jeunes, alors que fait défaut une politique familiale explicite.

L'étude apporte une contribution à une recherche qui vise à comprendre les entraves structurelles, les nouvelles voies et transitions des jeunes à l'âge adulte et les chemins de développement personnel basé sur de nouvelles façons et attitudes, marquées par l'interaction humaine.

**Mots clés: Socialisation, Sociologie de la famille, changement culturel, développement de la jeunesse, Kenya**

**QUOTE**

Every Society must somehow solve the problem of transforming children into (meaningful) adults, for its survival depends on that solution.

**Selznick and Darroch (1981)**

## DÉCLARATION

Cette thèse est un travail original fait par moi-même. Elle n'a jamais été présentée dans une autre université pour l'obtention d'un diplôme quelconque.

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## **DEDICATION**

This work is dedicated to my sister, late Joyce Kemunto Akuma (1967 - 1987), who during our childhood was fond of me and often carried me in her back. The vagaries of illness which struck early and throughout her lifetime deprived her the opportunity of navigating the youthful years of her life which are prone to the challenges of growing up in Gusii, the subject which forms the core of the thesis in this study.

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## ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

<b>ASAL</b>	Arid and semi-arid lands
<b>ASRH</b>	Adolescent sexual and reproductive Health
<b>CBS</b>	Central bureau of statistics
<b>CD</b>	Compact disk
<b>CIA</b>	Central Intelligence agency
<b>CMD</b>	Centre for multi-party Democracy
<b>CMD-K</b>	Centre for Multi-party Democracy
<b>CRHR</b>	Centre for Research on human Rights
<b>CSA</b>	Centre for study of Adolescence
<b>DEO</b>	District education officer
<b>DHS</b>	Demographic and Health Survey
<b>FGC</b>	Female Genital Cutting
<b>FHI</b>	Family Health International
<b>HIV/AIDS</b>	Human Immuno deficiency Virus / Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
<b>ICPD</b>	International Conference on Population and Development
<b>ICT</b>	Information Communication Technologies
<b>IEA</b>	Institute of Economic Affairs
<b>IEC</b>	Information Education Communication
<b>IMF</b>	International Monetary Fund
<b>KAIS</b>	Kenya AIDS Indicator Survey
<b>KBC</b>	Kenya broadcasting corporation
<b>KCPE</b>	Kenya Certificate of primary education
<b>KCSE</b>	Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education
<b>KDHS</b>	Kenya Demographic and health Survey
<b>KHCR</b>	Kenya Human Rights Commission
<b>KIE</b>	Kenya Institute of Education
<b>KIHBS</b>	Kenya Integrated Household Budget Survey
<b>KKV</b>	Kazi kwa vijana
<b>KNBS</b>	Kenya National Bureau of statistics
<b>MAFS</b>	Median Age at First Sex
<b>MDG</b>	Millennium Development Goals
<b>MOEST</b>	Ministry of Education Science and Technology
<b>NACADA</b>	National Agency for Campaign against Drugs
<b>NACOSTI</b>	National Council for Science & Technology
<b>NASCOP</b>	National Aids Control Program
<b>NBS</b>	National Bureau of Statistics
<b>NCPD</b>	National Council for population and development
<b>NFPA</b>	National family planning association
<b>NYS</b>	National youth service
<b>OECD</b>	Organization for Economic Co- Operation and Development
<b>PBT</b>	Problem behavior Theory
<b>PCEA</b>	Presbyterian Church of East Africa

<b>PRB</b>	Population reference Bureau
<b>SACMEQ</b>	Southern and Eastern Africa Consortium for monitoring education Quality
<b>SAMHSA</b>	Substance abuse and mental health services Administration
<b>SCRT</b>	Social and community responsibility Theory
<b>SDA</b>	Seventh day Adventist
<b>SPSS</b>	Statistical Package for the Social Sciences
<b>SRHR</b>	Sexual reproductive health and rights
<b>STI</b>	Sexually transmitted Infections
<b>SYPT</b>	Subsidized youth polytechnic Tuition
<b>TFR</b>	Total Fertility rate
<b>TIVET</b>	Technical Industrial Vocational and Entrepreneurship Training
<b>UN</b>	United Nations
<b>UNAIDS</b>	Joint United Nations programme on Acquired Immune deficiency Syndrome
<b>UNDP</b>	United Nations Development Programme
<b>UNECA</b>	United Nations Department for Economic Affairs
<b>UNESCO</b>	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
<b>UNFPA</b>	United Nations fund for population activities
<b>UNICEF</b>	United Nations Children's Emergency Fund
<b>USAID</b>	United States Agency for International Development
<b>WHO</b>	World Health Organization
<b>YEDF</b>	Youth enterprise development fund
<b>YHHs</b>	Youth headed households

**Map 1: Map of Kenya**



**Source:** Survey of Kenya, 2015

## GENERAL INTRODUCTION

### 1. Introduction

The study is set in Masaba South Sub- County, a rural region in South – Western Kenya. The study location is predominantly inhabited by the Gusii ethnic group, whom together with the other Bantu groups namely; Kikuyu, Meru, Embu, Akamba, Miji - Kenda and the Swahili account for nearly two thirds of the country's population. The current population stands at 138, 470 and is projected to rise steadily to 144,418 by the year 2017 (KNBS, 2012). Kisii County is characterized by a youthful and child rich population, with the 0-14 year olds making up 45% of the County's total population (KNBS, 2013). Like in the other parts of the country, though predominantly an agricultural area, the locality has experienced unprecedented and rapid socio- economic, political and cultural changes in the recent decades.

Rapid social change in the African continent has elicited focus on familial, educational and political transformations in the region (Cardoso, 1987; Thornton *et.al*, 1987; Yatta, 2007; Marito *et.al*, 2008; Wahab *et.al*, 2012). An important component of this transformation that has received relatively less attention is the adaptation and unconventional life patterns of future generations (Abbink, 2005; Blum, 2007; Ndugwa, 2010; Kabiru *et.al*, 2012). Studies have shown that, compared with previous generations, the growth trajectories of the next generations in Africa will occur in an entirely different context because of the dual effects of traditional and modern cultural values (France, 2007; Hine, 2007; UNECA, 2009). As elsewhere in the world, the lives of the young people in the continent are subject to complex challenges resulting from numerous changes in the wider society. The changes have been attributed mainly to the phenomena of globalization (Gidley, 2001; Shobha, 2006; UN, 2005; Trask, 2010).

Youth and adolescence being a period of emotional, physical, and psychological development contributes substantially to the well-being of the individual in adulthood (UNFPA, 2010; Ringheim, *et.al*, 2010; World Bank, 2007; Shaw, 2001). Kenya's population is youthful with about 66 % of her population constituting those below the age of 25 (Kenya, Republic of 2012). The consequence of a youthful population is that it provides a strong population momentum for future child bearing (Kenya, Republic of 2011). More so, as explained in chapter 1(see section 1.2), having a youthful population is likened to a "double edged sword". It is advantageous because it provides the society with the opportunity to nurture an educated and civilized citizenry. It also serves as a readily available market for the consumption of

goods and services, while at the same time providing a huge tax base for the country's revenue needs. On the other hand, the available social services are strained and the demand for jobs and other opportunities places the country at a disadvantage.

There is evidence establishing a direct link between societies with large proportions of young people and political and social violence (Urdal 2012; Daumerie *et.al*, 2010). With the largest – ever generation of young people entering adulthood, the youth are particularly at risk of being exposed to and engaging in violence and crime (OECD, 2011). This is explained by the fact that, with the heightened demand for education, the adult population and the government are unable to fully sustain the costs for schooling. This leads to early withdrawal from school by the young people and other associated costs. Coupled with unavailability of jobs, the involvement of the youth in criminal activities becomes a reality.

Moreover, young people become sexually active by their late teens and the high level of sexual activity is associated with risks such as HIV/AIDS, teenage pregnancies, unsafe abortion and school dropout. In Kenya, the HIV/AIDS pandemic has continued to impact negatively on the health of young people (Kenya Republic of, 2006). The HIV prevalence rate among the young people aged 15-24 has remained at slightly over 3% since 2003 (Republic of Kenya, 2007). Among the 14.3 million adolescents that gave birth in 2008, 1 in every 3 was from Sub-Saharan Africa (WHO, 2004). Pregnancy is the single most leading cause of death for young women aged 15 – 19 worldwide with complications of child birth and unsafe abortion being the major risk factors (Hussain, 2012). In Kenya, teenage child bearing is common and increases dramatically from 2 % of girls at age 15 to 36 % at age 19 (NCPD, 2013). According to a national survey of secondary school students in Kenya, 13 % had experienced their first pregnancy by age 14, while 10 % of the girls interviewed had been pregnant and had either given birth or had procured an abortion (CSA, 2003). In a study conducted by the Ministry of Health in Kenya to determine the incidence and complications of unsafe abortion in the country, about half (48 %) of all the post abortion complications clients were aged less than 25 years (Republic of Kenya, 2013).

The background presented clearly shows that the Kenyan youth are highly exposed to the adverse health outcome events largely resulting from their precariousness. Hence, this calls for adequate attention to the sexual and reproductive health needs of the members of the age-group. Other than the health problems, the girls' future is affected by: constraining them from

participating in education (Achoka *et al.*, 2012) and increasing the chances of a poor marriage. They are also likely to experience unemployment or a low paying job (Population Reference Bureau, 2013). Worse still, the assumption of the burden of caring for and bringing up a child before the mother is emotionally and physically prepared for the task and the experience of social ostracism exposes them to untold suffering (Singh, 1998). This study considers the inadequacy in addressing the young peoples' sexual and reproductive health needs as a major policy and research gap in Kenya. The study thus sets out to uncover the constraints to the amelioration of these negative outcomes in the study area.

Like in the other parts of the world, drugs and other substances are part of experimentation and risk-taking during the period of early and late adolescence in Kenya (Mazibuko, 2000; NACADA, 2012). Studies have shown that regular drug use increases with age and is highest among the 23-24 year olds (Njonjo, 2010; NACADA, 2009). The initiation of its use and prevalence is associated with numerous disorders such as: sensation – seeking, symptoms of depression and anxiety and post - traumatic stress (SAMHSA, 2009). Studies have also shown that the antecedents of adult mental disorders can be detected in children and adolescents (WHO, 2005). Alcohol and drug and substance use have also been found to have adverse effects on various aspects of interpersonal status. Similarly, low self – esteem, interpersonal relationships and the general mental health of the young members of society often lead to high suicide rates among adolescents (Scheier *et.al* 1995; WHO, 2012; Kanalley, 2005; Nock *et al.*, 2008; WHO, 2010; Kok *et al.*, 2011). The understanding of the challenges presented by the involvement of young people in the abuse of drugs and other substances is at the core of this investigation.

As already pointed out, the societal shifts and behavioral patterns exacerbated by the unique developmental vulnerabilities create a confluence of factors that place today's young people at heightened risk for poor health outcomes already described. The unique context in which the youth are developing calls for a deeper understanding of the issues affecting their health and wellbeing (Crocket, 1997; UN, 2005). Further, the need to transform the society's mainstream social institutions and contexts to make them relevant for preparing adolescents for their future roles in society calls for a critical understanding of the issues that confront the young people. However, the state of knowledge of adolescent and youth wellbeing outside developed countries is scanty (Halve *et al.*, 2005; Arnett, 2008) and the limited literature available is often restricted to the themes of sexual and reproductive health (ASRH) and



majorly concentrates on the urban spaces (Kabiru *et.al.*, 2013; Bearinger, 2007; Joschka, 2012; Veit *et.al.*, 2012). This study therefore, aims at interrogating the interplay between socialization as a unique human development process and its agents within the context of social and cultural change. In so doing, the study is guided by the premise that, the degrees to which young people develop their abilities and endeavor to realize their potential is determined by the social contexts of their interactions and societal experiences.

## **2. The agents of the socialization of young people**

The question of the knowledge of adolescent and youth wellbeing has been a dominant feature in the ideals of past political action and the diverse paradigms of the social science disciplines over the last three centuries (Shorter, 1975; Krausman, 1994; Griffiths, 1996). The understanding of youth problematic behavior has changed over time in response to the changing influences and concerns of the dominant social sciences such as Psychology, Educational studies, Criminology, Cultural studies and Sociology (France, 2007; Arnett *et al.*, 2011; Smetana, 2011). Using a historical perspective, France (2007) has examined the manner in which various disciplines have sought to define the “youth crisis”. He characterizes his findings into five distinct epochs: Starting with eighteenth and Nineteenth centuries, early twentieth century, the post war era, the 1960s and 1980s and lastly, the period from the 1980s to date. According to France (2007), in principle, the youth are incorrectly portrayed as a homogenous group, ignoring the inherent notions of diversity. In addition, there is lack of attention to the wider political and economic processes as well as the failure to recognize the embedded structural nature of the youth experience (France, 2007). This perspective is apt because today’s youth inhabit spheres that are replete with dissimilar challenging situations that render them particularly vulnerable. More so, their endeavor to negotiate their private lives and public roles are often strongly confronted by the effects of the reconfigurations brought about by the impact of globalization. The present study takes into consideration, the view that the young people’s unique experiences play a central role in their growth and in effect determines the outcomes of their socialization experiences.

From the political constructionist point of view, the youth has been seen in duality, both as a “threat to the status quo” as well as an innocent vulnerable being in need of protection from the ravages of modernity. Generally, the young people in society tend to be seen as a problem (Roche *et al.*, 2005). Jones *et al.* (2003 and) and Lincoln *et al.* (1994) have regarded this tendency to frame young people as “troubled”, “at risk” or “less rational” and “delinquent” as a “Crisis of representation”. This view corresponds with the Kenyan perspective in which the

youth are generally considered an acute social problem. In Kenya, the problematic nature of the young people is placed squarely on the shoulders of society, which is regarded as being responsible for denying the youth the opportunity to develop their potential. However, it is the considered opinion of this study that such views need to be challenged because it is untrue to argue that the young people lack the agency to behave consistently with societal expectations. On the contrary, young people usually find themselves trapped in a cycle of operation revolving between the unacknowledged conditions of their actions, which ordinarily results to unintended consequences. Further, this study argues that in this context, the representation of the youth problem seems to have focused on the negative socialization outcomes for far too long. Hence an understanding of the socio - cultural systems and structures, which play a central role in determining human behavior, remains the core target of academic investigation and policy intervention.

Flowing from the aforementioned, an important question to ask, that is of critical importance to this study is: Where and how does socialization of young people take place? In answering this, Bronfenbrenner (1993) proposes that research geared towards examining socialization of children and young people should do so within an ecological context. Hence, the various ecological settings in which an individual (young person) participates, such as the family, religion (church) and education (school) comprise significant social spaces for analysis. The study has, therefore, adopted the context specific approach to the understanding on how the key contexts such as the family, school settings and religious institutions influence norm implantation among the youth in the contemporary Kenyan society.

The family is responsible for the transmission of society's values, beliefs, attitudes and skills to the youth. It also plays the role of assigning social roles and the provision of emotional support. Religion, another socialization agent, has also been found to play a key role in shaping the behavior and attitudes of young people. According to Jessor (1998), church attendance has been found to promote adolescent health enhancing behaviours. Other studies have also found that parental religiosity is linked with higher levels of parental involvement in family. In Kenya, Mugambi (1996:6) notes that religion is regarded as an indispensable pointer to individual and communal self-understanding. It is thus common that in Kenya, as elsewhere in the world, young people and adults alike strive to abide by the doctrines of the religious denominations so as to reap the aforementioned benefits. However, religiosity does not always produce desirable effects for the individual and society. It can also bring about

negative consequences as demonstrated by the proliferation of religious fundamentalism and the radicalization of youth presently experienced in the country.

Like the religious institutions, educational institutions such as schools and colleges play a leading role in the socialization process. As socializing agents, they are the society's formal institutions where learning takes place (Berns, 2012: 186). Further, educational institutions provide the intellectual and social experiences from which children and young people develop skills, knowledge, interests and attitudes that shape their abilities to perform adult roles. In Kenya, the country's eight national goals of education aim at imparting skills and instilling positive attitudes among the young people. Education is, therefore, regarded as the avenue to prosperous living in the later life of individuals. For this reason, education is seen as an important socializing sphere. All parents, therefore, normally aspire to enable their off springs to acquire education at all costs to the highest standards and as much as their efforts can provide. Nevertheless, educational provisions remain a daunting challenge for parents and the government in Kenya.

This study attempts to generate new knowledge to guide in designing relevant and effective social policies and programmes for the youth. Specifically, it is hypothesized that while societies affect adolescents, adolescents also actively affect societies. As such, whereas they may have little or no influence over the macro - societal changes, young people are not passive actors in the transition to a unhealthy adulthood, but play an active role in selecting and interacting with the contexts in their immediate environment (Delgado, 2006; Evans, 2010). Hence the need to target the institutions for reform and contexts to better prepare the adolescents for the future. Similarly, the social policies and programmes should be crafted to fit the local social and cultural as well as the values and priorities of the adolescents and young people (Larson, 2002).

### **3. The family as the primary socialization agent in Kenya**

The African family is experiencing stress and strains, shortages and difficulties with all practical problems of social change (Ocholla Ayayo, 2000). In spite of its changing nature, it remains the only dominant and natural fora for providing the emotional and material resources necessary for healthy growth of its members (Belsey, 2005). Like any other institution, the family interfaces with others such as, the educational, economic, religious, cultural, and political institutions which present opportunities and challenges to it (Amotang

*et.al*,2004). The institution of the family is subject to wide ranging social, economic, political and demographic influences, which simultaneously mediate how individuals respond to social change. In Africa, it is at the family level that the society feels more acutely the pain of change (Popenoe, 1998). In Kenya, studies have shown that the family's role is in most part affected by the level of development and significant change experienced at the regional levels (Swadener, 2000:18). For instance, in child rearing, among the Arid and Semi-Arid land communities, children are still raised within the clan context, while in the agricultural and urban communities; it is common practice to rely on care takers outside the home to lend support. It is thus important to recognize the diversity and variations under which the impact of change on the family in Kenya takes place. More importantly, the impact has a direct bearing on how the important social institutions perform their role in society.

In the 1970's, Shorter (1975) described the emerging postmodern family as characterized by among others the youth's indifference to the family's identity. Gergen (1991) has described the emerging family as the "saturated family", whose members feel their lives scattering in intensified "busyness". In addition to absorbing exposure to myriad values, attitudes, opinions, lifestyles, and personalities, family members have become embedded in a multiplicity of relationships. The technologies of social saturation have created turmoil and a sense of fragmentation, chaos and discontinuities. Today, digital technology has revolutionized communication. Whereas this development has created a more versatile environment for learning and living, questions abound concerning its adverse impacts on children and young people as they grow up. Nevertheless, in Kenya, the family is the basic unit in which traditional norms and values, beliefs, and practical skills are first imparted into the young members of the society for their future survival as functional adults.

The role of the family is crucial in the development of young people<sup>1</sup>. For instance, parents' influence over their children is highest when they are younger, with the influence reducing as they grow older and is replaced by mass media and peers. Today, television, radio and the internet are the most prominent sources of information on sexual and reproductive health. This clearly shows that the socialization landscape among young people is fast changing in the contemporary society. Hence in the contemporary society, most young people (33%) have no source of reproductive health information (KNBS, 2009). Also, majority of Kenya's

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<sup>1</sup>In their theory development to explain adolescent Socialization in cross- Cultural Perspectives, Tallman et. Al (1983) have proposed that the family provides an initial arena within which the needs of the individual and the requisites of the social structure are confronted.

young people are unemployed and the rapid rate of growth in the working age population exacerbates unemployment and fuels frustration which increases the likelihood of violence, conflict and criminality. In Kenya, 53 % of crime is predominantly committed by persons aged between 16 and 25 years. (Republic of Kenya, 2013). Of these, the crimes committed by males include: robbery and theft (99%), homicide (84 %) and assault (79%), while women commit three types of crimes: infanticide and procuring abortion (84%), concealing birth (80%) and dangerous drugs and criminal damage (75%) (Republic of Kenya, 2013)

#### **4. Statement of the problem**

Although the youth constitute the majority of the population in Africa and are at the centre of societal interactions and transformation, they are often placed at the margins of public sphere and major socio - economic and cultural processes (Honwana, *et.al*, 2005). The youth provide the window to understanding broader socio - economic and cultural transformation in Kenya (Sagwe *et.al*, 2013; CMD-K, 2013; Kenya Republic of, 2013) and are the focal point of the many changes characterizing the contemporary African scene (Demi chili, 2009; Assad *et.al*, 2007; Khouri *et.al*, 2011). As makers of society, the young people contribute to the norms, rituals and directions of society which are also being shaped by them (Mizuko *et.al*, 2008).

As already pointed out the youth are generally perceived as the source of a myriad of problems plaguing the country today: crime, violence, illicit drugs, high youth unemployment and premarital pregnancies (Cunningham, 2004) which are putting enormous financial and psychological costs on the young people and their societies. As in other parts of the developing world, the Kenyan youth face serious challenges which severely affect their growth and development. Available evidence indicates that 7 out of 10 women and 8 out of 10 young men have had sex by age 20 and almost 5 out of 10 adolescents begin childbearing before the age of 20 (WHO, 2001; CBS, 2002). The traditional values and strict taboos that once regulated sexual behaviors among the youth have broken down and have not been replaced (Nsamenang, 2002). Akonga (1998: 18) notes that the “breakdown of the traditional mechanisms of control and education have contributed to the complexity of the problems of the youth, making their needs and problems unique”. Moreover, efforts to address the concerns of the youth, especially, in rural areas and harness their potential generally remain infrequent and insufficient (Sommers, 2007; Bennel, 2007). For special programmes tailored to meeting the needs of the young members of the society to be developed, there is clear need to carry out studies geared towards unraveling the mitigating factors responsible for increased

problems of the young people in society. The aforementioned outcomes of socialization (negative) results from ineffective emotional and cognitive as well as primary social and behavioral regulation among young people in society.

As socialization takes place in social contexts (ecologies), an investigation into how these ecologies (family, school, church, peers) and the socialization process impact on adolescent and youth development forms the research problem of the study. The study, therefore, raises four basic questions:

1. How do the effects of family change affect the socialization of young people in rural Kenya?
2. Does religion play any role in the socialization of young people in rural Kenya?
3. How does the mass media influence the socialization of young people in rural Kenya?
4. What role do educational institutions play in socialization of young people in rural Kenya?

## **5. Purpose and objectives of the study**

The purpose of the study will be to explore the effects of the family, education, religion, and the mass media's influences on adolescent and youth development in Kenya. The study seeks to examine how the former shapes the behaviour and attitudes of the young people. In order to achieve its purpose, the study will be guided by the following specific objectives:

1. Establish the effects of the family systems on adolescent and youth socialization in rural Kenya.
2. Determine the role of religion in adolescent and youth socialization in rural Kenya.
3. Examine the influence of the mass media on adolescent and youth socialization in rural Kenya.
4. Investigate the role of educational institutions in adolescent and youth socialization in rural Kenya.

## **6. Justification for the study**

Studies have shown that adolescence and youthhood<sup>2</sup> is a period of transition during which young people reach maturity, develop understanding of roles and relationships and acquire skills necessary to effectively take adult work and familial roles and responsibilities (Crockett

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<sup>2</sup> The term adolescent is derived from the Latin word, "*adolescere*" meaning growing up and is historically defined by WHO as period between 10 – 19 Years. On the other hand, the UN defines Youth as people aged between 15–24 years. In this study, therefore, adolescents are considered as a subset of young people.

*et.al*, 1995; Nanette, 1999; Elkind, 1998). The period offers opportunities to choose appropriate paths towards a productive life and avoid a diminished future (Carnegie council on Adolescent Development, 1998). The choices that the young people make about peer relations and risky behavior sets the stage for subsequent development into adulthood. Moreover, at the aggregate level, these choices have far reaching implications for the quality of life in such key social contexts as schools, families and the larger society. Furthermore; Erickson (1968) emphasized that adolescence is a crucial period for an individual to discover his or her identity. According to Phillips *et.al* (2013) the psychosocial development of young people appears to be related with wellbeing. Therefore, studies geared towards deeper understanding of socialization and its impact on youth development offer useful knowledge. The knowledge can be adopted to guide the modification of the relevant social institutions to make them more relevant to serving the needs of young people in contemporary society.

In Kenya, the youth constitute the majority of the population and are at the centre of societal interactions. Sociologically, youth is a period in life when individuals make many choices which in important ways have consequences for their life course (Deboeck *et.al*, 2005). It is at this age that much of the human capital is formed. Consequently, human development strategies during this transitional period have long term impacts on the structure and quality of human Capital (Kenya, Republic of, 2008). Moreover, the current initiatives by the government geared towards the welfare of the country's youth are critical. This is more the case given that, it is expected that by the year 2030, the country's population of the age bracket 15-64 years will overtake that of developed countries, reaching at least 65% by 2050 (Agwanda *et.al*, 2013). However, the youth are often placed at the margin of public sphere and major socio- political and cultural processes, making the young members of society vulnerable.

Much of the studies on youth portray them as a distinct social group that are often presented as disruptive to an otherwise coherent social order and social institutions (Schiff,*et.al*,2003; Cram,*et.al*,2007). Similarly, other studies have portrayed them as victims of the impact of the recent advances in technology. The intensification of global processes and the continued weakening of kinship and family ties have contributed to new and complex ways of understanding the youth phenomena in the contemporary Kenyan society. Indeed, the depth of understanding the lives of the youth has been marred by definitions and research questions often derived from socio economic, cultural and political contexts external to the direct

experience of the local youth .Furthermore, outside of sexual and reproductive health issues affecting young people, limited research has been conducted on the broader context of wellbeing in sub- Saharan Africa (Kabiru, *et.al.*2013). For instance, whereas some of these studies have focused on youth unemployment and involvement in crime (Mbatia, 1987; Omboto *et al.*, 2012), generally speaking, much of the current research on youth wellbeing in developing countries in general and Kenya in particular has focused on adolescent sexual and reproductive health, with a particular emphasis on HIV/AIDS (Secor-Turner *et al.*, 2013; Gama, 2009; Masese, 2011; Mehra, 2013; Onsumu, 2013), while others have concentrated on Adolescent child bearing (Njau,1993). Whereas, it is appreciated that sexual and reproductive health is one of the several components of adolescent wellbeing in its broadest sense, a multi – pronged approach targeting risk reduction across multiple fronts is required to effectively address comprehensive adolescent health needs (USAID, 2009; Secor–Turner, 2013). This study sets out to examine the contextual influences to which the young people are exposed to in the course of their developmental trajectories. This is accomplished by adopting the Bio ecological framework, which enhances a holistic approach to understanding adolescent and youth wellbeing. The findings of the study, therefore, make a significant contribution to the present debates on adolescent and youth socialization in rural Kenya and beyond.

Lastly, research aimed at recognizing the structural obstacles to establishing life as socially recognized adults by young people abound. In Africa generally and Kenya in particular, while attempts have been made to provide insights into the inability of the youth to successfully navigate the transition, the explanations so far advanced are neither clear nor conclusive, as they do not account for the failure to set in motion a viable socio – economic emancipation of the youth. The present study contributes to knowledge by creating new channels and orientations for seeking pathways to personal development based on new ways and attitudes of human interaction.

## **7. Definition of key terms and study concepts**

This section provides the operational definition of the key concepts that have been used in the study:

### **7.1 Youth**

According to the United Nations (2000), Youth is defined as comprising those persons between the ages of 15 and 24. This definition is inappropriate because being a “Youth” is relative and different cultures see it differently. Moreover, the operational definition and



nuances of the term often vary from country to country depending on the specific socio – cultural, economic, and political factors. In Kenya, the newly promulgated constitution defines youth as those individuals aged from 18 to 35 years (Republic of Kenya, 2010). In this study, in line with the international and national legal instruments, the age bracket of 12 – 24 is adopted for purposes of study analysis. As such, the adolescence stage is subsumed to fall within the Youth category and hence both concepts are used prominently albeit not interchangeably within the study.

## **7.2 Adolescence**

Adolescence is the period of transition in which young people are no longer considered children, but not yet attained the stage of being regarded an adult. Generally; it is understood to be the stage of human development starting at age 15 up to 19 years. It should be noted, however, that the concept of adolescence is continually dynamic and fluid and depends upon the region that one is talking about. In this study, the term adolescence is taken to refer to those young members of the community who fall within the age bracket of 11-19 years.

## **7.3 Traditions**

These refers to the process or a set of actions of passing over cultural information , belief and customs by a group of people from one generation to the next, normally imparted either by word of mouth or using established rituals in the community.

## **7.4 Socialization**

It is the sum of all efforts geared towards enabling members of a group to acquire its norms and meet her expectations so as to become functional members of the community now and in the future

## **7.5 Youth Crisis**

This refers to the social dislocation, alienation and privations experienced by young people resulting from lack of access to appropriate sources of knowledge and requisite resources by the agents of socialization within the context of the major social institutions in the society. In this study, the manifestations of the youth crisis include: educational challenges, youth unemployment, adolescent sexual and reproductive health outcomes, crime and delinquency and the outcomes of media use by young people.

**PART ONE**  
**YOUTH AND ADOLESCENCE**

# CHAPTER ONE

## STATE OF THE ART AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

### 1.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the background information on the importance of young people to society within the context of contemporary development scene. It starts with a review of the state of adolescence and young people globally and in the African continent. Thereafter, the definition of youth and the contexts of youth socialization within the mainstream social institutions and the impact of social change on adolescent socialization are discussed. This is then followed by the conceptual framework of the study, which is based on two theoretical models: The ecological model by Bronfenbrenner and the life course approach.

### 1.1 Global demographic landscape and young people

Globally, the youth constitute 18% of the world's population and are expected to increase to 32% by the year 2025 (Ashford *et.al*, 2006). Of these, 27 % live in the less developed countries compared to 17 % in the developed world (PRB, 2013). Similarly, while available statistics indicate that approximately 1 person in 5 between the age of 15 and 24 fall under this category, those of children (5-14 years) comprise 19.8 % of the total population. The majority (almost 85 %) of the world's young people live in developing countries, with approximately 60% in Asia, and the remaining 23% inhabiting the developing regions of Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean. The current proportion of young people (up to age 24) in Europe and North America is projected to drop from 28% to 25 and 33% to 30% by the year 2050 in Europe and North America respectively, and continue remaining so in the year 2100. On the other hand, in the African continent, while substantial decreases will be attained in the proportions of the young people, their numbers will be much higher in 2100 compared to the other parts of the world.

Furthermore, presently the number of young people in developing nations is at an all-time high (UN, 2010) and by 2025, the overall proportion of young people is projected to grow to 89.5 % of the total population, posing a major challenge in terms of provision of their social needs and welfare, such as education, health and employment opportunities. On the other hand, this category of the population has the potential to be a great impetus for development, provided that appropriate investment in human capital is made. However, if their wellbeing is

not addressed, the regions' development could be negatively affected (Chigunta, 2002; Hervish *et al.*, 2012).

As already pointed out, whereas the young people have the potential to transform the regions' development, evidence indicates that a poorly managed young population leads to instability and civil conflict (Kahl, 2006; Daiute *et al.*, 2006). For instance, the proliferation of terror groups such as the "Mungiki"<sup>3</sup> sect in Kenya and presently the "Boko Haram"<sup>4</sup> attacks in Nigeria and the resurgence of numerous Islamic groups in the West African nations such as Mali have been linked to youth perpetrators (Kagwanja, 2011; Mwangi, 2011; Campbell, 2014). In North Africa, the impact of political exclusion and political marginalization of the youth population has partly contributed to what is commonly referred to as the "Arab Spring" with far reaching implications for the respective communities (Weddady *et al.*, 2012).

Therefore, there is need to come up with effective ways of bringing up the current and future generations of young people, so as to become productive members to their communities. This study contributes to this goal by looking into the impediments to effective socialization processes in the contemporary Kenyan society.

## **1.2 African youth and the tri-crisis**

As compared to the other regions of the world, Africa's total population will continue to rise tremendously. In addition, the developing countries are expected to experience higher numbers of the elderly people, brought about by gains in life expectancy in the continent. Similarly, the proportion of the working age population is expected to rise from 55% in 2013 to 60% in 2050. Hence, by the turn of the century, the continent will be deeply immersed in what I refer to as a tri-crisis. A tri-crisis emerges when a country's population structure is characterized by a youthful population, a large pool of working age population and a greying population. The large youthful and ageing population will require more investment on social welfare services by the state, while a large pool of working people will call for the creation of more job opportunities.

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<sup>3</sup> "Mungiki" is an outlawed politico-religious sect that came into prominence in the late 1990s. Its name is a corruption of the Kikuyu word *Muingi*, meaning "multitude". At the height of its existence, its followers, who constituted mainly young people demanded protection fees from public transport operators, slum dwellers, and other businessmen in urban areas, especially Nairobi. Those who fail to oblige were brutally murdered.

<sup>4</sup> An Islamic extremist group based in North Eastern Nigeria, with some following in Chad, Niger and Northern Cameroon. Its membership is comprised of unemployed youth, with the political goal of creating an Islamic State.

Against this background, at the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) in Cairo, the 179 Countries represented asserted that population and development are inextricably linked, and that meeting people's wellbeing is necessary for both individual advancement and balanced development (UN, 1995:13). Being a critical developmental period with long - term implications for the wellbeing of the individual and society as a whole, most countries have developed policies for implementing special programmes for the young people (UN, 2006). However, often unaddressed in the policies and programmes are the unique vulnerabilities and challenges of young people, severely limiting their ability to contribute positively to their families and societies (Lundberg *et.al* 2012). As already observed, this study aims at addressing the inadequacy by generating new knowledge necessary to guide the design of effective programmes for the young people. The lives of the youth are embedded in networks comprised of communities, families and peers. Thus, the policies should be tailored to addressing the limitations in these contexts so as to make them effective socialization contexts.

The vulnerability of the youth arise from the fact that contemporary youth spend a longer time in school, begin work at a later age and get married and have children later compared to their counterparts several decades ago (Nugent, 2006; Eccles, *et.al* 2012). In addition, they are also less likely to live in poverty, unless growing up in sub - Saharan Africa or parts of Eastern Europe or central Asia. However, while in many ways the lives of young people are more complex and challenging than ever, they are also full of opportunity and more secure than in the past. The aforementioned notwithstanding, the transition to adulthood is laden with risks and challenges, as they come face to face with numerous risks along the path to adulthood. The transition entails the taking up of definitive steps by the young people who were previously depended on their parents and other care givers throughout childhood for residential, emotional and all the required support to independence. It becomes a challenging process to the youth when the requisite resources necessary for the successful navigation in the process are deficient or unavailable altogether. Some of the setbacks experienced include, HIV/AIDS, which is increasingly afflicting young people especially women, in most regions of the developing world. Other potential risks to health encountered are alcohol, tobacco and violence. More so, early sexual activity and early child bearing have also been found to have long term effects on the quality of the life of adolescents and youth.

The health needs of young people can best be addressed by policies and programmes through multi – sectoral strategies tailored towards responding to the varying social and economic circumstances of young people. However, the policies currently fail to recognize the diversity of the young people’s circumstances (UN, 2013). The Inadequacy of the contexts represents failure to invest and protect the young members of society and a choice to alienate them rather than integrate them to society (Riedel, *et.al*, 2002).

### **1.3 Socialization of young people in the contemporary societies**

Various perspectives have been put forward to describe the phenomenon of adolescence and youth (Odiase, 2014). As already pointed out, the adolescence stage falls within the broader categorization of youth as a stage in human development. In this section, a further discussion on how various scholars have described the two concepts is presented.

Santrock (2001:16) defines adolescence as “the period of life between childhood and adulthood, a process lasting from roughly ages 10 – 13 and ending at 18 – 22 years of age. He observes that while the concept is difficult to define, its attributes involves a “psychosocial and independent search for a unique identity and separateness, aimed at acquiring certain knowledge of who an individual is in relation to others”. In addition, the individual yearns for the willingness to take responsibility for which one is becoming and could like to become and the commitment to live together with the other members of the community. Bosack (2012:11) further adds that “as the adolescent does this, he or she seeks to develop self - understand within the nexus of social relationships”.

Santrock (2000) and Bosacks’ (2012) perspectives on adolescence as a stage in the life-course provide an important perspective for our understanding of this unique developmental epoch in the trajectory of an individual’s growth. However, their emphasis on age categorization and the unique attributes of the specific period fails short of explaining the great disparities in the age–continuum. Furthermore, the considerable development and experience which occurs prior to an individual reaching the said age–bracket is unaccounted for in their categorization. This study emphasizes that the combination of heredity, childhood experiences and those coming at the entry into this stage should be taken into consideration. For this purpose, the study has incorporated the life course approach into its study conceptual framework.

On the other hand, the definition of youth has remained contested for a long time. Youth is often generally understood to be the period of transition from childhood to adulthood, encompassing the processes of sexual maturation and developing autonomy from parents and other care-givers (Bennell, 2007). According to UN (2006), the age range of 15-24 is often employed to delineate the category. On its part, the World Development Report (2007) has expanded the range to include all those aged 12-24. The African youth charter regards a young person or youth to be a person aged between ages of 15 and 35 years. According to the Kenyan Constitution, article 260 defines a youth as an individual who has attained 18 years but is below 35 years (Kenya, Republic of, 2010). The Commonwealth Youth Programme defines youth as an individual between ages of 15 and 29 years old. Thornsen (2007) contends that social categories such as adolescents and youth are culturally and historically constructed and can change over time and from one social context to another. Similarly, according to Waldie (2004) classification of young people into various categories should be considered in light of context specific norms and customs such as rites of passage and assignment of social responsibilities as well as individual drive to acquire independence, prestige and social status.

Wyn and White (1997) note that the idea of categorization of people based on their age limits the analysis of young people as they grow up. Yet, the flexibility of interpretation is essential in overcoming the difficulties of age definition (UNESCO, 2004). In this study, both of these stand points are adopted. Thus, youth should most productively be conceptualized as a social process in whose meanings and experiences are socially mediated. It is equally significant to acknowledge that young people may not be seen as a single demographic unit, but must be considered as a broad category encompassing many specific sub-groups. The adoption of both stand points, therefore, serves to make the study more grounded.

Abbink (2005) has illustrated that like most social phenomena, being young in Africa as elsewhere is a socially constituted category. He notes that several authors have included groups, well advanced in their biological age in their definition of youth. These include those individuals that not completed their education, have no jobs and not in a position to raise a family. However, sociologically they resemble the many orphaned children under the age of 14 years, whom as a result of the AIDS pandemic in the continent have already resumed the role of the main bread winner for their younger siblings, effectively becoming household head. Hence, “both share a way of life defined by poverty and deprivation”. For this reason,

he remarks, there is “need to take the age boundaries as loose, open borders for the youth category”.

Nevertheless, in this study, while I adopt the contextualized understanding of adolescence and youth; as that of going beyond categories based on age and life stage alone, the 12-24 age categories have been delineated for purposes of survey respondents’ recruitment and analysis.

#### **1.4 Adolescence and youth as transition**

From the foregoing, it has emerged clearly that adolescence and youth are difficult concepts to define in so far as the use of specified and universal categories such as chronological age is concerned. However, what is true is that this particular component of individuals are poised for transiting from one category, that of childhood to the one of a responsible adult in society. In the traditional societies these were clearly marked communal undertakings and took place within a well-defined framework characterized by rituals and rites of passage (which are explained in detail in chapter two). In the modern society, due to the phenomena of modernization, this is no longer the case and how the transition is presently structured and managed is a matter of scholarly concern. More importantly in this study, how the transition is experienced in the micro-settings (i.e. family, school, religious institutions etc.) of the everyday life is of utmost concern to the investigation. As explained in chapter five (See section 5.1) the socio - cultural values and influences which guide the contemporary socialization of young people are not constant, but have been changing and at times contradictory.

Using the metaphor of a traveller, Turner (1975) posits that transitions, growing up included; are marked out in three steps: That of separation, margin, and lastly re –incorporation. The separation stage, which is likened to adolescence, is characterized by some stability with clear social identities. The one in-between (i.e. the margin) is viewed as a threshold across which all individuals must of necessity go through so as to be re - incorporated into their newly attained cultural and social adult status. In this endeavor the traveller’s status is marked by ambiguity and uncertainty. He adds that “the margins or “liminality” of the transition is situated on the threshold, located between what has been traditionally understood as the clear social identities of childhood and adulthood but now without any clear end point to transition (“communitas”). Cashmore (1984) adds that in the modern society, adolescence and later youth occur in a kind of “limbo” phase, characterized by conditions of neglect and



rootlessness. In the next section, the transition of individuals from the youthful stage to adulthood is discussed.

### **1.5 Socialization of young people among Kenyan indigenous societies**

In the traditional African indigenous societies, the transition or entry into adolescence is marked by initiation ceremonies<sup>5</sup>, which in whatever form, were regarded as the “gateway to adulthood”. In the Gusii community, the most important one was circumcision for boys and cliteridectomy for girls. According to Monyenye (1977:246), the period was characterized by a deliberately planned learning session and executed according to “well observed rules and regulations”. He observes,

*It is here that formal teaching is intensified, although it may have started long before the children reached adolescence. It is here that sex education is formally and informally taught to prepare the young people for marriage. It is here that the young adolescents learn to accomplish and become proficient in farm activities. In short it is (an) adolescent education, more than any other, which prepares and puts “final touches” on the young men and women in their readiness to enter into adult life.*

During this period, institutions for formal teaching are temporarily put in place. Monyenye (1977:246) adds that the learning takes the form of an “intensive course” with certain specific members of the community taking positions as authorized teachers, complete with a period of seclusion in which the initiates remain with the teachers most of the time.

Earlier in the period 1934–1938, in his intensive field research among the Bantu peoples of the then North Kavirondo of Western Kenya, Anthropologist Gunter Wagner (1970) found out that “circumcision alongside the elaborate initiation rites that surrounded the actual operation was essentially the single most outstanding event, even compared to other important ones such as marriage, reason being that it entailed a greater change in status (Wagner, 1970: 334). In presenting the case of the Gikuyu of central Kenya, Kenyatta (1961: 133) observes that “initiation of both sexes was the most important custom, looked upon as a

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<sup>6</sup>The initiation takes many forms depending on the society one is talking about, ranging from among others: Circumcision, Cliteridectomy, removal of teeth, Tattooing among many others.

deciding factor in giving a boy or a girl the status of manhood or womanhood in the community”. It was regarded as having enormous educational, social, moral and religious significance.

In emphasizing the indispensability of the initiation rites, Bahemuka (1982: 68) points out that among the Marakwet of Kenya, “unless a person went through the ceremonies related to initiation he or she was not allowed to join those who had been initiated”. For Mbiti (1990: 118), the procedure of initiation served an important religious function of; “introducing the initiates into the life of the living dead as well as of those yet to be born as they enter into the state of responsibility”.

The above cases point out how the rituals that characterize the moving away from childhood to the adulthood world shape how an individual is regarded in the respective communities. With the common purpose being that of transmitting the required skills to enable one to function and take up societal roles, these practices were crucial for one’s survival in the adult world. This study concurs with the views of the above scholars. However, with the changing nature of contemporary socialization as shown in this study, our findings show that these practices find little practicability and utilization in the contemporary society.

### **1.6 Adolescence and youth in the contemporary African context**

In the indigenous societies, initiation which was marked by the unique rites of passage was considered important for ushering in new individuals to be recognized as responsible members of society (Mircea, 1965). Additionally, Levine (1966: 183) points out that after such undertakings, the initiates were automatically ripe enough to assume adult responsibility and were henceforth regarded as being “intelligent”. However, today, partly resulting from the effects of modernization, the traditional routes into adulthood have become increasingly fragmented, protracted and non – linear (Bradford, 2012). In the traditional indigenous society, the pattern of movement in the transition process is structured, linear, and uni – dimensional with an individual destined for the adulthood stage- characterized majorly by maturity and independence. On the contrary, the transition today is multi - directional and fraught with the experience of moving forward and backward, for instance, as occasioned by situations of unemployment; and shaped by social circumstances such as class and gender. Secondly, it is multi - dimensional, in such a way that the labour market transition intersects

with other aspects of the life course transition. These include; relationships, settling down or home making among others.

Putting aside the thesis advanced above concerning the dimensionality of the transition, other views observe the fact that the said rites of passage responsible for charting the transitional process have disappeared altogether. In his discussion of the high prevalence of adolescent fertility in Kenya, Akonga (1997: 17) says that “because there are no institutional mechanisms (today) that define their status as children and clearly demark their transition into adulthood, the youth engage in sexual activities with as many partners as possible to prove to themselves and their partners that they are grown-ups, a situation that is in fact untrue”.

Hence, in the contemporary society, for majority of the young people, the ritual markers of the destination towards independence and adulthood have literally disappeared. Therefore, the prospects of obtaining a jobs, living or own habitation, starting a family and so forth have essentially become a mirage. This has led to the liminality of the youth to become extended.

Nevertheless, when critically considered, two contrasting views emerge from the foregoing and this calls for thorough scholarly sociological investigations to determine their viability. For instance, whether one can make a case that traditional initiation was better, and if its viability can be tested today forms part of the problem of this study. Similarly, the study interrogates the strengths and shortcomings of the contemporary versions of initiation practices in south western Kenya.

### **1.7 Social contexts of adolescent and youth socialization**

According to the ecological approach, the development of adolescent problem behaviors stems from complex and dynamic processes among the various socio-economic and cultural contexts within which the young people interact (Bronfenbrenner, 1986). Studies further indicate that young people grow to adulthood within a complex web of family, educational and schooling institutions, peer, community, cultural and societal influences that affect their present and future wellbeing (Morrow,V,2001; Edgel, P, 2005; Conger *et. al*, 2010; Dex, 2012; Roche *et. al*, 2008; Hosking *et. al*, 2010). During adolescence, developmental effects related to puberty and brain development lead to new sets of behavior and capacities that enable individuals to successfully navigate transitions in family, peer, educational domains

and health behaviors. Tallman *et. al.*, (1986) further observe that although parent – adolescent relationship is usually the focus in studying youth wellbeing, as a socialization process, its outcome can be best understood when interrogated within a social context. In the following sections, we examine the various institutional social contexts and how they impact on the health and wellbeing of young people as they move towards adulthood. The examination of these institutions is justified on account that young people are not an inactive monolithic and secluded entity. They are “actors” who occupy spaces (social institutions such as family, religion). Hence, it is the process of the “construction” of these “spaces” and “actors” which is at the heart of the sociological analysis in this study.

### **1.8 Family and the socialization of young people**

The concept of socialization entails parenting and child rearing which essentially takes place within the family setting. In as much as the mainstream functionalist, Marxist and feminist approaches to the family hold divergent stand points on the notion of social world, all regard social institutions as interrelated, with the family as consonant and in some measure adapted to other social institutions (Elliot, 1986). In this regard, the family is seen as performing a critical function in both biological as well as social reproduction. As such, the family is responsible for maintaining, replenishing and transmitting social values from generation to generation. Inevitably, it is within the family that the child is first socialized to serve not only her needs but also those of the wider society. As emphasized by Goode, 1987: 3):

*A society will not survive unless its needs are met, such as the production and distribution of commodities, protection of the young and the old .... Only if individuals are motivated to serve these needs will society continue to operate and the foundation for that motivation is laid by the family.*

The family plays a key role in the socialization of children. Research findings indicate that supporting parents to improve early childhood development is a crucial step in improving adolescent health (Hirschland, 2008). Brockman (2003) observes that there is high correlation between childhood behaviours and adolescent wellbeing. Studies also, show that the primacy of the family continues to play a key role as a predictor of positive socialization outcomes across cultures (Russel, 2002; Steinberg, 1999; Zarrett *et al.*, 2006). In a study to investigate the importance of the early years in establishing positive future trajectories among the young

people and the link between social capital and health related outcomes, McPherson *et al.* (2013) found out that nearly half of all the investigated associations in relation to family were positive. Specifically, it was indicated that children and youth living in a two - parent household reported a better outcome. Moreover, children and adolescents benefit from having a positive relationship with their parents. Similarly, being raised in a family where good communications among parents and their children is present and the young person feels supported and nurtured leads to positive socialization outcomes (Wang *et.al*, 2011; Atkins *et .al*, 2002). Observing that it is within the family setting that intra- familial processes, which have significant influences on adolescent development play out, Psychologist Malmquist (1978) states that the three main parent–child influences operating on adolescent socialization are: Quantitative interactions in terms of the frequency of contact and its correlative intensity, qualitative factors such as the manner in which people relate within a given family and the opportunities to test and re - evaluate the social techniques within a family and the outside world.

However, with the onset of several dramatic structural changes unfolding in the African family life over the past five decades, various scenarios have been witnessed. First, there has been a rise in the number of single-parent families. Secondly, the society is now experiencing an increase in divorce rates and female-headed households among others. In this study, an important focus is how these changes have influenced adolescent– parent relations and wellbeing. According to Larson *et al.* (2002), although public discussions worldwide take the form of discourse on the disintegration of the family, evidence indicates multiple trends that have both positive and negative implications alike. For instance, with regard to parent-adolescent relationship and exchange, there have been: more economic investment in children, greater investment of time and emotional support in children, parents becoming less authoritarian, more equitable treatment of the boy and girl child, while reduced parental authority and control and family violence against children have persisted (Larson *et.al*, 2002 : 86).

Be that as it may, large amounts of popular literature and the mass media in Kenya frequently attribute the high rates of teenage sexual activity, teenage pregnancy, alcohol and drug and substance abuse to the inabilities of the family. Often cited as leading to this state of affairs are low levels of parent-adolescent interaction and high levels of family conflict. Kitwood (1980) observes that the conflict in the home is largely due to a pervasive clash of values

between the parents and their adolescent children. Various studies have empirically documented that rapidly changing values, social roles, behavioral patterns and household arrangements in the various regions of the world have negatively influenced parent - adolescent relationships (Keiko et .al, 1992; Boehnke, K, 2001; Kyunghwa, 2003; Chunyi et .al, 2000). Kitwood (1980 : 112) further notes that the major issues on parent–adolescent conflict that are directly related to values include : Disagreement over the extent or nature of parental restrictions, Restrictions between members of a family when of the same age or status, Interference or influence attempts regarded as illegitimate and the disharmony arising from differences of outlook between parents. Other studies have shown that marital dissolution and reconstitution disrupt primary bonds between parents and children which in turn cause severe physical, cognitive and behavioral problems for children (Winstok, Eisikovits and Miller, 2004; Harkonen, 2013).

The foregoing observations have far reaching implications for the rearing and guiding of young people because children and young people behave as well as they are treated. As implementers of decisions about the socialization of young people, parents sometimes find these decisions overwhelming. Nevertheless, it should be borne in mind that parenting is bi – directional and hence, what a parent does to a young person is a reaction to the behavior of that individual and vice versa.

Other studies have shown that single parents are less involved in their children’s affairs, exert less parental influence and find it more difficult to supervise their children. This has been shown to lead adolescents in single parent families to exhibit significantly higher rates of deviant behavior. In such cases, adolescents who experience a transition to a step family are more likely to start drinking than those in single parent families (Rodgers *et.al*, 2002). In a study by Jeong (2010) to test how parents’ marital quality influences school adjustment among Korean adolescents, it was found out that young people are likely to adjust better when they perceive their parents as having a good marital relationship. Yongmin and Yuanzhang (2001) and Cooper *et.al*, (2011) also observe that marital disruption affects the academic progress and lead to behavioral and emotional problems among young people. Surprisingly, other studies have shown that early adolescent problem behaviours lead to parents’ divorce proneness as parents of such children perceive themselves as having a lower parenting efficacy normally associated with decreased parental involvement (Moore, C, J and Buehler, C, 2011).

In the developing countries, the responsibilities of taking care of the household are still commonly in the hands of women. Hence, the family circumstances of women as homemakers will definitely affect the wellbeing of other co - resident members, especially young people. With the exposure to western family norms, the traditional extended family systems that supported unmarried mothers such as those never married, divorced, and widowed have virtually disappeared. This has led to the emergence of female headed households and consequently put women in a more difficult financial situation and more trouble in socializing children (Kayongo – Male *et al.*, 1984). A study by the United Nations (1995) to examine how living arrangement of women and their children in developing countries affect the wellbeing of the youth, shows that children in female-headed households were more disadvantaged due to limited economic resources<sup>6</sup>. However, this has been contested as evidence to the contrary has proved that because of the authority that female heads gain, the allocation of resources within such households may be more child oriented (Himes *et.al*, 1991). As shown in Chapter eight (Section 8.4), the findings of this study contradict the view that female headed households are disadvantaged in terms of providing for the needs of the young people in the household. In contrast, the young people from female headed households experience less disruption and are better provided for in their personal welfare than those from the male – headed households.

In this study, the family is conceptualized as an important agent of socialization which plays a key role in influencing the young people’s socialization experiences. Furthermore, it is within the ecology of the family that their cultural and religious orientations influence their values, which in turn determine their developmental outcomes.

### **1.9 Education and socialization of young people**

Education provides individuals with the necessary skills and knowledge for the successful performance of adulthood roles in society. The philosophy and method of the acquisition of the information and skills differ markedly in the traditional and modern societies (Vago, 1996). According to Plato, education plays an important function in the socialization of young members of society as it provides the direction that will determine their future (Barrow, 2010: 138). Crosnoe (2004) further argues that families and schools are the two

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<sup>6</sup> UN (1995) *Living arrangements of women and their children in Developing countries: A demographic Profile*. United Nations, New York.

primary agents of socialization whose functioning is intertwined rather than isolated. The educational institutions cultivate human capital such as the skills, knowledge and the personal strategies necessary for the individual's survival in the modern market economy. Evidence linking educational attainment in early life with health outcomes in later life attest to the fact that improved education for women has substantial benefits for the health of children and youth (Save the Children, 2013).

In developing countries, completion of secondary education provides great benefits for adolescents and youth by increasing their capacity and motivation to prevent early pregnancies (Murphy *et. al*, 2007; Karra *et al.*, 2012; Kruger; Joshi 2013). In terms of labour force participation, recent evidence suggests an economic advantage of secondary schooling over primary schooling for girls. Girls are likely to reap economic benefits of education only with the completion of secondary education, unlike boys who will continue to be absorbed into the labour force much earlier in life, often at the primary school stage itself (Klassen, 1999; Reilly *et.al*, 2005; Al samarra, 2006; Psacharopoulos *et.al*, 2004). Higher educational participation among the youth has also been associated with lower HIV/AIDS prevalence (Kelly, 2000; Gregson *et.al*, 2001; World Bank, 2002) lower injury levels and protective against many new problems in adolescence including health behaviors.

In the following sections, a discussion of education and its usefulness in the socialization of young people in society is presented. This study considers education as an important sphere of change which influences the other socialization agents and consequently, the socialization process among young people in society. Hence, its context is considered within the traditional setting and thereafter, its role in the modern setting is discussed.

### **1.9.1 Education and socialization of young people in traditional and modern society**

As already pointed out, the preparation of children for social life in the adult world in the indigenous societies was conducted within the community. The scope of the socialization was limited to introducing the child and youth into the knowledge and skills appropriate for adult life, identity and loyalty to the community. Though limited in scope, Mead (1930) observes that it was adequate for the wholly self-sufficient communities. In such societies, the transmission of culture was a major part of education. In her account of child education in Samoa and New Guinea, the anthropologist observes that the young were given the



equivalent of a "primary education" within the family without ever getting to a school. They were thus socialized within the extended family setting.

Modern educational systems have arisen due to enlargement of social scale, necessitating the teaching of young people the skills necessary to navigate the highly complex modern state (Vago, 1996). Despite the efficiencies attributed to the European type of education, scholars have pointed that it has actually brought with it a host of unexpected social problems and conflicts. According to Wandiba (1997), although children spend most of their time in schools, the procedure of socialization in schools does not involve the traditional concept of gender role counseling. Thus the young people "grow up without this necessary aspect of education for the future". Shorter (1994) has pointed out various shortcomings of modern schooling. First, it fails to cater for all the different levels and facets of modern social life and lays little emphasis on education for membership to community and neglect of the child's whole education that is group oriented emphasizing correct social relationships, courtesies, rights and duties. In addition, modern education brings about the lack of shared responsibilities for child's upbringing. Secondly, it suffers deficiency in training young people to prepare for demands of society such as patriotism and loyalty. Another shortcoming of modern education is that greater emphasis is placed on stressing intellectual achievement at the expense of practical skills. Lastly, its limited emphasis on moral and family education opens a wide gulf between parents and children.

From the foregoing, it is clear that education like the other agents of socialization, still retains its important role in providing the necessary knowledge and skills which are critical for individual functioning and role taking in society. However, as shown by the findings of this study, the current practice of offering an education that does not accord the recipients the practical utility benefits renders it irrelevant. As such, the study views modern education as leaving the young people alienated and defranchised from leading an active and productive life in adulthood. As explained in Chapter two (see section 2.4) this has led to negative consequences leading to numerous challenges towards the attainment of positive youth development.

### **1.10 Religious institutions and the socialization of young people**

Religion is an important socialization mechanism as it plays a key role in the transmission of values and behavior. According to Berns (2012: 193), traditions, rituals and religious

institutions are responsible for the reinforcement of the values which are taught in families. Furthermore, religious orientation influences the families' socialization practices by providing an ideology that enables individuals to comprehend events that happen to them.

Among the youth, religious participation improves psychological wellbeing (Wright *et al.*, 1993) and has also been found to be inversely related to delinquency and other high risk behaviours (Donahue *et al.*, 1995). Powell (1963) observes that religion provides persistent values, improving daily living and establishing a clearer outlook of life. Furthermore, an individual's religious and social context influences his attitudes and behaviors. Rossenberg's (1965) study among young people in the USA found out that when an individual is isolated from his religious group, he was found to display certain psychic consequences, majorly of emotional nature and eventually experienced a low self-esteem.

Other studies have noted a positive relationship between religiosity and a sense of moral worthy and ability to control personal affairs (Furseth, *et.al*, 2006; Engebretson, 2004; Ploutzian *et al.*, 2005). When the individual is isolated from his religious group, one tends to face his immediate environment without the sustenance of group support. Organizations and communities are also said to promote favourable self-images among young people by providing opportunities for positive reflected appraisals (Regnerus, 2003). In their study to examine the role of religion on Mother –child relationship, Pearce *et al.*, (1998) found out that the more important religion is to the mother, the more likely her child was to report a higher quality of relationship with her. However, other studies have found out that the parental public religiosity curbs the frequency of conversation with regard to sexual socialization of adolescents (Regnerus, 2005). As such it was found out that while such parents claim to be talking to their adolescent children about sex and birth control, the study shows that what parents are exactly communicating is less clear and that they only appear most likely to be conveying sexual values. Worse still, such devoutly religious parents appear much less apt to talk to their children about sex and birth control as well as more likely to report difficulty in communicating.

Religious involvement among young people has also been found play an important role in shaping attitudes towards sexual activities, with studies showing delayed transition into sexual activity and its multiple outcomes such as teenage pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections. In a study to determine the association between religious involvement and

adolescent sexual activity, Burdette and Hill (2009) found out that the said association varies according to measure of religious involvement and the form of sexual activity under investigation. Of these, religious salience was found to have a particularly strong association with delayed adolescent sexual behavior as compared to private religiosity, church attendance and family religious behaviors and religious affiliation. Burdette *et. al* (2009) attribute this to the fact that religious salience is the only one aspect of religious involvement that adolescents are able to control through their perceptions of religion's influence in their daily lives, while some adolescents may not be able to control the regularity of their church attendance and the religious behavior of their families.

Other social institutions play a supporting role in the religious socialization of adolescents in society. For instance, the family, peers and the schools jointly offer the young people a meaningful system with which to interpret religious experience and model relevant religious behavior (Spickard, 1988). However, parents retain a strong influence on their adolescent's religiosity, even after accounting for the adolescent's schooling situation, friends' religiosity and extra familial mentors (Uecker, 2008). In a study to test the impact of parental religious influence on adolescent religiosity among 235 American families, Kiren and Munroe (1987) discovered that paternal and marital variables were significantly associated with the religious activities of both the male and female adolescents. On the other hand, however, only paternal religious activity variables were significantly associated to female adolescent religious activity.

In the traditional religious setting, the "rites of passage" comprised one of the many personal rituals that surrounded the principal events in the lives of individuals and was considered a great transition from childhood into adulthood to make him a full person and introduce him or her to sex life. However, modern life has resulted in the "thinning" of the custom to a hurried performance (Parrinder, 1981; Magesa, 2008).

In the contemporary society, religious influence has been found to have a dual impact on the socialization of young people. As supported by the findings of the study (see section 6.3.2), while religion has the potential to promote resilience and provide mechanisms for coping among young people, some of the religious doctrines and the precarious nature of the youth render them liable to be influenced negatively. Thus, while religion may accrue great benefits

to young people, other instances may breed negative consequences leading to undesirable outcomes among the youth.

### **1.11 Social change and the socialization of young people**

According to Mayers (1974), change entails alteration brought about by interplay among the forces and movement of tradition, drift, tension, adaptation as well as innovations. On the other hand, Vago (1999:9) conceptualizes social change as “a process of planned or unplanned qualitative or quantitative alterations in social phenomena that can be analyzed in terms of five interrelated dimensions of identity, level, duration, magnitude and rate”.

Social change is characterized by a relatively stable system of social stratification, based largely on role ascription and the traditional criteria for the assignment of prestige, replaced by extensive social mobility with status largely assigned on the basis of achievement, in turn intimately linked with the attainment of educational and technical skills ( Cheung et .al, 2010). In the realm of values and fundamental life ways, religion tends to lose ground to the progressive secularization of values and distinctive national folk cultures, with their infusion of religious prescription, significantly giving way to a more uniform national culture with the pre dominance of rational – legal norms for regulating individual behavior (Montoro, 1993).

The transformations experienced by society in recent decades demonstrate that the social changes accompanying the process are indeed abrupt and massive (Baum, 2002). The result has been the emergence of a condition of “deregulation in society”, the situation that Emile Durkheim variously referred to as “social anomie” entailing the “breakdown of rules on how people in society ought to treat one another” and hence people do not know what to expect from others. Ritzer, (2007: 112) has observed that when this situation obtains:

*There are few, if any, clear strong collective ideas about things. As a result confronted with many issues ..... people simply do not know what they are supposed to do. More generally, people are a drift in society and lack clear and secure moorings.....this contrasts strongly with mechanical solidarity in which everyone is very clear about what the collectivity believes and what they are supposed to do in a given situation.*

Societies with high levels of anomie create problems of socialization of its members (Katsas, 2012). Pointing out that though socialization will be problematic does not mean that members

of the society will not socialize; Katsas observes that instead, it will contain the building blocks of a social structure characterized by anomic situations. According to Akonga (1997: 18), in the event of “rapid socio-cultural, technological and ecological change, a disjunction developed between the previously integrated elements that held the society together”. As pointed out above, partly due to the ineffective application of the prevailing society’s norms and the inability of the members of the society to deploy the newly introduced ones, “the society becomes overwhelmed by the change, leading to “social death”. Due to lack of any authority to provide moral guidance to its members on the correct goals and the means to attain them, those who stick to the old norms are regarded as old fashioned while others come up with modern alternative—numerous “individualistic” and “personally constituted mechanisms of goal attainment”. The implication is that no equivalent replacement of institutions is created. As Katsas, notes, this effectively leads to the loss of a firm reference point.

Hence, as society experiences change, the socializing agents experience greater challenges as there are more choices to be made. A key concern to this study is how the period of adolescence and youth can be adjusted to accommodate all the opportunities that are available. As demonstrated by the findings of this study, the adult socializers in South Western Kenya have been affected directly by the uncertainty that rapid change has produced as well as the opportunities and challenges that these present. For instance, whereas the adoption of new media and technological innovations by the young people for communication and learning presents positive opportunities (see section 6.4.1), it is paradoxical that the development is perceived as being detrimental to the wellbeing of the youth and community.

The impact of social change has been a key area of concern in sociological analysis, with the founding fathers profoundly concerned about the disruptive effects of change in society. Whereas Emile Durkheim regarded the changes brought about by the industrialization as a threat to the prevailing social order through the breakdown of normative consensus leading to anomie, Marx saw the dehumanization of man (alienation) brought about by the capitalist mode of production, making man a commodity and work becoming a degrading necessity as issues of concern (Zhao *et.al*, 2010; Clarke, 1991; Zdraromyshov, 1998). On the other hand, Max Weber and Ferdinand Tonnies viewed change as a threat to the close effective relationships of the traditional society (Giddens, 1994).

Marx further argues that the changes in the material production creates pressure for wider social changes and that at any level of technological development , there will be a “corresponding set of social relationships and accompanied by a degree of social disruption” (Hughes *et.al*, 2003) . Eisenstadt (1966) further observes that the continued change involves processes of disorganization and dislocation giving rise to continual development of social problems and conflicts between various groups and resistance to change.

Kempny (1996) has shown that the claim by anthropologists and sociologists that tradition stands in opposition to change and that change always brings about disorganization is untrue. On the contrary, he avers that it can in fact generate processes that positively transform cultural reality. He adds that change from the point of view of an individual means to either legitimize what is novel in social life or resist the new patterns through creativity and invention. The latter is mainly achievable through adaptation, diffusion and innovation (Hamblin, *et. al*, 1973).

However, according to Illich (1971), there are three factors which constrain invention, creativity and action, and these constraints become a responsibility of those who experience them as “shackles”. Thus, social change involves a triple action: Reorganization of the social structure, often regarded as subversion or revolution, attempting to get behind public illusions which justify structures and the emergence of a new “social character” which is experienced by many with utter confusion and character.

All in all, in order to escape out of the destructive impacts of social change, Cotgrove ( 1978) says that man is well endowed with skills and the requisite tools necessary to craft , negotiate and bargain in both structured and unstructured situations as it is possible for him to decide “who” he is (Identity).

The above views are justifiable as indeed, societal change produces tension as demonstrated in the parent–child knowledge divide in the study area. Also, the changing trends among parents’ goals for child rearing and schooling are visible. Interestingly, there exists a huge difference in viewpoints among parents and their young off springs with regard to the above. This is mainly attributed to the differences in their motivation and focus for living and life goals. However, the disparities can be tackled by reducing the gap. Therefore, schools and

other institutions should endeavor to involve and make parents active partners in their programmes for the young people since adolescent and youth socialization is a collective activity.

### **1.12 Adolescent socialization as a collective process**

Unlike the other rites of passage, those performed to usher in the young people's transition into adult life are performed collectively. Wagner (1970) observes that among the Bukusu and Maragoli communities of Western Kenya, the aforementioned was rationalized on account that the significance of the process "extended beyond the orbit of the individual's life cycle". Wagner (1966:335) says:

*These events furnish the occasion for observances that affect much wider groups and serve much wider functions than those bearing on directly and immediately upon the individual concerned.*

Shorter (1994) adds that among the indigenous African societies, the Child's education was meant to accord her membership to the community. As in all societies, such rites he says were a clear manifestation of the interest of the whole community in the upbringing of the child. Later on, the education could be grouped oriented. Children brought up in this manner developed greater self-assurance and established a wider network of personal links and are bound to enjoy greater success in life.

The above aspect of community implies shared beliefs and customs and commitment by all its members. Hence, when younger members of the society discern the impression that everyone is involved, they perceive the available support and adult role model as real. As a consequence, this motivates them to reciprocate by abiding by the society's norms and values. The lack of collective initiatives weakens the intangible community support system.

According to George Herbert Mead, individual members of the society "become able to understand what is expected of them, and what they are supposed to do in a group (Blumer, 2004). He argues that one's behavior ("I") or ("SELF") – that part of the individual's personality made up of self-awareness and self-image - reflects the larger social structures that go beyond the "self". He proposed that a "complete self (effective socialization)" is only possible when a (young person) moves beyond taking the role of individual "significant

others” and takes the role of “generalized others” – broad cultural norms and society’s values. Individuals are able to evaluate themselves from the point of view of the group as a whole and as a matter of fact, in order to have a “self”, one must be a member of a community and be directed by the attitudes common to the community (Gould, 2009). The central idea here is that the self’ does not exist at birth but is acquired through social experience, majorly comprised of exchange of symbols eventually resulting in what Mead refers to as “consciousness of the self (Kashima *et.al*, 2007). Thus, when an individual reside within a closely knit system of individuals and families, the individual gains access to a repertoire of resources and frame of references who serves as a point of reference. These provide him with a network of readily available and reliable support from which he derives the much needed motivation and local cultural orientation.

However, with the disappearance of the less static and coming up of the ambiguous socio – cultural arena, the young people today face problems in establishing a secure sense of personal identity and cultivation of a stable value system (Conger, 1975). Challenging this view, Bauman (2004) argues that in the modern world people are not born into their identities. That they are required to construct identities themselves and hence the collective pool of community norms and resources upon which an individual negotiates are unnecessary. Referring to a “project of the self”, Giddens (1991: 112) observes that in late modernity, a sense of identity is something upon which people work and identity becomes “less a package of received personal characteristics but a matter of defining the meaning of where they have come from, who they are now and where they want to go”. From this perspective, as adult identities no longer naturally follow from childhood, young people can imagine futures different from those implied by received identities. However, these cannot be based entirely on a vacuum; certain kinds of “social capital” and consumption of particular objects are required, such as technology, educational resources and so forth (Bradford, 2012). Further, increasing urbanization and geographic mobility and the weakening of the extended family leading to isolated nuclear families and the emergence of the “youth culture (s)” have further served to intensify the societal polarization and eventual decline of the authority of the traditional social institutions. Consequently the mass media has stepped in to fill the gap, becoming a central part of the cultural environment of society, of course with far reaching implications in the socialization of the youth (Arnett, 1995).



Nevertheless, the stepping in of the media as explained above cannot fully replace the face to face interaction that ensues among individuals. As a form of communication in which an individual obtains information through an impersonal medium, it is impossible to adopt the message to the interest and understanding of the receiver. In this study an important question is whether the media can be regulated in order to serve as an effective socialization agent in the study area.

### **1.13 The mass media and socialization of young people**

The mass media has increasingly become an important component of the social element among people of all ages in contemporary society (Dubow *et al.*, 2006). In both the developed and the developing regions of the world, it has become a significant source of values (Okafor *et. al*, 2013) and hence plays an important role as an agent of socialization (Rubin, 1994). The daily use of the media has “permeated the lives of young people’s lives, so much that it is hard to believe that less than a decade ago the technologies barely existed (Horst *et al.*, 2008).” An important question is what such a transformation in the socio – cultural environment portends for the socialization of young people. Arnett (1995) observes that what has transpired is that the youth have taken to using the media for “self-socialization”. The media material is used towards identity formation, occupational preparation, gender role learning and the development of a set of values and beliefs (Anderson, L *et al.*, 2012).

Conversely, the presence and influence of the family has been on the decline (Martin, 1990). Arnett (1995) further observes that the main challenge for the young people is that as a socializing agent, the media operate in an environment which is uncontrolled and offering a wide array of information and influences for the recipients to choose from. Secondly, whereas the traditional agents of socialization like the family, schools and religious institutions aimed at passing on attitudes and beliefs in order to preserve the social order and transmit the uniform culture from one generation to the next, the mass media are driven by the “profit motive” and as such, the content that is packaged for the young people depends on what presumably is appealing to the young recipients. Consequently, the young people maintain greater say over their socialization. The parents are thus denied the opportunity to supervise and impose any restrictions on what array of media products are to be accessible to the younger members of the society.

Numerous studies have observed that the young people are in essence, endeavoring to come up with “alternative ecologies” for seeking a sense of empowerment that they consider as otherwise lost onto the adult world because of their marginal socio - economic and cultural position in contemporary society (Grbich,1990; Bulcholtz,2002; Heilbronner, 2008; Skelton,1998 ). As such, the mass media are seen to play a liberating function, so that they can increase the young people’s independence in the socialization process. However it can also work towards broadening the incoherence and a lack of integration as observed in the contradictions among the messages produced leading to confusion and alienation (Qin, 2006).

From the foregoing discussion, it can be concluded that the media constitute a useful socializing agent in the contemporary society. However, its peculiar feature of influencing values, beliefs, attitudes and behavior makes it a shaper of culture. As pointed out, the orientation so propagated may not at all times be in the best interest of the recipient. Hence, variables such as the age, cognitive ability and adult supervision activities accompanying media use by the young people become of paramount importance. Thus, for the young people, it is not so much what the media does to them but what they do with the media that will bring about positive or negative socialization outcomes. In Kenya, the media, especially the internet, has become a youth–culture. In this study, the adoption and utilization of the mass media for self – socialization is at the core of the investigation.

#### **1.14 The youth sub – culture and young people.**

Being a youth distinguishes the young people from the other population groups in the society. It also serves to accord space upon which they can achieve identity beyond that offered within the mainstream social institutions of family, school among others. Furthermore, it creates the opportunity for exercising agency where the former experience powerlessness (Castells *et al.*, 2004; Mallan *et.al*, 2003). According to Cohen (1955), the emergence of the youth sub culture is viewed as a compensatory source of identity that grown to fill up the shortcomings of the mainstream social institutions. The mass media in their various forms are regarded as a “social space” in its own right complete with their own consumption and forms of content production, expression and identity formation that are produced within the virtual space. In a situation of this nature, the young people “, who may be geographically dispersed share identical interests, rules and shared activities and a common sense of belonging. At the same time, studies have shown that by using instant messaging and the common social networking sites the mass media has become an important instrument for multi-tasking.

Steinberg *et.al* (2006) has observed that the internet is today regarded as a cultural artifact and a culture in itself and it presents an opportunity for the youth to share experiences, artistic creations and make sense of their own situation as sub - structural members.

In this study, therefore, media in the form of printed information, audio (mainly in the form of popular music) and the internet are considered important socializers of young people. It has thus become an important ecological sphere, with own sub- cultural paraphernalia. As shapers and transmitters of culture, the media feeds the youth – sub culture, which occupies a central place in adolescent and youth socialization.

Swatos (1998) defines youth sub- culture as “those intrinsic capacities that young people possess for defining themselves in their value behavior in the society to which they belong and in their projection towards the future”. It arises from the inconsistencies that young people perceive in adult society, consequently, they develop a set of expressive symbols, norms and elements of particular values, with which they maintain their relationship with society. The adolescents and young people feel denied the coherent perceptions and view the adult society as not being relatively homogenous but more fragmented (Moncloa *et.al*, 2010). Unlike in the traditional setting, the young people no longer view the “adult society” as speaking in a single voice and also possessing the ability to plan and launch a unified attack on the ever increasing and emerging societal challenges.

What emerges, therefore, is that the micro – system of the peer group comes out strongly to fill up the resultant void. The desire to certify certain needs of belonging and develop a sense of self makes the peer group a natural alternative for the youth. The peer group makes its contribution beyond the influence of the family and school. In the next section, the discussion on the role of peers in socialization of young people is provided.

### **1.15 The peers and socialization of young people**

Like other agents of socialization process, the ecology of the peer group is a significant micro system which comprises roles, relationships and activities among individuals (Rubin *et.al*, 2008). In both the developing and developed regions of the world, peer relations among young people occupy a central place (Doumen *et al.*, 2012; Crosnoe *et.al*, 2008). Although much of their time is spent in school and within the family setting, for both young men and women, their peers are the most important reference group (Arnet, 2007). In a study by

Arnon (2008) to examine the relative importance of the peer group as compared with diverse adult socialization agents, it was found out that the most important socialization agents for young people are the peer - group and the family, while those of school and the community were secondary. This centrality of the peers in adolescence and youth life is significant because the “peer contexts” consisting of multiple, overlapping social relations, which though significant in all stages of the life course are developmentally emic as the link between peer relations and developmental trajectories, is much stronger during the youth(s) stage than during childhood or adulthood (Giordano, 1995; Brown *et .al*, 2003). Furthermore, the relationships adolescents have with their peers, family and society play a vital role in social development (Dishion *et.al*, 2011).

It is thus, important to recognize the multiplicity of peer influence in relation to all the other important socialization agents. For instance, it can be utilized as an appropriate channel for carrying out significant modifications in the other social institutions such as the families and schools. By so doing, the array of ecologies for youth development are increased and indirectly strengthened.

Further, peer relationships provide them with the arena in which the young people develop mutual - trust and high levels of self- disclosure necessary for providing critical support during the early adolescent periods when the youth are experiencing emotional, psychological and physical changes. As they mature, the peer group interactions provide extensive opportunities to learn from each other and consequently shape their own identities and social niches (Edwards, 2006). During this particular period in their developmental trajectories, their relationships with family members are often charged with conflicting emotions ( Smetana, 2011 ; Updegraff *et.al*, 2005 ) and parent–child conflicts over cultural values and social behavior are not uncommon (Choi *et.al*, 2008; Ozmete *et.al*, 2009) ; Anguelova,2008; Krishnan,2004 ). Consequently, their interaction with parents and siblings diminish and their peers, who are in the same stage in the life cycle of development and sharing many similar experiences hold a special place (Ardelt *et.al*, 2002; Almas, 2009). However, Conger (1973) asserts that while the former is true, the implicit assumption that parental and peer influence are necessarily mutually exclusive is untrue. On the contrary, these vary depending on two factors: First, the adolescent’s appraisal of the value of either parental or peer influence on a specific situation, hence neither parental nor peer influence is “monolithic” (Wang *et .al*, 2007). Secondly, the domination of either parental or peer influence will most likely be due

to poor parental relationships in the home (Raudino *et .al*, 2013). All in all, “adolescents who perceive their parents as understanding, willing to talk with them when they have a problem have a high degree of adolescent–parent affect, are proparent in their preferences. In contrast, when the qualities of a good relationship are weak or absent in the youth – parent relationship, a large proportion assign priority to their best friends” (Adelson *et .al*, 1975). On the whole, however, the adolescent does not choose friendship but is driven into it. Adelson, *et.al* (1975) adds:

*He is in process of breaking (or recasting) his ties to the family and desperately needs the support, approval and security as well as norms, of a peer group. He is discovering, and trying to interpret and control, a changed body, and with it new and frightening impulses, and so requires both the example and communion of peers He is about to crystallize an identity, and for this needs others of his generation to act as models, mirrors, helpers and testers.*

However, it is important to point out that it is not in all cases that peer influences always negate family values and expectations. On the contrary, depending on the parenting style adopted, young people can display intimacy and internalize the values of their parents. Such individuals will, therefore, find little reason to rebel. Similarly if young people are included in decision making in their families, such individuals will feel socially competent. They will then most probably associate with friends who share similar values. Consequently, they will not be faced with negative peer influence.

In general, the peers fulfill an important function of enhancing and promoting a sense of belonging, social leverage and wellbeing among the young people (Bourdieu, 1977; Coleman, 1994; Briggs, 1998). In enhancing their healthy development, Skovdal *et.al*, (2012) argue that the young people utilize the “peer social capital” to deal with life circumstances. According to Johnson (2011), the social capital can be of three types: First, bonding capital, which brings about support and guidance from peers, friendship groups and serves to provide group identity, values, norms and practices. Secondly, bridging capital, obtained from the inter–peer group and support from membership of clubs and instrumental for facilitating an exchange of a range of possible knowledge and skills including a range of resources for identity development and renewal. Lastly, linking capital, comprising of more open ended

networks for providing connections to and relationship with links with materially and socially more distant groups.

Therefore, in studies targeting the understanding of socialization among young people, peer influence is an important aspect because the young people derive their own opinions from the interactions that they enter into with their colleagues and other members of society. For instance, the parenting style adopted will in turn affect the type of relation that a young person enters into with her peers. In the following section, discussions of the impact of inter-generational challenge on youth socialization is presented.

### **1.16 The inter- generational challenge and the socialization of young people**

According to Daniel Bell (1968), sociologically and intellectually, no individual is able to live in the same kind of world as that inhabited by their parents and their grandparents. However, in the past, the traditions and cultural values of the communities were handed down from one generation to the other through initiation and established ritualized routines. In most societies, there existed a common body of knowledge and morality that was passed down from one generation to the other. With rapid modernization and social change, the present generation of young people has experienced a radical rupture with the past. More so, the task of preparing the young members of society for life in the future is laden with challenges. Firstly, the challenges of an older generation preparing a younger generation for an “unknown future”. Secondly, the main social institutions and contexts are not appropriately tailored to perform this important function. The above presents a dilemma that confronts the entire human society during the present century. Tallman et.al (1983:03) summarizes these into four key questions, namely:

1. What behaviours and orientation best prepare people for a future that is unknown?
2. Can people who have learned (or failed to learn) to cope in one environment adequately prepare their offspring to cope in different environments?
3. What social conditions facilitate or hinder the process through which one generation learns from another ways to adapt to social change?
4. Is the current parental generation aware of ongoing social changes and the need to prepare off springs for a world different from the one in which they currently live?

The above four questions summarize the main challenges that effect socialization of the young people in society. This mainly results from the inability of the socializers to effectively

manipulate the environment to suit their roles. This has been attributed to the changes that contemporary societies are experiencing.

Earlier, Kingsley Davis (1940) observed that among other sociological factors, the rate of social change was the single most important variable related to the extra – ordinary amount of parent – adolescent conflict. He pointed out that “parents in a relatively static society would have less difficult than those in one in which social change is rapid and deep and that in such a society parents could be closer to their children, since the generation gap could be minimized. More so, parents could only need to produce children like themselves as the models do not change so often and in such a drastic manner as they do (in contemporary society). Similarly, in a rapidly changing and pluralistic society, young people often question the parents’ prescription of what ideally constitutes “morally acceptable” and “good” behavior due to “parent–adolescent (dis)similarity” (Cashmore et.al, 1985). In their study among 547 Israel adolescents aged 16- 18 years, Schwartz *et al.*, (2003) set out to empirically test factors that determine acceptance of parents value as they are imparted to the young people. The findings of the study indicated that inaccuracy of the perception of parents’ values correlated positively with value conflict and the parents’ autocratic and indifferent parenting. The value conflict is attributed to the differences in the “social content” which leads to “loss of mutual identification” and the parent is unable to “catch up” with the child’s point of view. Additionally, due to the prevailing social complexity, the prevailing standards within the generations become confusing. Kingsley (1940) observes that in the end “*faced with conflicting goals, parents become inconsistent and confused in their own minds in rearing their children ..... And the acceptance of parental attitudes is less complete than (previously)*”. This “loss of the parents’ niche” is mainly attributed to the rise of the mass media (Walker *et.al*, 2012) with the development and use of technologies such as the internet, interactive television and the mobile phone providing both a measure and a cause of profound cultural change (Holmes *et.al*, 1999).

Consequently, the proliferation of these media exposes the young people to a variety of sources of information which in some instances exposes them to multiple – channels often leading to confusion. In other instances, the inability of parents to provide information leaves the young people on their own. This leaves them with no option but to search and supply the required information for themselves.

### **1.16.1 Multiple socialization agents and dissonance**

The family institution which was traditionally considered as playing the dominant role as well as the sole agent in an individual's interpersonal life has undergone tremendous changes both in terms of size and composition and connections to other social institutions (Caldwell, 1982; Dolan, 1995; Taki, 2001). Although in their book entitled "*The sociology of the African family*", Kayongo-Male and Onyango Priscilla (1984) observe that the most striking characterization of socialization in the pre – colonial African family was the large number of agents of socialization, the process was performed collectively and co- operatively with each of one of them "supporting the parental values and duties to the larger Kin and ethnic group". The child was socialized by the entire community and could be corrected and disciplined by any adult if he misbehaved without abusing the authority. The peer group (age set) which was usually age – segregated was equally important in maintaining family and kin values.

The presence of several agents all working towards the common goal of imparting important information to the younger members of society worked relatively well because of the common purpose, interest and uniformity of the transmitted information and values. In the modern society, the competing authorities of the family, educational institutions (schools), the peer – group and the mass media all tell the youth "what and how he or she should think and behave". Worse still, fathers and mothers (parents) are always in competition with the former when they seek to influence their children (LeMasters and Defrain, 1989) all providing contradictory information to the young people in society. An important trend among adolescents is that they spend increasing amounts of time using electronic media (Chaves and Anderson, 2008). The main stream media (television, music, magazines, movies and the internet) rarely depict sexually responsible models. In a study conducted over a 4 year period to determine the amount and type of sexual content aired on American television found out that sexual content ranging from flirting to sexual intercourse had increased from slightly more than half of the TV programmes to more than two thirds of the programs. Further, one in every ten programmes was found to depict suggestive or explicit intercourse (Kunkel *et.al*, 2001). Similarly, a study to determine whether the amount of parent-adolescent sexual communication made a significant contribution in predicting sexual risk - taking behavior, showed significance but in the opposite of the hypothesized direction. Whereas those who reported more sexual communication with their mothers used more methods of birth control, they were most likely to engage in sexually risky behaviors (Clawson *et.al*, 2003). However, Keller and Brown (2002) have observed that mass media



may be especially useful for teaching young people about reproductive health if elements of popular culture can be used to articulate messages in young people's terms, in a language that cannot embarrass them and even make safe sex more attractive.

This finding presents a window of opportunity for advancing life skills and reproductive health information targeting young people in Kenya. This could prove more youth friendly because by so doing, such programmes will make use of activities such as music and drama that appeal to the young people.

On their part, schools have been found to contribute to the ineffectiveness of sexuality education by concentrating on provision of information about the dangers of sexual activities. Monk (2001) argues that such messages reinforce the notion that sexuality is risky and is something that should not be freely enjoyed and "positions young people as lacking in agency and is unlikely to appeal to their sense of exercising power". This denies the young people a sense of empowerment and a positioning as autonomous sexual subjects capable of negotiation of safer sex practices (Allen, 2007). The above scenario calls for a paradigm shift, with the aim of demystifying the numerous problems and challenges that have persistently been portrayed as uniquely inherent to young people. When information is packaged in such a way that it demonizes social problems, then the prospective recipients will be discouraged and hence keep away from obtaining the important services.

### **1.16.2 Young people and their self-socialization**

As pointed out earlier, an important development in the socialization of young people in society is the emergence of the internet. The internet has stepped in to partially replace the usual traditional "adult socialization" agents, effectively resulting in a "self-socialization process" and identity development. Studies have shown that the self-socialization on the co-constructed world of adolescents' social space is fraught with "risky behaviours" (McCabe *et al.*, 2012; Notten, 2014).

Among the harmful effects are those touching on: violent behaviours (Yballa *et.al*, 2008), alcohol, drug and substance use (Slatter, *et. al*, 2010) sexual activities (Chandra, 2008; Jochen *et.al*, 2008) and child obesity (Utter, 2003; Beaudoin, 2014). More so, as adolescents have a greater control over their media choices, they end up choosing from a diverse range of media materials. Consequently, as they often lack integration in their socialization they end

up receiving different socialization messages from media and peers than they do from the adult socializers in their environment (Arnett, 1995).

Research has shown that the mass media provide the young people with materials whose content conflicts with the basic values of society, at least as held by parents and an unrealistic portrait of the world. For instance, violent acts are rampant in television commercial advertisements with majority of those camouflaged by the simultaneous presence of humour (Blackford *et.al*, 2011; Gulas, *et.al*, 2010). Perhaps the most dangerous aspect of this is that the youths draw inspiration from these and attempt to replay such in real life, with some instances, involving murder (Dogra, 1994). The “profit motive” has been the main reason for its commercial nature with the ultimate test for their effectiveness being how “much money they make and not what they do to people” (Ganesh *et.al*, 2005). The result has been the proliferation of media and its accompanying consequences on the life of the young members of society. Hence, left on their own, and relying mainly on media and the peer group, the young people are forced to design their own world and separate system which according to Clark (2004) has created the most serious and yet, unstudied social crisis in the contemporary world. However, it should be noted that if appropriately utilized, the media can be a powerful tool for enhancing innovation and nurturing talent among young people. As pointed out in section (6.4.2.1) its utility can be of great benefit in boosting learning among young learners.

### **1.17 The study conceptual framework**

The study conceptual framework is derived from Bronfenbrenner’s (1994) theoretical framework and the life course approach to human development.

#### **1.17.1 The ecological perspective and human development**

This study conceptualizes that the wellbeing of adolescents and young people is dependent on the (un)health risk behaviours adopted by individuals during the period of biological changes and social role transitions (Setterstein *et.al*, 2010). In the course of the socialization process, the young people learn and adopt certain behaviours through the process of social interactions (Lincoln, 2000). These interactions take place between the young people and the proximal social institutions and settings such as families, educational institutions (Schools), religious institutions (churches), occupational worlds and the general community institutions. In these settings, important actors’ actions such as those of parents, teachers, religious leaders and

employers among others affect the experiences of adolescents and consequently their preparation for adulthood (Boardman et.al, 2005). In addition, the capacity of the mainstream institutions (family, education etc.) to provide shelter, safe water, sanitation and information, health and education, among others, is of paramount importance with regard to the wellbeing of members of society, especially the young people (UNICEF, 2009). The inadequacy of these institutions usually leads to social deprivation, which in turn leads to negative consequences on the survival and the development of individuals.

Through the social interactions, the individuals' personality and identity are formed. The identity is derived from social norms, values and beliefs which are passed on to the young members of the society. On the other hand, although the biological sequence of puberty will usually be consistent, changes in the timing of puberty and social role changes of the young people in diverse societies are widely affected by the prevailing and the ever changing socio economic and cultural factors. Hence, this call for an examination of the changing role of the proximal institutions of the families, schools, religious institutions and the labour markets that shape what adolescents must prepare for as future adult members of the society.

As such my conception of youth socialization draws heavily on Bronfenbrenner (1994) framework on Human Development. According to the framework, in order to understand human development, we must consider the entire ecological system in which the growth and socialization takes place. In the context of this study, adolescents or youth development is influenced by a variety of different settings or social '*ecologies*' such as family, schools, peer group, community organizations, economic institutions, religious institutions among others. He argues that the system in any one ecology comprises five socially organized sub - systems that help guide human growth, ranging from *Micro - systems, Meso - systems, Exo - systems, Macro - systems to chrono - systems*.

The Micro - system comprises a "pattern of activities, social roles as well as interpersonal relations experienced by an individual in a particular face to face setting with particular physical, social and symbolic features (Bronfenbrenner 1994: 39). These allow or prevent engagement in sustained, progressively more complex interaction in the immediate environment in such settings as family, school, peer group, religious institution or workplace. Depending on the content and structure of the micro system, the proximal processes operate within the immediate environment of the micro system to produce and sustain the given

development. Variables included in the study include: Media, role models, religious institutions, school environment and media.

The Meso- system is basically a system of the micro - systems that comprises all those linkages and processes taking place between two or more settings inhabited by the developing individual, such as then relations between, home, the church and the school and even the mass media. The variables examined in the study within this sphere include: parental attributes, family cohesion, and school and religious connectedness (Bronfenbrenner 1994: 40).

The exo – system involves all the processes and linkages taking place between two or more of the settings, in which at least one does not contain the developing person, but in which events occur that indirectly influence the processes within the immediate setting that a person inhabits. For instance, the parents’ place of work, family relationships and the community environment such as the extended family are likely to have an impact on the development of the adolescent through their influence on the family. Bronfenbrenner (1994:41) points out that this relationship is not uni- directional but bi – directional. For instance, an adolescent can influence the parents, just as much as the parents can. Furthermore, this influence can reach far beyond the family setting of the adolescent child’s exo – system. Social services and neighbourhood characteristics also play an important role.

The Macro- system, which essentially is made up of an overarching pattern of the micro, meso and exo – systems can be regarded as comprising a set of belief systems, bodies of knowledge, customs and lifestyles embedded in a given culture. These include: political realities, government legislation. In this study, the government policies concerning family and youth development are examined (see chapter seven). Lastly, we have the Chrono System, which encompasses consistency or the change both in the characteristics of the person and the environment in which he or she lives.

### **1.17.2 The life course approach to human development**

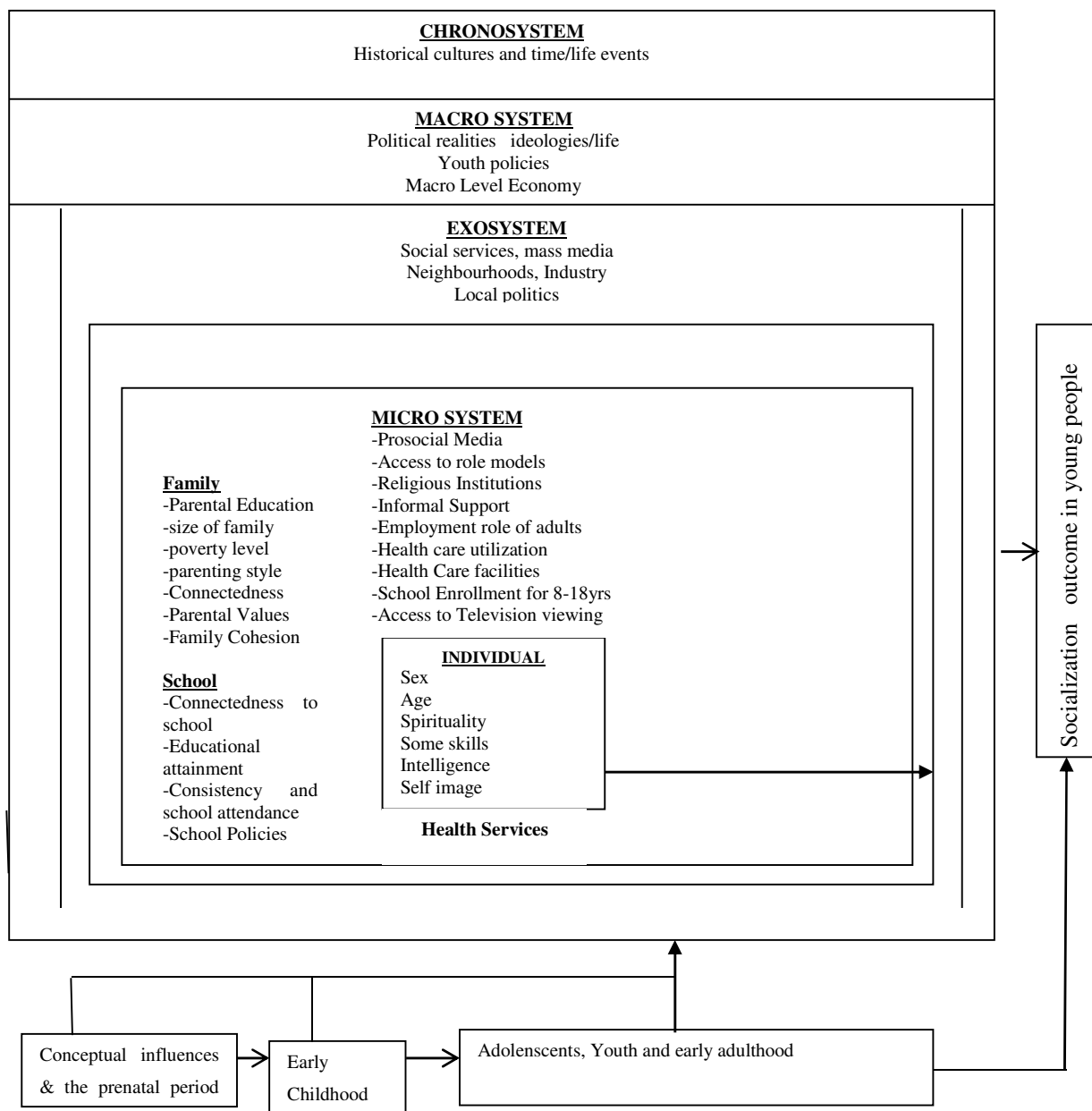
In addition to the above, the adoption of appropriate behavior useful for the achievement of normal developmental milestones is attributable to the socialization experiences during the previous developmental stages (early and late childhood). As such, social disadvantage and other negative experiences during the preceding stages will work to undermine their

wellbeing (Sawyer *et.al*, 2012). Similarly, behaviors that positively or negatively affect the health and health outcomes in adolescence have a sustained effect on the individuals' future health as many non – communicable diseases, mental disorders and injuries during adulthood arise from risk processes that began before or during adolescence. Moreover, it calls upon individuals to acquire behaviours that enable them to function effectively in a society whose opportunities and demands are changing (Tallman *et al.*, 1988). Hence, to capture this important aspect of positioning the adolescents and youth within the life course as they navigate their various trajectories towards adulthood, the study has also adopted the life course approach.

### **1.17.3 The study conceptual model.**

The system of concepts, assumptions, expectations and theories that underlie and inform a study is a key part of the design of the study. According to Miles and Huberman (1994: 18), a conceptual framework is a visual representation which explains either graphically or in narrative form the major factors, concepts or variables to be studied and the presumed relationships among them. The study adopted Bronfenbrenner's ecological Theory. Additionally, as adolescence and youth is considered within the life course and emphasizes trajectories of development across the lifespan, the life course approach is also adopted to the study. The conceptual model is shown in Figure. 1. `

**Figure 1: Conceptual model for studying the socialization of young People in rural Kenya**



**Source:** Adopted from Urie - Bronfenbrenner (1974) and Sawyer et.al, 2012 with slight modification to suit the purpose of the study.

## CHAPTER TWO

### CONTEXTUALIZING THE STUDY: YOUTH AND ADOLESCENCE IN KENYA

#### 2.0 Introduction

In this chapter, the contextual basis of the study is laid out. Specifically, the brief background information on the country in which the study is undertaken is outlined. This is followed by the description of the population and age structure, which are treated both at the national and regional levels. Drawing largely from a wide range of empirical and policy sources, the chapter then reviews the social, cultural and economic context in which the young people live. Lastly, the rest of the chapter dwells on the general description of the phenomena of the “youth crisis” in the country generally and the study area in particular.

#### 2.1. Brief background information on Kenya

This sub-section provides an outline of the administrative and the socio-economic and cultural description of the study area.

##### 2.1.1 Administrative setting

The study is set in Kenya, a country located in the Eastern Africa. Administratively, the country is divided into forty seven counties (see map. 1). The present study is set in Kisii County, located in the South Western part of Kenya (See map. 2). The administrative head of a County is a County Commissioner. The Counties are further divided into various sub – counties. There are 291 Sub- Counties in Kenya. Each Sub - County is under the jurisdiction of a Deputy - County Commissioner. Below the Sub – Counties, we have the Divisions. The Divisions are further sub– divided into, locations and sub – locations.

##### 2.1.2 Socio - economic and cultural environment

The country has no single culture, but instead consists of various cultural practices held by its various communities. While most of the cultural practices are important for the preservation of the country’s rich cultural heritage, some have been associated with negative impacts on healthy growth of the younger members of the society. The retrogressive cultural practices include among others: circumcision for female adolescents, early marriage, low status of women which is associated with low use of contraception and utilization of reproductive health services. Others include: high levels of desired family size, widow inheritance and polygyny (Kenya, Republic of, 2007; Agot *et.al*, 2010). According to KAIS (2012), 15.4 %

and 10.1 % of young men and women respectively have had sexual intercourse by the age of 15 (Republic of Kenya, 2012).

According to the 2014 National HIV estimates, the prevalence rate among people aged 15 – 49 years was 6% in 2013. Regionally, the prevalence rate varied from a high 25.7 % in Homa Bay County in Nyanza province to approximately 0.2 % in Wajir County in the North Eastern region of the country. The counties with highest adult HIV prevalence in 2013 included: Homa bay (25.7%), Siaya (23.7 %,) Kisumu (19.3%), Migori (14.7 %) and Kisii (8 %.). All in all, 75 % of all new infections among children occurred in the above five Counties (Republic of Kenya, 2014).

In the education sector, there are presently high enrollment figures at the national level. Those enrolled at the pre–primary level stand at 2,465,605, while those enrolled at the primary and secondary levels stand at 10.2 Million and 2.1 million respectively ( Republic of Kenya, 2014). In the technical, industrial and vocational education training (TIVET) institutions, the enrollment currently stands at 148,009, while those at Universities were 324,560 in 2013 (Republic of Kenya, 2014). However, despite the impressive progress made, over one million children of school going age are still out of school in Kenya mainly because of high poverty levels and incessant conflict. Moreover, the primary school education received is not of sufficient quality (Fox et.al, 2006). For instance, in a study among young men aged 15-24 years who had left school after six years of schooling, 26 % were found to be semi – literate. Further, young people from disadvantaged backgrounds are less likely to possess skills for decent work (UNESCO, 2012).

## **2.2 Population and Age–structure in Kenya**

This sub-section highlights the demographic picture of the population of Kenya. The demographic situation is presented first, followed by the impact of the structural transitions on the wellbeing of the country’s young people.

### **2.2.1 Demographic situation of youth in Kenya**

According to the 2009 population estimates, Kenya’s population stands at 44 Million (Kenya, Republic of, 2012), out of which 26.1 Million (68%) live in the rural areas, while 12.5 Million (32%) are based in urban areas. The country’s population has been rising steadily since 1948 when the country’s population stood at 5.4 Million. This rose steadily to



15.3 Million in 1979 and then to 21.4 and 28.4 in 1989 and 1999, respectively. According to population projections, the country's population today (2015) stands at 46 Million. In terms of age-structure, her population has been dominated by young people (aged 0-14 and to a lesser extent, 15- 24 years).

In comparison to other developing countries, Kenya had a higher proportion of young people from 1960s to 1990s, with the absolute size of the youth population growing from about two million in 1969 to about six million in 1999. In the last five decades, the countries' youth population has grown three- fold. According to the results of the 1962 population census, the proportion of children under the age of 15 years was around 46%. Recent estimates portray a similar trend, with all indications showing that the population trends among the country's young people have been increasing. At present, those aged less than 34 years constitute 78.3 % of the country's population. Table 1 shows the trends among Kenya's young people over the last five decades.

**Table.1: Population trends in Kenya among young people aged 15-34 years (1969-2009)**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Population (15-24 years)</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Population (25-34 years)</b>	<b>%</b>
1969	1,983,110	18.1	1,341,028	12.3
1979	3,069,249	21.0	1,873,788	12.2
1989	4,281,630	20.0	2,789,185	12.0
1999	6,236,096	21.8	3,945,425	12.8
2009	7,944,646	20.6	5,720,732	14.8

**Source:** *Computed from the 1969, 1979,1989,1999,2009 Kenya Population Census analysis reports*

Further, while the share of children aged under 15 years dropped from about 48% in 1969 to about 43% in 2009 that for young people aged 15-24 and 25- 34 rose steadily from 18.1 % to 20.6 and 12.2% to14.8 % respectively. The trends show that the population of young people in Kenya has been rising rapidly over the decades. The rapid rise in the number of young people implies that the country will continue to contend with a huge portion of a “youthful population”. Having a large youthful population will impact negatively on the country's

economic success as more resources will be required for the provision of social services. Furthermore, the large “youth dependency ratio” leads to low economic status and hampers the country’s economic development.

### 2.2.2 Kenya’s youth population (15- 24) in 2009 by province

According to the 2009 Population census, at 21.2 %, Nyanza province<sup>7</sup> has the highest population of young people (Outside the city of Nairobi). Overall Nairobi province leads with 23.1 % compared with the national average of 20.6 %. Table 2 shows the percentage distribution of youth population aged 15-24 according to provinces in Kenya.

**Table 2: Percentage distribution of young people aged 15 -24 years in Kenya according to provinces**

Province	%
Nairobi	23.8
Nyanza	21.2
Rift Valley	20.9
North eastern	20.5
Coast	20.3
Western	20.1
Eastern	19.5
Central	18.9
National(Average)	20.6

**Source:** *Republic of Kenya (2010)*

From table 2, it is clear that the proportions of young people in the country vary according to the regions. These regional variations mean that the effects of the youthful population on sustainable development on the country will be felt differently at each region, with the rural areas experiencing greater inequalities. Hence, this presents a challenge to the country’s efforts towards narrowing the disparities. As such, the rural areas with higher proportions of young people have also consistently recorded higher levels of poverty in the country.

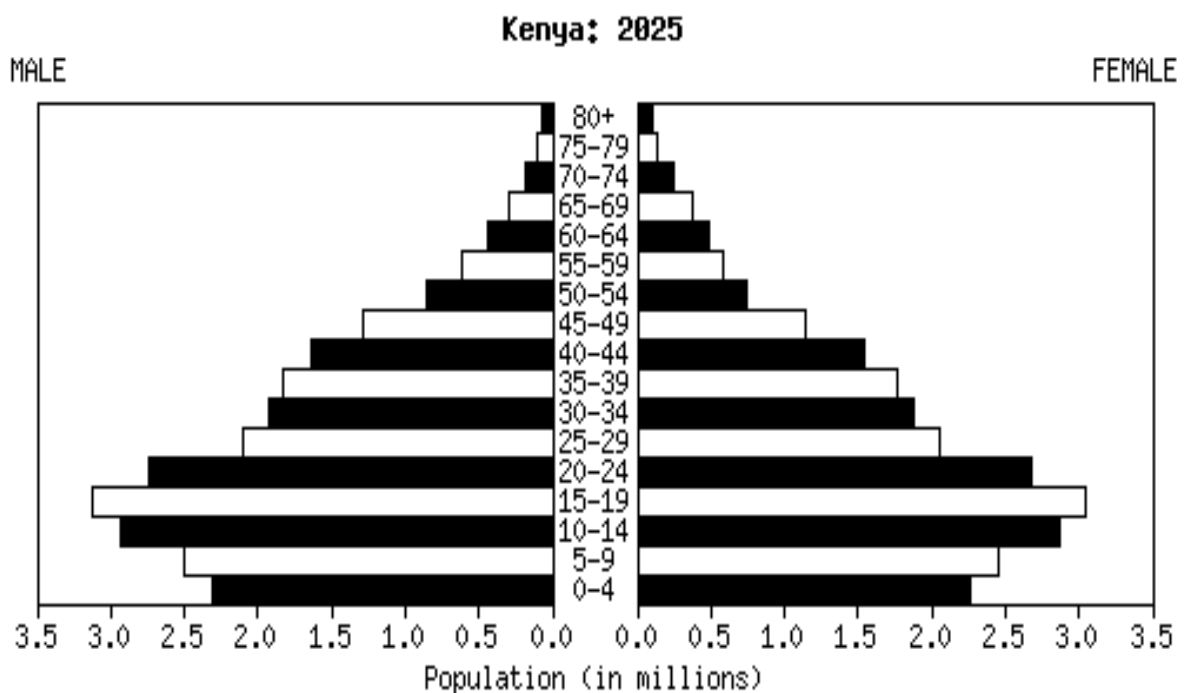
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<sup>7</sup> Presently, although the basis for planning is at the county level, the population figures and statistics are still tied to the defunct provincial levels.

### 2.2.3 The Demographic transition and young people in Kenya

As already noted, Kenya’s population structure is characterized by a huge population in the 0- 14 age bracket, giving it the common “broad based shape”. However, according to population projections, it is expected that in the next 10 – 15 years, the country will transition from “child rich” to a “youth bulge” as shown in Figure 2. The figure shows the population structure for Kenya in 2025 as depicted from population projection figures.

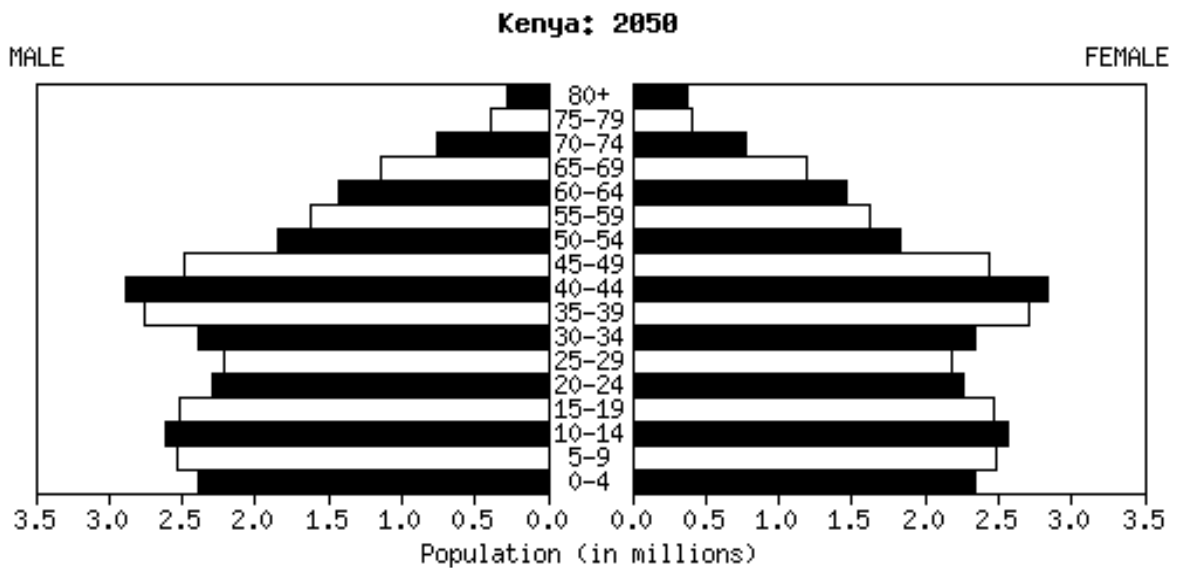
**Figure 2: Population pyramid of Kenya, 2025**



**Source:** *U.S Census Bureau (2015)*

It is shown that the population structure in the year 2025 will be mainly comprised of the greater percentages of the 10 – 14, 15-19 and the 2024 age categories. On the other hand, Figure 3 shows the population structure for Kenya in the year 2050.

**Figure 3: Projected population pyramid of Kenya, 2050**



**Source:** *US. Census Bureau (2015)*

The figure shows that in three and half decades, the country’s population structure may transition further to comprise a higher percentage of the 35-39 and the 40-44 age categories. In the former scenario the “youth bulge” is as a result of the country’s reduction in infant mortality but still experiencing high fertility rates, leading to high population with majority of the segment being young people. This phenomenon can present both opportunities and threats, depending on how it is harnessed (Ahmed, 2014)<sup>8</sup>. For instance, it can provide a large pool of working population necessary for a country’s workforce. However, this will depend on the substitutability of the youth labour with other factors of production (Kitonga *et.al*, 2011). Other studies have argued that youth bulges make countries to be susceptible to political violence (Urdal, 2006). All in all, the most important issue is that for the country to reap the benefits of the youth bulge, she must put in place an effective political and socio – economic policy environment to harness the demographic dividend (African Union, 2011)<sup>9</sup>. According to a recent study by the World Bank (2012:108), the projected increase in the continent’s working age population during the present century presents a window of

<sup>8</sup> According to Bloom *et.al*, (1998) the emergence of the economic miracles among the “Asian tiger economies” can majorly be attributed to the youth bulge in the East Asian countries.

<sup>9</sup> Among the strategies for turning the “youth bulge” into demographic dividends include: improving the education for young people to match with quality, equipping the learners with higher level skills and enhancing youth participation in all spheres of decision making, especially in matters that directly affect them.

opportunity which can be transformational, if properly tapped. The study argues that as economies mature; the magnitude of the dividend will decline, thus enhancing growth. The economy must however, create jobs in a sufficient scale to absorb those joining the labour market as well as improve access to education and formulate policies geared towards removing impediments to private sector development.

### **2.3 The Youth crisis in Kenya**

Kenya's youth crisis has many dimensions that are manifested through youth unemployment, limited access to education, especially at higher levels and the low completion and transition rates in the education sector. Additionally, the high promiscuous behavior has had several adverse health outcomes such as high teenage pregnancy rates and HIV/AIDS. There is also a high affinity to political violence which is fuelled by the exclusion of young people from decision making forums and inaccessibility to essential resources from the government.

Like in other African countries, Kenya experiences a high incidence of children and young people at risk of poverty, disease, orphan hood and mortality. This has mainly been attributed to the hostile environment(s) in which their childhood is influenced by various factors that severely limit their emotional, mental, physical, and social growth and development. The manifestation of the said crisis is in the form of mass unemployment (Escudero *et.al*, 2013), the facing of general exclusion by the young people and the crisis within the family due to poverty and AIDS pandemic (Odingo, 2012; Cherlin, 2012). This can also be due to the lack of education and skills (Republic of Kenya, 2014). There has also been lack of meaningful engagement of young people in decision making, and the national state policies have worked to marginalize the youth (UNESCO, 2004).

In Kenya, the crisis has essentially been traced to the decline in the position of the contemporary family (Goldberg, 2013). In his analysis of family decline in Western European countries, Popenoes (1998) pointed out that the changes occurring within the institution include among others: the family's internal de- institutionalization, the taking away of the family's traditional functions by the other social institutions and the loss of its power to the state. Popenoes' thesis applies to the Kenyan situation, albeit, partially since, while the Kenyan family's adaptive resilience has been discernible over the decades, recent socio – economic changes seem to have a substantial negative impact on its existence and

functioning (Republic of Kenya, 2006; World Bank, 2006; Mooney *et.al*, 2009). Prior to experiencing structural and organizational changes that not only radically altered the structures of society but also enlarged the scale of relationships, the indigenous communities had well-structured institutions with “each member of society’s position defined by formal rules of conduct with regard to each family member”. According to the well documented works of early anthropologists<sup>10</sup>, the traditional family was essentially self-sufficient and effectively facilitated the process of socialization. Specifically, this was enhanced by initiation from childhood to adulthood by equipping the young members of society with the necessary knowledge and life skills (Nyairo and Kamaara, 2010). However, partly due to the impacts associated with modern economic conditions, increased educational opportunities and the impact of the mass media, the institution of the family has come under considerable pressure leading to changes in its fundamental cultural values (Shakeela *et.al*, 2014).

Among the various problems that the young people face in the Kenyan society as a result of the above stated crisis include those associated with low completion and transition rates from one level of education, despite the increasing gross and net enrollment. On employment, the majority of young people are either unemployed or underemployed. The problems associated with sexuality and reproductive health is critical among the country’s young people. The adverse sexual and reproductive health outcomes include: unwanted pregnancies, early child birth, early and forced or arranged marriages and sexually transmitted infections. The current low level of age at first sex and median age at first birth point to the worrying trend among the young people’s health and wellbeing. The age at first sex is an important indicator of exposure to sexually transmitted infections during adolescence (FHI, 2011) and the median age at first birth, is positively correlated with the birth of baby at birth, which in turn is a good measure of the health of a child at birth (Mwabu, 2008). Available data shows that in eastern and southern Africa, 34% of young women aged 20-24 years report that they were married by age 18 (UNFPA, 2012). For majority of the young girls and adolescents, the first sexual encounters are often forced. A study to determine the extent of such violence in primary schools in the eastern and southern African region showed that their sexual, marriage and early pregnancy experiences were neither voluntary, consensual nor informed. The

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<sup>10</sup>Among the ethnographical works that portray the indigenous and effectively functioning societies are those by : Wagner (1949) *The Bantu of western Kenya with specific reference to the vugusu and logoli*.Oxford University press, Iona Meyer ( 1973) “The Gusii of Western Kenya” in Molnes, A. *The cultural Source material for population planning in East Africa*. East African publishing House, Nairobi and Levine, R (1966) *Nyansongo: A gusii community*.Willey publishers. New York. Kenyatta (1965) *Facing Mount Kenya*. Random House. New York.

cultural traditions and weak legal infrastructure for reporting the violence play a key role<sup>11</sup> in the perpetuation of the retrogressive practices. The young people are also most vulnerable to HIV/AIDS and there is a rise in the growing number of Youth – Headed households (YHHs), including the vulnerability of young females working in the commercial sex trade (Ayieko, 1997). In Kenya, the problem of alcohol, drug and substance abuse consumption is a public health concern. According to available statistics, 13 % of the young people aged 10 – 14 have ever used a drug or a substance, while the number of drug users among the 19- 24 stands at 71.1% (NACADA, 2012). The consumption of drugs and substances among the youth also lead to the spread of HIV/AIDS due to promiscuity.

### **2.3.1 The young people and educational challenges**

The provision of education is central to youth development and is one of the basic human rights (Kenya, Republic of, 2010). Further, an appropriate education and acquisition of the correct skills and attitudes will be beneficial to the health and development of young people. An increasingly felt need both in the developed and developing regions of the world has been the continued offer of an education system that is irrelevant to the needs and interests of young people (UNESCO, 2013). In the words of Matsuura Koichiro:

*An education that leaves young people alienated from the challenges and pleasures of learning or places them in an environment of exclusion, rejection, violence and discrimination cannot be an education of quality.....<sup>12</sup>.*

Instead, the educational needs of adolescents and young people must be considered in the context of modernity and the globalization phenomena. This is because; its attendant economic, cultural and political impacts have had far reaching consequences on the building of identities and reconstitution of institutions. The education content that is more useful to the young people is one that is linked to the cultural and social realities of learners and acting as a source of motivation to becoming an active citizen.

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<sup>11</sup> Saito, M (2011) Violence in primary schools in Southern and eastern Africa – Evidence from SACMED. Workshop on preventing violence against women.

<sup>12</sup> An excerpt from the address of the director general of UNESCO, Koichiro matsuura, to the international conference on education of UNESCO, Geneva, 8-11 September, 2004. In UNESCO (2004) *Quality education for all young people: Reflections and contributions emerging from the 47<sup>th</sup> international conference on Education of UNESCO*. Geneva.

In Kenya, the education system is centralized and follows the 8.4.4 cycle. Learners spend eight years in primary, four years in secondary school and four years at the university. Overall, the access to primary schooling is reasonably high as shown in Table 3, but according to evidence, the transition from primary school to secondary schooling is marred by high wastage. There are also disparities between boys and girls access to schooling with girls having a lower gross enrollment at both primary and secondary school levels (Kaivo – Oja, 2014). Furthermore, the completion rates for both primary and secondary education are low, more particularly among girls. According to UNESCO (2013), in Kenya, the net enrollment rates for primary schools for the males stood at 95.9 %, and that for females was 97.6 %. For secondary school, the net enrollment stood at 32.9 % for males, while that for females was 32.6 %. The primary school completion rate for females was 81.9% and that for boys is 78.6. On average, the completion rate for both boys and girls combined is 80.3 %.

**Table 3: Primary School Enrollment in Kenya, 2003 -2012**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Enrollment</b>
2003	7159524
2004	7394762
2005	7597285
2006	7632113
2007	8330148
2008	8577619
2009	8965707
2010	9381211
2011	9857890
2012	9970900

**Source:** *Kenya Statistical Abstract, 2014.*

According to the education for all Global monitoring report (2012), while the pre–primary gross enrollment ratio rose from 43% in 1999 to 52% in 2010. The primary net enrollment ratio rose from 62% in 1999 to 83 % in 2010. The out of school children dropped from 1.98



Million in 1999 to 1.01 Million in 2010. Overall, the youth literacy rate stood at 93% in 2010 (UNESCO, 2012). At the secondary school level, the Ministry of Education data shows that there have been consistent increases in access and participation over the years. For instance, secondary school enrollment by class rose steadily from 879,956 in 2003 to 1,914,823 in 2012 as shown in Table 4.

**Table 4: Secondary School enrolment for Kenya by Form 2003 – 2012**

YEAR/FORM	FORM 1	FORM 2	FORM 3	FORM 4	TOTAL
2003	251063	238046	203908	879956	879956
2004	272702	238638	223093	190717	925150
2005	263853	232338	228682	209276	934149
2006	299461	251092	236421	243106	1030080
2007	312969	323046	292668	251584	1180267
2008	387673	359664	337573	297301	1382211
2009	445321	377143	312860	337310	1472634
2010	498933	443944	398609	311898	1653384
2011	521601	460021	431045	373053	1767720
2012	532128	513938	457427	411330	1914823

**Source:** *Kenya Statistical Abstract, 2014; MOEST, 2014.*

However, despite the aforementioned progress, surprisingly, studies have shown that the increases in school enrollment contributes to the rise in the age at marriage, thereby lengthening the period of exposure to the risk of experiencing pre-marital sex by young people in society. Based on the results of their analysis in a study among 3,000 school going adolescents, Zabin and Kiragu (1998) contend that this is made possible in three ways:- increasing the contact between adolescent boys and girls, undermining the authority of the parents and increasing the likelihood that an adolescent girl will have pre-marital sex.

Other studies have attributed the increase in pre-marital sexual activity to schooling and employment opportunities available to young men, which give them greater independence from their families and sexual access to young women (Bledsoe and Cohen, 1993). In the

past, sexual activity was regulated by the community. For instance, among the Gusii, there existed traditional means of controlling sexual behavior in which kinship sanctions operated to ward off pre-marital sexual activity among young people<sup>13</sup>. However, in today's communities, these controls are absent, letting the young boys have unlimited access to the girls and make sexual demands on girls away from the watchful eyes of the elders (Ibid). In Kenya, a study among students to determine the degree of concurrent partnerships showed that 38.3 % of the girls and 36.2 % of the boys were in serious relationships. On the frequency of sexual intercourse during a month, 26% of the girls and 33% of the boys indicated that they had sexual intercourse at a frequency of between 1- 4 respectively ( Hongwei, *et.al*, 2010). Due to the prevailing educational knowledge gap, which could ideally be addressed within todays educational and perhaps religious and family settings, there exists numerous myths and stereo - types regarding involvement in sexual intercourse among young people. This is clearly brought out in a study to examine the sexual script of young people in more than 2000 schools in Kenya. It showed that:

*Boys felt forced by their sexual urges, their peers and what they perceived to be expectation of girls and of their parents and community. Girls felt forced by material needs, their peers, requirements of reciprocity and familial obligations and by actions of boys. Boys believed that remaining abstinent when young could lead to their failure to impregnate a wife when married.*<sup>14</sup>

Ideally, education should contribute to an individual's integral development, with a strong life<sup>15</sup> skills development and sexuality education (Pick et.al, 2000). According to Darden et.al, (1996), life skills include ways and information for effective living alongside the academic skills and that it is only schools that provide the natural arena for such training. To prevent problem behaviors, children require four central areas of necessary competencies. These are: identity development and purpose in life, problem solving and decision making, interpersonal relationship management and physical health maintenance.

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<sup>13</sup>Mayer, I (1965) Studies in Gusii kinship. Unpublished PhD thesis. Rhodes University.Grahamstown.

<sup>14</sup>Tyndale,E.M; Gallant, M ;Coyle, B.C ;Holland,D ; Metcalfe, K ;Wildish,J and Gichuru, M ( 2005) The sexual script of Kenya's young people.

<sup>15</sup> The WHO defines life skills as "abilities for adaptive and positive behavior that enables individuals to deal effectively with the demands and challenges of everyday life.

The inability to fulfill the aforementioned tasks will impact negatively on an individual's present (childhood and adolescent stage) and future (Adulthood stage) functioning (Gazda *et.al*, 2001). In Kenya, despite the introduction and declaration of Life Skills Education as a compulsory component of basic education in the country's primary schools<sup>16</sup>, effective teaching of the subject is hampered by numerous factors. For instance, lack of training among the teachers, and it's being exempted from being an examinable subject made both teachers and learners alike develop a negative attitude towards the subject (Abobo and Orodho, 2014).

An equally glaring gap in the country's education system is its failure to orient its education system towards creating a balance between skills implantation and academic knowledge. Even with the government's deliberate efforts to reform the country's education system<sup>17</sup>, Godia (1987) has noted that the supposedly targeted problem of unemployment is here to stay as the changing of the curriculum without first restructuring the country's economic and political systems will not offer any tangible short term and long term solutions. The gap also lies in the failure of the education system to provide skills development necessary for enabling the young people to overcome social disadvantage (Adams, 2011). There is a disconnect of skills produced in educational institutions with the demands of the job market.

### **2.3 2 Youth unemployment in Kenya**

Unemployment in Kenya is high with estimates based on the KIHBS (2005/06) indicating that an average unemployment rate of 12.7 % (KNBS, 2008). High youth unemployment is often associated with social problems among young people such as: youth crime, drug and substance use, violence in schools and suicide (Singell and Lillydahl, 1989). According to the World Employment Social Outlook (2015), the issue of youth unemployment remains a concern globally as this category of the society's population continues to be hit disproportionately by the crisis despite the considerable improvements in average educational attainments of the cohort. In Europe, the youth unemployment rates ranged from 8% in Austria and German to a high of over 40 % in Italy and 52% in Spain and Greece. The situation is equally difficult in sub Saharan Africa, whose declining fertility rates imply that

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<sup>16</sup> The Life Skills Curriculum was formally rolled out by the Government of Kenya in all the country's Primary schools in the year 2008.

<sup>17</sup> In 1985, the government of Kenya initiated radical reforms in the education system, giving birth to the 8.4.4 education system. Since then, periodic measures have been carried out to restructure the curriculum to suit the ever changing needs of the country.

the continent is in its early stages of the transition. Table.5 provides the data showing the labour force participation by young people (15- 24) in some of the East Africa countries.

**Table 5: Labour force participation in percentage among young People (15 -24) by gender for selected East African countries.**

<b>Country</b>	<b>Male (%)</b>	<b>Female (%)</b>
<b>Burundi</b>	68	73
<b>Kenya</b>	43	37
<b>Rwanda</b>	72	74
<b>Tanzania</b>	69	65
<b>Uganda</b>	49	60

*Source: International Labour Organization, 2014.*

As shown in the table, whereas Rwanda shows the highest labour force participation rates by its young people, Kenya scores poorly. More so, the Unemployment rates for the young people are remarkably highest among the Kenyans as shown in Table 6.

**Table 6: Unemployment rates for youth (15 - 24)**

<b>Country</b>	<b>Gender</b>		<b>Residence</b>	
	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Urban</b>	<b>Rural</b>
<b>Burundi</b>	0.6	0.3	25.3	*
<b>Kenya</b>	22	19	32	17
<b>Rwanda</b>	10	9	8	28
<b>Tanzania</b>	5	1	1	11
<b>Uganda</b>	4	7	3	23

\*Not available

*Source: World Bank, 2012*

As demonstrated in the table, the country's unemployment levels are the highest compared with those of other countries in the Eastern Africa region. The unemployment rates are

slightly much higher for males compared to the female youth. Additionally, those for the male youth who reside in the rural areas of the country are the highest in the region.

In Kenya, some of the factors leading to youth unemployment are: lack of requisite skills required by the industry, mismatch of TVET acquired skills and the job market expectations, gender and cultural biases and limited guidance<sup>18</sup>. The country's unemployment rates have over the decades recorded higher rates than those of the adult and the national unemployment rate. Overall, the unemployment rates are highest among the 15- 19 Cohort. This could be attributed to the fact that the young people constituting the age group are still in school though still likely to be looking for jobs. The 20 – 24 and 25 – 29 age cohorts are categories affected most by the unemployment

In responding to the critical problem of unemployment, since independence, the Kenyan government has grappled with the problem of youth unemployment through the design of appropriate policies as shown in the country's successive five year development plans. However, while in the 1980's, two landmark policy reports<sup>19</sup> touching on unemployment were formulated and their implementation attempted, it was only in the year 2008 that employment was considered a structural issue<sup>20</sup>. Perhaps, it was in its endeavour to address the question and concerns of the youth unemployment, that in April 2009, the government launched the *Kazi Kwa Vijana* (KKV) programme<sup>21</sup>. The initiative aimed at creating between 200,000 and 300,000. While its roll- out created a positive impact on the recipients by enabling them to gain income for self and family upkeep, its weakness lay in the fact that the only phase that was rolled out targeted unskilled labour, leaving out a large section of the young people who had attained vocational skills . Furthermore, its sustainability became a challenge. The work was short term with low pay and thus the young people have humorously referred to the programme as “*Kazi Kwa vijana, pesa Kwa wazee*”<sup>22</sup> . The other

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<sup>18</sup> Kenya, Republic of (2014) “Kenya country Report for the 2014 Ministerial Conference on Youth unemployment. 21 – 23 July, 2014. AbdiJan, Cote Divoire.

<sup>19</sup> These were: The report of the presidential committee report on unemployment (1982 / 1983) and the sessional paper No.2 of 1985 on unemployment.

<sup>20</sup> For the first time, in the Sector Plan for Labour, Youth and Human Resource Development Sector 2008/ 2012 the youth dimension was incorporated into the unemployment phenomena.

<sup>21</sup> The initiative dubbed “Work for Youth” aimed to employ both the urban and rural youth in labour intensive public works projects like road maintenance, water harvesting, afforestation and water collection.

<sup>22</sup> Kiswahili expression for “Work for Youth, Money for Adults “. A slang denoting the high level corruption associated with the project (Standard Newspaper, 5 – 9 - 2013).

notable public policy intervention aimed at addressing the problem of youth unemployment involves human capital development through the Youth Enterprise Development (YEDF) by providing financial aid for initiating small business enterprises and self - employment.

Despite the Kenyan government's spirited efforts at curtailing the contribution of youth unemployment to the youth crisis, an examination of the trends in the country's job creation over the last three decades reveal an interesting pattern. At 79.4 %, the formal sector employment opportunities were at an all-time high in 1986. These have witnessed a phenomenal drop to 16.2 % in 2013. On the other hand, the reverse pattern has been witnessed with regard to the trends in the informal sector. From an all-time low of 221.7 % in 1987, the growth in the creation of employment opportunities in the informal sector led to a massive leap reaching 83.8 % in 2013 as shown in Table. 7

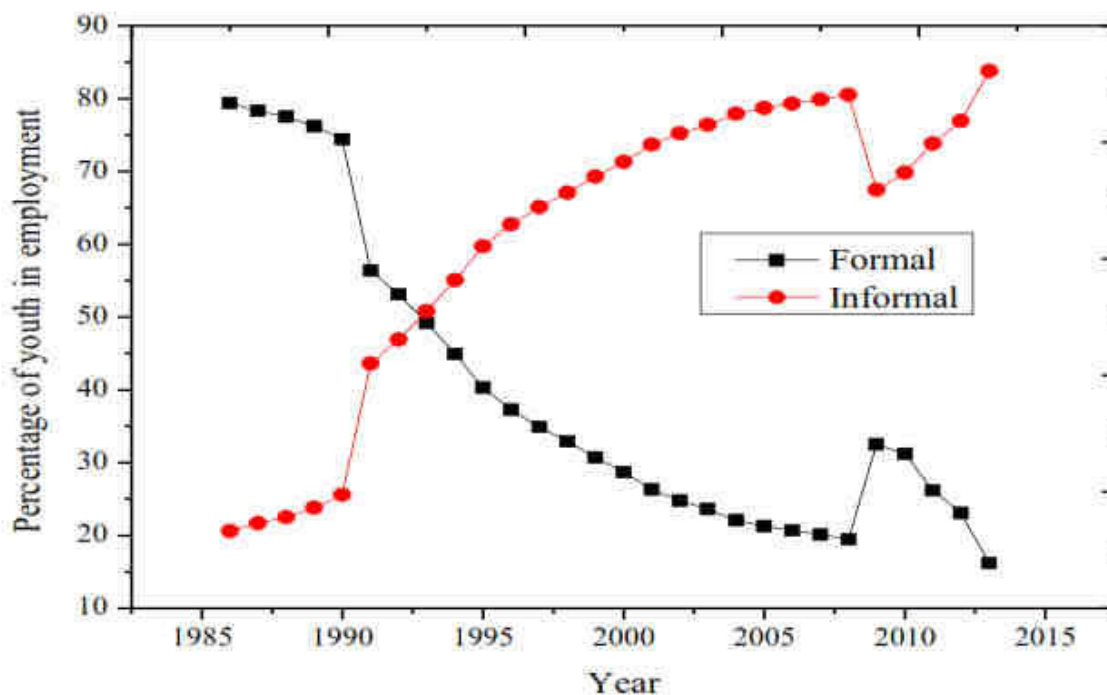
**Table 7: Percentage of employment opportunities created in public and Private sector in Kenya, 1986 – 2013**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Proportion in Formal Employment</b>	<b>Proportion in Informal Employment</b>
1987	78.3	21.7
1988	77.5	22.5
1989	76.2	23.8
1990	74.4	25.6
1991	56.4	43.6
1992	53.1	46.9
1993	49.2	50.8
1994	44.9	55.1
1995	40.3	59.7
1996	37.3	62.7
1997	34.9	65.1
1998	32.9	67.1
1999	30.7	69.3
2000	28.7	71.3
2001	26.3	73.7
2002	24.8	75.2
2003	23.6	76.4
2004	22.1	77.9
2005	21.3	78.7
2006	20.7	79.3
2007	20.1	79.9
2008	19.5	80.5
2009	32.5	67.5
2010	31.2	69.8
2011	26.2	73.8
2012	23.1	76.9
2013	16.2	83.8

**Source:** *Extracted from Economic Survey reports 1986 – 2014*

From the data it is clear that the year 1993 marks a watershed, when the proportion of employment opportunities in the formal and informal sector converged for the first time in the country's employment history as shown in Figure.4.

**Figure 4: Trends in Formal and Informal employment in Kenya, 1986- 2013.**



**Source:** *Economic Survey Reports, Kenya 1986 – 2014.*

Accordingly, as the Kenyan formal sector experienced downturn<sup>23</sup>, the Kenyan government resorted to popularizing the informal sector as the future route for employment creation. Despite the paradigm shift, the Kenyan populace, especially the rural young people have failed to embrace the new spirit. The consistent clamour for “white collar jobs” by both the educated and uneducated youth has contributed to the crisis. In the face of the weak performance of the economy, this constrained growth in wage employment during the 1990s. In addition, public sector reforms resulted in retrenchment and restrictive employment. Consequently, the civil service, which used to be the largest employer in the country, experienced a major down - sizing, leaving the private sector to fill in the attendant gap. Paradoxically, in Masaba Sub- County as elsewhere in rural Kenya, the common thinking

<sup>23</sup> Among the various structural adjustment reform measure conditions imposed by the World Bank and the IMF on the donor recipient nations in order to be eligible to access new loans and renegotiate existing private loans was to cut down on expenditure on public sector wage ceilings, leading to a recruitment freeze for several years and downsizing of public sector employees. Action aid (2009) *The IMF fallacies and pitfalls of the IMF Policies*. Action Aid International Kenya, Nairobi.

among rural populace is that one is in secure employment if he gets the opportunity to serve in a rank within the mainstream civil service. In my interviews with parents, it became clear that parents believed that if one was involved in the private sector, such an individual was in temporary employment and thus looking forward to getting permanently employed in government service and that only so will an individual be considered fully employed.

### **2.3.3 The challenge of young people's sexual and reproductive health experiences in Kenya**

The Kenyan government is a signatory to various conventions at international and regional levels. Some of the protocols that the government has accented to include: Maputo Plan of action, International conference on population and development (ICPD), Global youth conference, the UN convention on rights of the child, the African youth charter and a range of other regionally focused declarations. In so doing, the country has illustrated her political will and commitment towards actualizing the continental sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) framework necessary for enabling her accelerate action towards the implementation of the MDGs 4, 5 and 6<sup>24</sup>. Partly, based on their demographic strength and the uniqueness and complexity of their development challenges<sup>25</sup>, there has been an increasing call to substantively address the reproductive health needs of adolescents and young people. This has been included in the post 2015 development Agenda as a necessary condition for economic and social development (UNFPA, 2013).

The Kenyan government recognizes the entitlement of her adolescents and young people to high quality reproductive health care and the realization of the importance of their wellbeing in influencing the country's national development. The Government has thus, for the first time developed and launched an explicit youth policy<sup>26</sup> to guide in integrating the health and

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<sup>24</sup> The eight (8) goals forming a blue print agreed by all world nations ranging from halving extreme poverty rates, to halting the spread of HIV/AIDS by the year 2015. The 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> ones target to reduce child mortality, improve maternal health and combat HIV/AIDS, Malaria and the other diseases.

<sup>25</sup> Presently numbering 1.8 Billion, they constitute approximately 25% of the global population. Furthermore, available data indicate that annually, close to 15 million young girls aged 15- 19 give birth with a significant proportion experiencing rape and unsafe abortion ordeals. In addition, globally, young people aged 15- 24 years account for nearly 41 % of new HIV infections.

<sup>26</sup> Prior to its initiation and adoption the country mainly relied on eight international and local policy instruments to provide ASRH services. These include : UN Convention on rights of the child, 1989, ICPD , 1994, Beijing Platform for Women, 1995, National reproductive health strategy for Kenya, 1997, UN Youth world



development concerns of the youth and adolescents into the development process (Kenya Republic of, 2003). The policy among other targets to: Double contraceptive use rate among adolescents aged 15-19 to 8% in 2015 and the youth (20-24) to 40%, reduce the proportion of women below age 20 with a first birth from 45 % in 1998 to 22% by 2015, raise the Median Age at First sexual intercourse from 16.7 for girls and 16.8 % for boys to 18 for both by 2015 and reduce maternal mortality rate by 50% in the 15-24 age group by 2015.

In a recent review report, after the decade long implementation of the Kenya Adolescent and Youth Reproductive Health, it was observed that limited achievement has been attained .The results showed that sexually active adolescent boys and girls who had engaged in higher - risk sex stood at 98% and 56% respectively, while women aged 20 -24 years who had given birth by age 18 and with Unmet need for family planning was 26% and 30% respectively. The women aged 20- 24 years who had been married by age 18 constituted 26% while men and women aged 20- 24 who had practiced sex by age 18 were 58% and 48% respectively. Among the factors that have hindered its effective implementation are: - first, cultural practices and the gender norms whose behavioral expectations for men and women stand in opposition and fail to align themselves with the policy objectives. Secondly, while they may serve to encourage abstinence from sex by adolescents, in most part, religious practices and beliefs are in opposition to life skills and sex education and family planning. Lastly, minimal involvement of adolescents and their parents in the Adolescent Sexual and Reproductive Health policy, leads to the lack of awareness about the existence of the policy (Kenya, Republic of, 2013).

It is widely accepted that Adolescent Sexual and Reproductive Health (ASRH) behavior is in most cases are dependent on a society's prevailing socio – cultural situation. Traditionally, all the Kenyan young people underwent certain initiation ceremonies in order to acquire the right character to enable them to fit and function effectively in their respective communities. With the coming of modern education and western religion, the traditional initiation ceremonies and modes of socialization have given way to modern schooling and teachers, parents and religious leaders now play a key role in shaping adolescent behavior (Bogonko, 1976). However, there is evidence that in Kenya, today's adolescents and young people are growing

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programme,2000, National population policy for sustainable development, 2000,The children's Act – Kenya,2001, The persons with disabilities Act, 2003.

up in a social and cultural context that appears to reinforce the confusion and contradictions<sup>27</sup> that adolescents face as they transition into adulthood. For instance, because it is considered taboo for children to discuss matters of sexuality with their parents, most parents have often shelved the responsibility, perceiving it as shameful, immoral, inappropriate and encouraging sex (Poulsen et.al, 2010). In Nigeria, the parents' lack of knowledge in reproductive health has been found to be a hindrance to parent – adolescent communication on ASRH matters (Shugaba *et.al*, 2006). In a study to examine the impact of adults and teachers information about sex on unplanned pregnancies among adolescents in Nairobi County, Kinara (2013) found out that although teachers were identified to be the primary source of sexual information, they were poorly prepared to teach the subject. It was also observed that sexuality information from the parents discouraged the adolescents from using contraceptives. Hence, rendering the information received ineffective as studies elsewhere have proved that when sex education classes fail to discuss contraception, the recipients portray unhealthier sexual outcomes<sup>28</sup>. Among the Kuria of South Western Kenya, Prazak's (2000) study to investigate the dynamics governing parent – adolescent talk about sex found out that it was difficult for parents to closely control their children's sexual behavior. This is because talking about sex is considered inappropriate between adjoining generations in the community.

In addition to the limited life skills education programme taught in schools, young people receive considerable counseling from faith based institutions, with focus on abstinence (Kangara, 2004). However, most religious groups oppose the teaching of sex education to young people and the provision of contraception such as condoms on the basis that encouraging these methods promotes irresponsible sexual behavior among them. Besides the teachers, parents and religious practitioners, peers education whether provided formally or informally by close friends also shapes adolescent attitudes and beliefs regarding sex. Studies

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<sup>27</sup> In Kenya, young people were traditionally initiated into adulthood after undergoing appropriate rites of passage which included either the circumcision or a physical operation in the body of the initiate, followed by the provision of intensive information and guidance on sexuality and related issues. The prevailing social arena is characterized by a scenario of contestations ( no man's land kind of) within which the old and the new order are constantly being negotiated – a combination of traditions which are today being questioned and regarded as being “old fashioned”, religious teachings, mainly consisting of restrictions and decrees and the school as a new loci for the dissemination of information, guidelines, customs and opportunities that may be more meaningful to the younger generation. On their part, the older constantly live in fear of the looming possibility of the loss of control over their children as they negotiate the less familiar (on the parent's part) institutional pathways (Prazak, 2001).

<sup>28</sup> Dorskotch, P (2012) “Youth have healthier outcomes if their sex education classes discuss Contraception”*Perspectives on sexual and reproductive health* .Vol.44. No.4 Pg.270.

have pointed out that for both adolescent boys and girls, peers are increasingly becoming an important source for providing much of the desired information. Among the Kuria, Prazak (2000) observed from her respondents that more than half (51%) of her male respondents had learnt from age mates. As Prazak found out, discussions with age mates provide information in topics that are too embarrassing for discussion with elders. For instance, for boys, sex talk is primarily based on hearsay and tends more to do with practice. Interestingly, this comes in form of peer pressure. In a study to find out the factors pre-disposing young people to engage in risky sexual behaviours, Nzioka (2001) discovered that 31 % of the boys had experienced pressure from a friend to have sex.

As elsewhere in the world, the proliferation of the mass media has intersected virtually all the socializing social institutions. Thus, in the Kenyan society its role in shaping adolescent and young people's values, attitudes and beliefs about sexual and reproductive health has increasingly become enormous (Strasburger and Donnerstein, 1999). The contemporary Kenyan youth initiate sexual activity and childbearing early and the same youth hardly practice safe sex, which exposes them to great danger.

Hence, it is evident that the Kenyan environment in which adolescents and young people are making decisions related to sexual and reproductive health is rapidly evolving. It has, for instance, emerged that they are growing up in circumstances uniquely different from those of their parents and there is greater access to formal education and unlimited exposure to new ideas via the mass media. As we shall see in the next sections (2.3.3.1 to 2 3.3.2.) like in all the other developing countries, the period of sexual debut and rate of sexual initiation are changing and child bearing and marriage are increasingly unlinked, just as high HIV prevalence increases the risk associated with the early initiation of sexual activity.

### **2.3.3.1 Age at first sexual intercourse and Age at marriage**

The age at which a person initiates sexual activities is considered an important determinant of key demographic and sociological outcomes. For instance, girls who have a first sex intercourse earlier than average (10-14 years) have a higher likelihood of having sex with high risk men and a greater risk for STI/ HIV (Menschke *et.al*, 2000). They drop out of school prematurely and are victims of unwanted pregnancy and teenage childbearing. This results in diminished chances of life opportunities (Berglas *et.al*, (2003; Pettifor *et.al*, 2004) and may lead them to become victims of early marriage (Erulkar, 2013).

In the Eastern African region, while the age at first sexual intercourse is generally dropping, the age at first marriage is going up. In Kenya, the proportion of women marrying by age 15 declines with age from 2% in the 15-19 age bracket to over 10% among 45- 49. This indicates that there has been a shift in early entry to marriage over time. A similar situation is observed in all the other East African countries of Tanzania, Rwanda Uganda and Burundi. Consistent with theory, educational attainment is seen to affect initiation of sexual activities among young people. For instance, in Kenya, women with at least some secondary education begin sexual activities almost three years later than those with no education. In contrast, though those for men show no consistent pattern by level of education (Kenya, Republic of, 2010). In Burundi, also, the effect of education and schooling creates a greater impact in women in which a significant gap is portrayed than in men (Republique du Burundi, 2010). In Tanzania, among women, the Median Age at First Sex varies by level of education with those with secondary education postponing the initiation of sexual activities by close to three years (NBS- Tanzania, 2010). It is perhaps, only in Rwanda that for men and women, the highest variation in the Age at First Sexual Intercourse is by the level of the education attained.

Similarly, variation in AFSI for women varies by region of residence only in Kenya, Rwanda and Tanzania. Table 8 shows the most recent statistical rates for Median age at first sexual intercourse and Age at marriage among young people in the eastern African countries.

**Table 8: Median age at first sexual intercourse and Age at Marriage for East African countries**

Country	Median Age at First Sex		Age at Marriage	
	Men	Women	Men	Women
Burundi(2010)	22.6	20.0	23.8	20.3
Kenya(2008/9)	17.6	18.2	25.1	20.0
Rwanda(2012)	21.6	20.7	24.9	21.4
Tanzania(2012)	18.5	17.4	24.3	18.8
Uganda ( 2007)	18.1	16.6	22.3	17.9

**Source:** *Various Demographic and Health survey Reports*

From the table, it is shown that except for Kenya, for all countries, the median age at first sex is higher for men compared to that of young women. Accordingly, the MAFS for men was 17.6, while that for women stood at 18.2. This implies that young men initiate sex much earlier than their counterparts in the region. Similarly, as shown in the table, in Kenya, the age at marriage is much higher compared to their counterparts in the other countries in the region. This has far reaching implications in terms of the amount time that the young people take before settling down to family.

### **2.3.3.2 Variations of Age at first sex among young people in Kenya**

An important trend in initiation of sexual activity is the variation among regions in the country. For instance, in Kenya, adolescents and young people living in rural areas have been found to initiate sexual activity much earlier than those in their ages residing in the country's urban areas. According to the Kenya Demographic and Health Survey (2008/ 9), 8.5 % and 39.1% of young women aged 15-24 years in urban areas initiate sex before age 15 and 18 respectively while 11.8% and 49.8 % of the young women in rural areas initiate the first sexual activities before age 15 and age 18 respectively. On the other hand 15.4 % and 51.1% of the country's urban young men initiate first sexual activities before age 15 and 18 respectively. Their counterparts in the rural areas comprise 23.8% and 60.1 % whose sexual activities are initiated before 15 and 18 years respectively. Young women in Nyanza province (18.3%; 63.6%) have the highest likelihood of having sex before the age of 15 and 18 years respectively. The data shows for young men aged 15-24 years, the likelihood of initiating sex before attaining 18 years is highest in Western (69.2 %), Nyanza (63.3 %) and Nairobi (60.8) in that order as shown in Table 9.

**Table 9: Percentages of young people (15- 24) according to region who initiated sex by gender in Kenya**

Region/ Gender	% Women		% Men	
	Before age 15	Before age 18	Before age 15	Before age 18
Nairobi	3	27	17.3	60.8
Central	4.2	32	15.1	50.1
Coast	11.6	53.4	13.2	46.3
Eastern	7.1	42.1	23.3	54.5
Nyanza	18.3	63.6	27.2	63.3
Rift valley	13.7	47.9	22.5	58.9
Western	8.7	48.4	27.3	69.2
North Eastern	11.1	38.5	8	20.4

**Source:** Kenya Demographic and health Survey, 2008/9 Report.

The observed regional variations have mainly been attributed to the prevailing socio - economic and cultural variations in the country. For instance, Nyanza province is mainly inhabited by the Luo and Kisii. Ethnic entities have their respective socio cultural ideologies made up of norms, beliefs, values and practices which impact either positively or negatively on the reproductive performance of the communities. The major explanation for increased incidents of early sexual initiation has been attributed to the presence of institutional and normative structures mainly supplied by the kinship and the extended family system which serves to promote early marriage and child bearing ( Ikamari *et al.*, 2007 ). In contrast, the urban environment is favoured by the exposure to reproductive health information and ready access to reproductive health services (Beguy, *et.al*, 2014).

### **2.3.3.3 High risk sex practices and multiple - sex partners among young people in Kenya**

High risk sexual practices entail an individual setting to engage in a sexual act by a non - married or non-cohabiting sexual partner which is likely to result from non – use of a condom, drunkenness or multiple partners. According to the Kenya Demographic and Health Survey (KDHS 2008/9), young men (15-24) from Nyanza (87.8%), Central (86.8 %) and western (86.4 %) provinces engage most in higher sex risk as shown in Table. 10. For young

women, however, it is shown that the highest risk is associated with living in Nairobi, followed by Nyanza province.

**Table 10: High risk among young people (15 - 24) in Kenya according to region**

<b>Region</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Women</b>
Nairobi	83.8	44.6
Central	86.8	31.0
Coast	84.2	25.2
Eastern	79.1	30.2
Nyanza	87.8	35.8
Rift valley	77.9	35.1
Western	86.4	29.4
North eastern	0.0	0.0

**Source:** *KDHS 2008/09*

From the data, it is shown that in Kenya, high risk sexual behavior among the young people is associated with region of residence. Kisii County, in which the study area is located, falls within Nyanza province. This has implications for the sexual and reproductive health outcomes among the young people in the study area.

#### **2.3.3.4 Negative outcomes of ASRH in Kenya**

The young people approaching adulthood experience problem behaviors and their sexual activities, both within and outside of marriage, lead to negative reproductive health outcomes (UN, 2008). Majorly, for the young women, the practice of unprotected sex exposes them to the risks of unintended pregnancy, unwanted child bearing and abortion as well as HIV and other STIs (Masatu *et.al*, 2009). In Kenya, the adoption of a multi sectoral strategy to address the aforementioned has been implemented. However, despite the strides made on this front, adolescent sexual and reproductive health situation continues to be characterized by considerable ill-health among the young people (Kenya, Republic of, 2013). Some of the reasons cited for the continued disproportionate suffering by the young people are attributed to the physical and social vulnerability alongside their being neglected by programmes and

health policies (UNDP, 2010). In the following sub – section, we examine the challenge of teenage pregnancy and child bearing among the young people in the study area.

### **2.3.3.5 Adolescent pregnancy and child bearing among the Gusii**

Globally, adolescent pregnancy and child bearing is considered one of the most serious problems facing young people today. In Kenya, the proportion of teenagers who have begun childbearing increases dramatically from 2% at age 15 to 36% at age 19. The country’s national TFR currently stands at 4.6 and the young women aged 20-24 have the highest fertility rates at 238 births per 1,000 women. For this age cohort, the rural fertility rates are twice as high as for the urban dwellers (KNBS, 2010). Some of the consequences of teenage and childbearing among young people include: a reduction of the probability of high school completion by between 18 to 37% (Berthelon, 2014), pregnancy related deaths and those resulting from post abortion complications (Darroch *et.al*, 2000) and a wide range of effects on the social mobility of children (Bledsoe *et.al*, 1993).

During the fieldwork for this study in the period from March, 2013 till August, 2014 it emerged strongly that of all the challenges confronting the community, that of adolescent child– bearing ranked highest. The phenomenon has become salient to the extent that whereas livelihood challenges, general social relations, morality and gender relations have been the subject of social commentary over and over in recent decades, contemporary Gusii Popular songs and lyrics are full of expressions pointing to the loss of moral connection and continuity resulting from the aforementioned aspect of youth crisis in the lives and trajectories of young people. For instance, in the lyrics of the song, *Akangaina amandazi* (Appendix 7), the circumstances under which young women struggle to singly navigate the ordeal, often in the context of the lack of support from the key stakeholders in the community are illustrated.

Several factors have been found to be associated with adolescent pregnancy and child bearing. They are: poverty and deprivation, early sexual debut, lack of reproductive health knowledge, non-use of family planning methods and sugar – daddy relationships (NFPA, 2002). Other studies have indicated that the main reason for becoming a teenage mother is the involvement in transactional sex<sup>29</sup> (Gyesaw *et.al*, 2013; KNBS, 2010). In a study among

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<sup>29</sup>According to KDHS (2009) transactional sex involves the exchange of sex for money, favours and gifts, usually highest among men aged 15- 29 years.



adolescent mothers in a Ghanaian suburb, young respondents pointed out that they became pregnant due to their desire to meet their ordinary basic needs. Interestingly, even among those from affluent families, the need to meet their basic needs not provided by their parents leads them to seek help from men, leading to teenage pregnancies (Republic of Sierra Leone, 2013). In the aforementioned local song (transcribed below) the situation leading the young girls into motherhood is brought out in the lyrics:

**Akang'aina amandazi na Justus Marube<sup>30</sup>**

Akang'aina *esoda*, akangaina *chips* x2

Akangaina *eroast*, akangombia *sweetie* x 2

Ekeru kwagoreretwe *esoda* baba

Naende gwasaba *chipsy*

Aye kwegokia kwaigwa buya

Oborito bogocha, kwarera

According to the lyrics, the young people are led into engaging in sexual activities and end up conceiving at the early ages. The young girls usually become easy prey and can easily be lured by men to engage in sex in exchange for material gifts. In Nyanza province, a study by Njue, Askew and Chege (2005) found out that sweet talking and persuasion through gifts, money and trickery were the common methods used by young boys and sugar daddies to lure young school girls into engaging in non-consensual sex. The girl (adolescent mother) in the song laments that she was cheaply lured and duped into sexual activities by the male partner by offering her a plate of *chips, soda and roasty*<sup>31</sup>. She was also tricked by soothing her into giving in to the man's desires. A study among Tanzanian adolescents showed that the sexual relationships that end in such pregnancies often take place with much older men<sup>32</sup>. However

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<sup>30</sup>**He cheated me with 'maandazi' (English translation) by Justus Marube**

He cheated me with a soda, he cheated me with a soda  
He cheated me with roast meat, he soothed me sweetie  
When you were bought (for) a soda young girl  
And you asked for chips  
You entertained yourself and felt good  
When pregnancy comes, you cry

<sup>31</sup>Common delicacy of deep fried potatoes taken together with soda among young people in Kenya

<sup>32</sup>Liljestrom, R; Masanja, P ; Rwebangira, K.M and Urassa, J.N ( 1998)" Cultural conflicts and ambiguities" in Haraka haraka -Look before you reap: youth at the cross roads of custom and modernity .nordiska afrikainstet. Uppsala

this particular episode depicts a young person who disowns the girl on learning that she has become pregnant. The adolescent mother is portrayed as being vulnerable to manipulation for short term pleasure (for both her and the young man) but she is left to bear the blunt of the consequences of their (boy and girl) actions. This brings to the fore the unequal gender relations and the (unempowered) economic position of the young adolescent mother. In reference to the girl's gullibility, the narrator in the song points out how suddenly the short term pleasure translates into a bitter experience for the (now) young mother leading to untold anguish and torment.

### **2.3.3.6 Consequences of child bearing among the youth in Gusii**

Adolescent pregnancy comes with reproductive risks: complications in pregnancy, expulsion from school, frequent anaemia and single mother hood. Due to the society's disapproval of teen motherhood, unmarried pregnant adolescents often find themselves coming face to face with rejection, stigma and in the extreme, sometimes physical and psychological abuse. A study to examine the responses to unintended pregnancy among urban adolescents in Kenya's urban informal settlements showed that the rejection by the male partner and stigma associated with being a pregnant student were some of the consequences that teenage mothers had to contend with (Mumah *et.al*, 2014).

In the song, *Akang'aina amandazi*, the pregnant adolescent demonstrates her vile temper toward the male partner for neglecting her upon learning that she has conceived. Her attempt to reach him on the telephone does not bear fruit and the desperation draws her to contemplate killing the unborn foetus (abortion) if only that could relieve her the much pain she is experiencing. Her anguish comes out clearly in the following lines in the song:

#### **Akangaina amandazi<sup>33</sup>**

Omomura ongeete omwana oyo nere ogerete ngoita

Oonchokire obeire ekebarabara

Yaani obeire bobbe omomura oyo

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<sup>33</sup>**He cheated me with mandazi ( English translation)**

the young man who gave me (impregnated ) this child is the one who has made me to kill  
he has suddenly become a turn coat  
i mean he has become bad this young man  
so now where do I go  
he has refused to receive my phone call

Gaki bono inche nkai ngochia

Gaki bwangire kobwata esimi

In addition, the girl is fearful of the parent's reaction to her situation. In the song, she says:

Mama ominto nache antige. Abaibori bane nabatindi<sup>34</sup>.

In a study to find out the parents' reaction to their daughter's pregnancies in Tanzania, it was observed that the parents and guardians of all the young mothers included in the study "were annoyed when they learned that their daughters were pregnant"<sup>35</sup>. At another level, the mother of the adolescent mother is "full of fear" because "when a daughter misbehaves (becomes pregnant) the blame is put on the mother and this affects the good reputation of the whole family. Hence, although mothers will usually be among the first person to be informed of the pregnancy, they will usually show dissatisfaction with their daughter's pre mature and pre-marital pregnancies. Consequently, the mothers may detach themselves from sharing in their daughter's ordeal<sup>36</sup>. The girls' fear of their parents reveals a lack of mutual trust.

As pointed out above, it is the mother that takes the blame when their daughters' conceive. On revealing of her pregnancy to the mother, she will usually get worried of the consequences emanating from the father. The mothers meet their daughters' revelation with utter shock and her response is captured in the song thus:

Morito! Morito omwana one?<sup>37</sup>

Tata omino gose nache atotige<sup>38</sup>

In a study in rural Zimbabwe to capture men's perspectives on pre-marital sex and pregnancy, the respondents said that once it came to the knowledge of the father that the daughter was pregnant, the father then for sure beat the mother. According to the

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<sup>34</sup>**English translation**

What will my mother do to me? My parents are harsh.

<sup>35</sup>Katapa, R.S (1998) "Teenage mothers in their second pregnancies" in Haraka Haraka Look before you Leap: Youth at the cross road of custom and modernity. *Nodiska Afrikainstitutet*. Uppsala.

<sup>36</sup>Liljestrom, R; Masanja, P; Mkai, P; C.P.B and Masabo, T (1994) "The pubescent girl – past and present". In *Chelewa chelewa: the dilemma of teenage girls*. *Nordiska institutet*. Uppsala.

<sup>37</sup>**English translation**

Pregnant! Pregnant my child.

<sup>38</sup>**English translation**

Will your father spare us

Zimbabwean study, the common practice among men (fathers) is to ask the question “where were you when the daughter got pregnant”<sup>39</sup>

The fear of being blamed, violence from the husband and ridicule from the community members forces the mothers to assist their daughters to procure an abortion. In Kenya, although abortion is illegal and official statistics are not readily available, the scanty data indicates that it is a serious and growing concern. Studies point to a high incidence among adolescent women and that induced abortion is the most important determinant of maternal deaths (Gebreselassie et.al, 2005; KHRC, 2010, CRHR, 2010). In the song, *Akangaina amandazi*, both the mothers and their daughters see the termination of the pregnancy as the ultimate solution to the problem at hand. In contrast, the male stakeholders (adolescent father and father) are quick to dismiss the suggestion. The above comes out strongly in the lyrics of the song:

Ebange onge chibese ingende indusie oborito<sup>40</sup>  
Inkong’enta inde inche. Hi! Inche inkong’enta inde  
Togende gochia maate aa bochaberi atoruserie enda  
Yaa - ya yaa - ya, bwone yaa- ya  
Mama ingoita inde, mama ingoita inde  
Omwana oyo ende ing’iraine oboiseke  
Naende ingirane oboiseke  
Naende ingirane epara  
Inche inyore echiro  
Ekero indabe nomwana oyo

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<sup>39</sup>Chikovole, J; Nystrom, L; Lindmark, G and Ahlberg, M.B (2003) “Denial and violence: Paradoxes in men’s perspectives to pre-marital sex and pregnancy in rural Zimbabwe”. *African sociological Review* 7, PP.53- 72.

<sup>40</sup> **English translation**

Prepare yourself and give me money to go and procure an abortion  
I am going to strangle. Hi! I am going to strangle  
let’s go down here so that *bochaberi* can enable us procure an abortion  
No. noo ..... Noo ..... No not in my home  
mama I am going to kill, Mama I am going to kill  
this child so that I can become a girl again  
so that I become a girl again  
I return to the road  
I become marketable  
when I will be with this child  
young men will not like me  
the father (of unborn child) has referred to me as a *scrap*

Bamura imbakonyancha

Ise ondokire e *scrap*

Concurrently, as the pregnant adolescent demands for financial support from the male partner (responsible for the pregnancy), the mother suggests that they should urgently contact *bochaberi* to seek her services of procuring an abortion. The father assertively rules out such an undertaking, declaring that such a thing cannot take place in his own home, while the father (of the unborn child) refuses to be an accomplice in the girl's mission.

Unsafe abortion is a painful process in which the abortee encounters health complications such as: haemorrhage, sepsis, peritonitis and trauma to the cervix, vagina and abdominal organs (Grimes et.al, 2006) and childlessness or infertility (Tabong et.al, 2013). In the song it goes thus:

Ekeru ogoita omwana baba *nechilaana* baba kweretera<sup>41</sup>

Kaa norigie omwana oyo, origie ere akobore<sup>42</sup>

As clearly brought out in the song *Akangaina amandazi* unsafe abortion can lead to permanent loss of the ability to conceive, thereby severely affecting the reproductive life of the young people.

Other than for the fear that the mother will bear the brunt of the community's ridicule and put up with the anger and violence meted out by the fathers, it is perhaps the young woman's fear of missing out on prospects of getting married that motivates them to choose abortion. According to Monyenye (1977: 101), among the traditional and even the modern Gusii, "every girl is expected or expects to be married, even if she is useless, deformed or crippled or whoever ugly she was". Citing Iona Mayer (1973), he avers that "a girl who delays to get married is suspected of either being infertile or coming from a home whose parents are known to be notorious witches". Furthermore, custom required that all marriageable girls should get married, a fact that explains the absence of the Gusii local word for

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<sup>41</sup>**English translation**

When you kill the child baba you have brought curses to yourself.

<sup>42</sup>**English translation**

One day you will look for this child, look for this child but you will not get one

“spinister”. The common belief was that if a girl grew grey hair (aged) in her parents’ home she could likely suffer a curse, *emuma*<sup>43</sup>

The girl’s fears of missing out on a suitable suitor emanates from her supposed non – appeal to either the man that impregnated her or any other eligible one especially if she becomes a mother upon giving birth. According to Bledsoe et.al (1993) this could be due to the increasing unwillingness of husbands and kin to acknowledge illegitimate children. They write:

*Today, having a premarital birth makes it difficult for a young woman to find a man willing to marry her since she is stigmatized as promiscuous*<sup>44</sup>

In the past, alternatives existed for assisting individuals who found themselves in such circumstances. This involved either to have such women married- off to older men in polygamous relationships<sup>45</sup> or have children born under questionable circumstances purified in prescribed rituals and then get incorporated into the community<sup>46</sup>. However, in today’s societies, such crucial mechanisms are non – existent.

### **2.3.4 HIV and AIDS infection and young people**

HIV/AIDS and its consequences pose a critical challenge to young people globally. In developing countries such as those in Africa, the transition to adulthood has been made more difficult for the young people as HIV /AIDS is presently the leading killer of this category of the population (UNAIDS, 2012). According to UNAIDS estimates, quickening the pace of HIV prevention and treatment in Africa and the middle east will avert close to 13 Million new infections, particularly those occurring among young women (UNAIDS, 2014).

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<sup>43</sup>This is a mysterious punishment involving the occurrence of sudden death in an individual’s family due to non-adherence to the stipulated norms and customs of the society.

<sup>44</sup> Bledsoe, H.C and Cohen, B (1993) Social dynamics of adolescent fertility in sub Saharan Africa. National Academy Press. Washington D.C.

<sup>45</sup> Akonga, J.B (1988) Adolescent fertility and policy implications in Kenya. Paper presented at the Institute of African Studies, University of Nairobi. Nairobi.

<sup>46</sup> Kopytoff, I and Miers, S (1977) Slavery in Africa: Historical and anthropological perspectives. University of Wisconsin press. Madison.

In Kenya, the HIV prevalence rate for adolescents and young adults aged 15-24 fell from 3.8 in 2007 to 2.1 in 2012. Geographically, at 15.1%, the prevalence is highest in the Nyanza<sup>47</sup>, Mombasa and Turkana regions and lowest in the North eastern region (2.1 %). Whereas the highest infection rates were reported among the adult population 35- 39, 40- 44 and 50- 54 age groups at 12% 11% and 10% respectively, at 5 and 8 % the young people aged 20-24 and 25- 29% respectively portray significantly higher rates of infection. Although the HIV prevalence rates for the general population are higher in urban areas compared with rural folk, men in rural areas are more likely to be infected than those in urban areas and the odds of being infected among young women is higher than among men ( Republic of Kenya,2014). According to the most recent data, the proportion of young people aged 15- 24 who have had sexual intercourse before age 15 stands at 15.4 % and 10.1 % for male and females respectively. Those having multiple sexual partners include 14.7 % men and 2.5 % women. These indicators are quite high and point to the fact that despite the collective effort to reduce the epidemic to tolerable levels, HIV /AIDS will continue to be a major contributor to the youth crisis in Kenya.

### **2.3.5 Crime, delinquency and drug and substance use**

Crime degrades the quality of human life and impedes development (United Nations office on Drugs and Crime, 2009; Bratton et.al, 2004). Delinquent and criminal behaviors among young people as they negotiate their transition to adulthood, much like the other transitional behaviours, have been shown to be detrimental to their health and growth, both socially and physically (Singer, 2007; Baskin- Sommers and Sommers, 2006). Studies have shown that crime is strongly associated with age as crime rises rapidly in early adolescence, picking in late adolescence and then declines during the middle and older ages (Hirsch and Gottredson 1983; Rosevear, 2012). Crime and violence are more severe in urban areas, with African cities accounting for a sizeable proportion of their nations' crime (United Nations Human settlement, 2007).

In Kenya crime statistics indicate that there has been an increased incident of crime rates in recent years<sup>48</sup>. As shown in Table 11, crime rates are more prevalent among the male population compared to the female convicts. Furthermore, crime rates vary with region of

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<sup>47</sup>The counties with highest infection rates and located within Nyanza region comprise: Homa Bay (27.1 %), Kisumu (18.7 %), Siaya (17.8 %), Migori (13.4 %) and Kisii (8.9 %) in that order.

<sup>48</sup>According to the current statistical abstract ( 2013) compiled by the Kenya national Bureau of Statistics, the number of persons reported to have committed offenses rose from 69,484 in 2007 to 83, 853 in 2012.

residence. The distribution by region (2012) show that the Rift valley region has the highest recorded number of crimes, followed by Nairobi, Western, Central, Coast, Eastern, Nyanza and lastly North - Eastern province. While the said variations were previously associated with urbanization, recent studies have shown that higher crime incidents have permeated the rural areas of the country (World Bank, 2006).

**Table 11:No. of Persons reported to police to have committed offenses by gender <sup>49</sup>**

Region / Year	2007		2012	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
Nairobi	10599	1898	8155	1713
Central	8812	2130	7963	1049
Coast	7685	1011	8107	1345
Eastern	7064	3878	8244	1278
North Eastern	1222	136	760	148
Nyanza	6197	794	7345	504
Rift Valley	18,124	3217	13426	1850
Western	9215	1432	5993	1150

**Source:** *Republic of Kenya: Statistical abstract, 2013.*

The failure by the government to turn the tide in the crime wave in the rural areas has led the communities to come up with own ways of preventing crime. Consequently, as a response strategy, the communities have established local youth vigilante groups to purge the localities of criminals and serve as a disincentive to prospective criminals (Ruteere and Pommerolle, 2003). With regard to Drug and substance abuse, a rapid assessment to determine the level of alcohol and drug abuse in Kenya revealed that drug and substance abuse in Kenya was a major social problem. The main substances consumed by young people included Cocaine, Heroin, alcohol, cigarettes, *miraa* among others (NACADA, 2012).

### **2.3.6 Young people and the use of digital and social media**

Digital media has become an increasingly important medium for communication and conducting social activities. In Kenya the internet has, particularly become widespread and is

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<sup>49</sup> Crime reporting in the country is incomplete; hence a major limitation lies in determining the actual ratios which could provide accurate statistics on offending.



nowadays the key means for knowledge seeking and socializing among the young people (M'cLeod, 2,000). According to the Kenya demographic and Health Survey, 2008/9, the media plays an indispensable role in providing family planning messages to adolescents and young people in the country. The data shows that for both the young men and women, the radio message has bigger audience, followed by television and then the newspapers and magazines (See Table 12). Furthermore, it is evident that the exposure to family planning messages via the mass media is higher in urban areas than in rural areas. More so, the level of exposure increases with the level of education attained as well as the wealth quintile.

**Table 12: Means of Exposure to Family planning Methods by youth 15 – 24**

Gender/ Age	Men				Women			
	Radio	T.V	Newspaper	Others	Radio	T.V	Newspaper	Other
15-19	57.3	28.6	28.4	36.3	52.9	27.3	27.9	44.1
20-24	75.9	42	44.9	18.9	75	43.3	37.6	23.6

**Source:** Kenya Demographic and Health Survey 2008/9

However, despite its usefulness as a source of disseminating information, studies have shown that the mass media can be a source of harm to young people in society. A study by UNICEF indicates some of the dangers among the youth that are associated with the media as:

1. Sexually explicit content posted on the internet including pornography
2. Non distinction of online only and offline friends
3. Low awareness of risk and consequences of engaging in unsafe behavior
4. Risky suggestive self-exposure
5. The parent – child digital media knowledge gap<sup>50</sup>

Exposure to pornography has been associated with delinquent behavior and substance use among the youth aged 12- 18 years (Ybarra *et.al*, 2005) and problem internet use has been found to cause notable behavioral and social maladjustment among adolescents (Kormas *et.al*, 2010). The likely overuse of computer internet is also likely to lead to addiction to the internet, whose consequences have been found to be failing in school and developing up of family and relationship problems (Brian *et .al*, 2005). A study among American adolescents found out that listening to music with degrading sexual lyrics is related to advances in a range

<sup>50</sup>UNICEF (2013) A private - public space: Examining the impact of digital and social media among adolescents in Kenya.UNICEF, Nairobi.

of sexual activities and that reducing the young people's exposure to such a type of music would delay the onset of sexual behavior (Martino *et.al*, 2006). Generally, fake identities , cyber bullying, transmission of hateful content and privacy violations in the mass media is a matter of great concern , especially given the fact that awareness of risk and the consequences of unsafe digital behavior among Kenyan adolescents is very low.

## **2.4 Conclusion**

In this chapter, we have presented the background information of the study area. The section has also provided the contextual review of the demographic, socio economic and cultural environment for adolescent and youth at the global, regional and local levels. As evidenced by the policy and empirical findings, it has been established that the phenomena of young people presents both opportunities and challenges to the modern societies. In Kenya, it has been demonstrated that the state of young people constitute a crisis as indicated by the many problems experienced by this important section of the society's population structure. These include: educational challenges, media use, Drug use and involvement in crime, unemployment, and reproductive health experiences and its related negative outcomes. It is concluded that the need to put in place effective political and socio – economic policies are warranted by the necessity to reap the benefits of the “youth bulge.”

## CHAPTER THREE

### THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES

#### 3.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the main theories that inform the various aspects dealt with in the study. In selecting the theoretical perspectives, the study recognizes that adolescent and youth development is complex and multi-faceted. It is also a subject that has generated multi – disciplinary interests. Thus, no single set of theories can claim to account for all aspects of the phenomena. Instead, certain theories offer specific contributions in complementarity to the others in providing the total landscape of adolescent and youth development in all its richness. To understand adolescent and youth socialization, this study has adopted various theories considered pertinent for this study. The theories are majorly derived from: first, those that underlie the major propositions explaining the phenomena of socialization followed by the theories of deviance.

#### 3.1 Theories of socialization

Sociological analysis on young people derives from theoretical work on socialization. Socialization is the process by which generally man and specifically young people adapt to and internalize society. The general purpose of socialization is to give an individual knowledge, ability and motivation for purposeful living (Orville, 1966). In this study, whereas the major focus is on theories on early socialization in the family, an attempt is made to interrogate the ability of the growing individuals' ability to make decisions regarding the environment in which they are growing up. Thus, the growing individual is seen as an independent entity apart from society which must be shaped and guided by external forces in order to enable him or her to become a fully functioning member of the society. The study, has also adopted the view that adolescence as a life stage cannot be studied in isolation from the other equally important life points, namely; prenatal, early childhood and adulthood. Hence, it is inferred that the impact of socialization at any one given stage will determine the wellbeing of an individual during the other stages within the life-course<sup>51</sup>. As asserted by Rutter (1989:160), social disadvantage and negative socialization experiences in infancy and childhood impede the achievement of normal developmental milestones in the subsequent life stages. As such, “principles and concepts of (human) development must be reviewed in

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<sup>51</sup>Socialization continues throughout life. After childhood, the growing individual continues to enter new groups and attain new status, learn new roles and equip himself with the skills and tools to enable him participate in society.( Elkin, 1972 : 142)

relation to lifespan issues due to the need to consider such issues in their social context, timing of experiences, experiential factors and continuities and discontinuities.” Hence, although most theories of socialization do not make direct reference to adolescence in the exact sense of the matter, but instead refer to childhood, the theories remain quite relevant to this study. The theories of socialization fall into three main categories; namely, deterministic, constructivist and symbolic interactionism.

### **3.1.1 The deterministic model of socialization**

According to this view, society appropriates the child, meaning that the young child is taken over by society and trained to become its productive member. Under this model, the child is seen as only playing a passive role in the process. Generally, there are two variants to this model: The functionalist and the cultural reproduction models. On one side, the functionalist model only seeks to prescribe the norms that the young person ought to internalize and also the parental child rearing and training strategies that will be employed to enhance such internalization. As such, the perspective lays little or no emphasis on how the young should be integrated into society. Talcott Parsons, the leading theorist of American sociology after the Second World War, regarded a young person as “a threat to society<sup>52</sup>, who must of necessity be “appropriated” and be “panel beat” to fit in it. While acknowledging that a child can be useful to the continuing functioning of the social system, he likened him/her to a “pebble” thrown into a “social bond”, whose initial point of entry – the family, experiences its initial effects. Only until she is socialized through formal training will she accept to follow the laid down social norms and eventually internalize the social system (Parsons *et.al*, 1955).

In this study, the deterministic model variant is quite helpful in our understanding of the perspectives of the socializees and the socializers towards the socialization of young people. In the contemporary setting, it is clear that the parents and other adult care givers consider the young people as inexperienced and in need of the wisdom of elder members of society in order to become fully functional in the community. Secondly, the rationale for providing the young people with the necessary information and education in the indigenous social setting was to equip them with the customs and behavioral norms required for functioning in society.

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<sup>52</sup>Parsons (1955: 36) considers society as comprising of a large scale social system made up of “an intricate network of interdependent and interpenetrating sub systems in whom a single individual plays multiple roles.

Thus, in both settings, if this is not provided, then the individual is deemed incomplete and therefore, ill prepared to face the challenges of life.

The second variant, mainly propagated by Bernstein (1981) and Bourdieu, (1977) advances the view that differential treatment accorded by social institutions to individuals (young people) in form of cultural capital serves to perpetuate prevailing class inequalities. Hence, they point out that due to the prevailing differences in the transmissible *cultural parental codes* and *practices* which vary by class passed on from parents to their children through the process of family socialization or in Bourdieu's term *Habitus*, class inequalities are reproduced<sup>53</sup>.

The deterministic model can be criticized for regarding young people and children as useless and lacking the ability to contribute actively and complement the process of adult's actions of their socialization. According to Corsaro (2011), the children are made to just internalize the society they are born into, without due regard to their being active and creative social agents. Thorne (1987) further points out that this socialization framework embeds problems for the young peoples' research as it makes it difficult to conceptualize young people as veritable social actors. In his thesis of an "over-socialized" individual, Wentworth(1980) considers the fact that 'if targets of socialization are viewed as passive without any ability to influence the agents, such an action will lead to excessive conformity and fail to allow for innovation, creativity and change. Furthermore, the portrayal of an "over directive society" leads to internalization which shouldn't be the case as society and its members should not be regarded as mere "norm followers". In today's society, it is common practice that not all norms are beneficial to individual members of society. In certain instances, the commonly held beliefs and cultural practices cease to be of benefit and instead become injurious to the users. Such retrogressive beliefs and practices demand to be interrogated, modified and then made to suit current circumstances or abandoned altogether. This, therefore, calls for an alternative model. The constructivist model thus comes in handy for providing adequate explanations towards the phenomena of the socialization of the young people.

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<sup>53</sup>This mechanism works through schools and other social institutions where important agents like teachers' actions reward some actors (young off springs) at the exclusion of others. Although she indicates in her study that the former might not necessarily apply to the understanding of religious socialization among minorities in Europe, Lene Kuhle (2012), nevertheless avers that religious habitus is demonstrated in instances in which many of the third generation persons often return to the religion of their first generation ancestors.

### **3.1.2 The constructivist model of socialization**

The constructivist model argues that the developing young person generates knowledge and meaning from an interaction between their experiences and ideas for use in organizing and constructing their own interpretation of the world. In a complete anti-thesis of the deterministic view-point, here the child appropriates society (Cosaro, 2011). This model is propagated by Jean Piaget, whose propositions have been widely applied to studying human development in society.

#### **3.1.2.1 Piaget's theory**

Jean Piaget's theory emphasizes on the importance of adolescents' conscious thoughts. The theory also stresses that adolescents actively construct their own cognitive worlds. They adapt their thinking to include new ideas. Thus, information is not just poured into their minds from the environment (Santrock, 1996). The growing individual, in a gradual process comes to internalize the world's objects in the same manner that they are perceived by adults. The internalization involves values as the cognitive aspects of symbols and their meanings are shaped by culture (Piaget, 1950). In this process, the individual goes through four distinct stages, whose way of understanding the world makes one stage more advanced than the other.

The initial stage, *Sensory motor* mainly involves understanding the world through reflexive patterns among the 0- 2 year olds. This is achieved mainly by coordinating sensory experiences with physical action. During the *Pre operational* stage, at 2-7 years, the child begins to represent the world with words and images and improves in symbolic thinking. In the third one, *operational* stage lasting from 7-11 years, the child can logically differentiate objects according to size. Finally, at between 11-15 years at the *formal operational* stage though more idealistic, the adolescent reasons logically and in a more abstract fashion.

Piaget's theory is important to this study as it informs us that young people perceive and organize their worlds in a manner qualitatively different from that of adults. The implication, therefore, is that any investigation on the use and understanding on adolescent's use of parents' information and their participation and organization of their peer world must take into account their level of cognitive development. The above notwithstanding, however, Piaget's emphasis on the individual child's mastery of the world on her own terms, without any due regard to the impact of the prevailing cultural systems limits its explanatory power. In addition, its failure to capture the macro-societal institutional impacts on the growth

trajectories makes it deficient for understanding the socialization of young people. This gap is filled up by the symbolic interactionism theory.

### 3.1.3 Symbolic interactionism

According to the symbolic interactionism perspective, individuals usually define themselves within the context of their socialization (Sheffer, 2005). Blumer (1969) asserts that individuals act towards things on the basis of the meanings they assign to them. Such meaning is derived from the social interaction with others in society. The meanings are held and modified through an interpretive process used by the individuals in dealing with the things and situations that they encounter. In comparison with functional analysis and conflict theories, this emphasizes social structures in groups, institutions and societies. On its part, the symbolic interactionism perspective narrows its focus to “person to person interactions” in everyday life (Judson, 1995).

Using this tradition, Charles Horton Cooley (1962) in his conceptualization of the *looking glass self* asserts that an individual views herself through other’s perceptions in society and in turn gains identity. Identity or self is the result of the concept in which we learn to see ourselves as others. The *looking glass self* which begins at an early age and continues throughout a person’s lifetime is a process of developing a self-image on the basis of the messages we get from others as we understand them. Briefly stated:

*it entails our image of others responses towards us. Normally people try to maintain situations in which the responses will be congruent, and will support the person’s self. If an individual is told that he is useful, important valued and so on, he will come to see himself as such.*

In addition, what individuals gather from the reflections they see in everyone shapes how people think and act within a community. This develops into the *generalized other*, from whom the young people often hold as imaginary friends and who become their partners and help them in their own socialization. They then gradually take on the roles of the community. The *generalized other* as propounded by George Herbert Mead simply refers to a set of expectations and not to any person or specific group of individuals (Mead, 1964; McNall, 1969). Through *the looking glass self* and *the generalized other*, young people define their

self-image and develop to who they are as individuals. In symbolic interaction, the tragic potential is, when the responses are negative the individual may be reduced to “perceiving themselves as nothing”.

#### **3.1.4 Relevance of symbolic interactionism to studying young people**

The study found the symbolic interactionism theory to be the most relevant one in the study of socialization of young people due to various reasons: First, the conceptualization of the nature of society, humans (people) and change at a given time in historical development of communities is an area where the principles predicated by the symbolic interaction theory find a lot of applicability. This study is essentially concerned with the studying of the interaction among the young people and their peers as well as the older members of the society. Symbolic interaction contextualizes interactions such as the ones investigated between young people, peers and parents. For instance, according to Mead, the individual is always acting in reference to the environment, hence “the “generalized other” according to him exerts social control over the attitudes and behavior of others, thereby ensuring certain predictability in social life” (Adams and Sydie, 2001 325). Moreover, symbolic interactionism recognizes that socialization practices cannot be divorced from the history, social cultural values and the political matrix within which it is embedded. Hence, the conceptual framework adopted for the study (see 1.6.3) borrows heavily from this framework, which serves to unify the various complementary theoretical models .The theoretical approaches are discussed in the next section.

### **3.2 Theoretical approaches for studying the socialization of young people**

Human life can best be understood if considered in their historical time and place by examining how early events in an individual’s life influence future events and decisions. Seeking to investigate the social trajectories of young people and their developmental pathways that are subject to changing conditions and future options calls for the adoption of a strong life–span developmental orientation (Santrock, 1998). The approaches that help explain the above are discussed in the next sections.

#### **3.2.1 Life course theory**

Life course refers to the inter weave of age graded trajectories subject to changing conditions, short term transitions and future options (Elder, 1994). These transitions are normally



embedded in trajectories that give them distinctive form and meaning and consideration is made of the consequence of early transitions and later events. Children of different ages are bound to be influenced differently by historical changes. According to elder, choice making is paramount and especially with regard to rapidly changing societies, for instance, today, some young people are entering child bearing early in their adolescent years, while some are opting to pursue career and education and then later embark on child bearing, As a consequence, the former are prone to encounter numerous developmental risks. Elder further states that as lives in society are *linked* and *embedded* in relationships with both kin and friends across the lifespan, any impact of change on one party creates an impact on the other. As such in case of a misfortune or opportunity befalling adult children, such become intergenerational and vice versa. In this formulation, the individual is not powerless but is well endowed with the opportunity to choose from available options.

Despite its usefulness in this study by offering useful insights into how social change shapes individuals' lives from birth to death, its major shortcoming is the theory's failure to recognize diversity in life course trajectories. Hence, it is fallacious to observe that individuals' choices are constrained solely by the structural and cultural arrangements of a given historical era per se. On the contrary, unequal experiences and opportunities give some members of society more options than others at any given period in human history. Therefore, theory falls short of being adaptable to the contemporary rural Kenyan societies such as Gusii, which is fast experiencing higher levels of heterogeneity. The gap is bridged by the social and cultural reproduction theory as presented in the next section.

### **3.2.2 Social and cultural reproduction perspective**

This perspective is propagated by Bourdieu and other like-minded theorists. They assert that, the embodied cultural capital which is unconsciously accumulated in a lifelong process of socialization provides an individual with long lasting "*habitus*" for navigating life chances. According to Bourdieu (1986), an early cultural socialization provided by parents is likely to leave its marks during one's life time (Kraykamp and Van Eijck, 2010). When considered in terms of the social standing of the parents, this essentially implies a consideration of the socio-economic background and the region of residence of an individual (Bourdieu and Passeron, 1977).

This theory is important to this study as it has been adopted in explaining the persistence of inequalities in education despite the intensified efforts by governments to eliminate the

disparities. It is noted that parents' schooling levels (institutionalized cultural capital) affects the schooling levels of their children, with those who acquire higher levels and being knowledgeable of its benefits likely to motivate their off springs to do better in their educational endeavors. Such parents accept to assume greater financial and emotional responsibility for their children. In Britain, Edwards and Alldred (2000) refer to this as being equated to a process of "familiarization". In this process, the parents readily put at the disposal of their children "cultural capital" which includes books, study materials and equipment and provide a positive learning and intellectual environment at home (Jeynes, 2005). Thus, studies have demonstrated that the match between family climate and the school environment leads to better performance among the young learners (Hull, 2015; Malik, 2000; Bempechat, 1992).

Another important form of capital available for reproduction has been proposed by Coleman (1994). He observes that this is situated within the family. He argues that the capital is only available in certain kinds of families: These are two parent families with small number of children and with mothers who are full time housewives. This is because as he says, are able to provide the required optimal contexts for the successful transmission of social capital between generations. To him the most effective measure of social capital available to children from parents is the strength of relations between parents and children (Coleman, 1988). In situations where both parents are in gainful employment, and thus possess high levels of human capital, their accrued human capital may become irrelevant to the outcome of the children because their formal employment removes them from the household for long periods of time rendering their social capital weak. Similarly, parents with large families may find it difficult to apportion sufficient time to each individual child.

However, in agreeing with Bourdieu's argument that due to the persistent impacts of poverty and their attendant effects on communities, Leonard (2005) cautions that ignoring other forms of capital displays naivety as social capital only becomes effective when it is reinforced with other forms of capital (Leonard, 2005:620). For instance, for adolescent girls, providing financial capital, opportunities to gain education, knowledge and skills leads to their economic advancement. For such young girls, economic advancement is a critical lever for changing their lives as they lack social support coupled with the prevalence in the community of social norms, which create gender related obstacles to their economic advancement (Fewer *et.al*, 2013). It is important to bear in mind that economic empowerment

intersects with the youth sexual and reproductive health (Plourde, 2013) and tackling gender inequality is associated with effective tackling of HIV / AIDS pandemic ( Gupta *et .al*, 2011).

### **3.3 Theories of deviance**

This section presents the theories that explain the phenomena of deviance. Deviance is manifested in individuals when they display behavior that violates social norms due to lack of self-control. According to Gennavo and Maahs (2012), the key to developing social control is proper socialization, especially during childhood. Of relevance to the study are Problem behavior theory and Social and community responsibility theory.

#### **3.3.1 Deviant behavior and young people**

Deviance among young people as they navigate the path of transition from childhood is a common phenomenon and is attributed to difficulties encountered during the process of establishing their self – identity and integrating into the community (Bartlett *et.al*, 2006). The susceptibility to peer pressure, low self-esteem, media, school and other family variables have been shown to be the main causes of the development of the anti- social behavior ( Claes *et.al*, 2005; Dielman *et.al*, 1987 ; Donnellan *et.al*, 2005; Sharma, 2012 ). From a sociological point of view, deviant behavior is regarded as an expression of pro - social behavior within the delinquent network aimed at gaining peer acceptance through committing more severe acts of deviance (from the perspective of the deviant) (Lo *et.al*, 2011). Thus, they should usually be considered as a form of non – criminal deviance among young people as most do not violate the law and are thus forms of delinquency<sup>54</sup>. According to Konty, (1996), deviance manifests itself in two distinct forms, delinquency and rebellion. Delinquent behavior is associated with adverse life events and conditions of extreme poverty, limited or absence of parental monitoring and exposure to violence and coercion (kabiru *et.al*, 2014; Siegel *et.al*, 2012) while rebellion emanates from their exclusion and the inequalities faced by the young people in education, health and decision making (Fraser *et.al*, 2012). The various aspects of the deviance among young people are explained in the following sections.

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<sup>54</sup>As such parents and the society at large consider children’s norm breaking behavior as simply behavior deviations with acts such as tattooing, funny hair styles, music tastes and inappropriate dressing styles among others which are not controlled by any legislation that is officially gazette as occurring within the criminal domain being common ( Konty, 1996 )

### 3.3.2 Pathways to the young people's problem behavior

In analyzing and categorizing actions and social behavior as deviance, it becomes necessary to employ multiple paradigms to show the pathways and derailment from healthy development (Bryant, 2011)<sup>55</sup>. Of relevance to this study are: social and community responsibility theory and Problem behavior theory.

#### 3.3.2.1 Problem Behavior Theory (PBT)

Problem Behavior Theory (PBT) holds that problem behaviors involving risky behaviors are used by adolescents as means to gain peer acceptance and respect and are regarded as a means for gaining independence from family (Jessor, 1998). Risk factors include relationship of young people to parents, attitudes of friends which increase the probability of problem behavior (Karaman, 2013). The young people separate themselves from their families with problem behaviors and opt to stay with friends in order to attain autonomy and create expanded social network opportunities for themselves (Silbereisen *et.al*, 1998). Problem behaviours are those behaviors regarded by society as falling outside of social norms which cause unwanted negative results such as smoking, alcohol consumption and engaging in premature sexual activities (Jessor *et.al* 2004) and academic failure and aggression (Mobley *et.al*, 2013). The probability of engaging in these problem behaviors stems from the *personality system* of the individual or *the personal control structure* which normally include his personal motivational structure. Deviance may also result due to low self-esteem, low success, expectations and the general orientation towards anti-social friends. Resilience is associated with supportive family relationships, good results, involvement in positive social activities and religious faith ( Rohrbaugh *et.al*, 1975 ; Jessor *et.al*, 1998; Luthar *et.al*, 2000 ) Secondly, in the *perceived environment* system made up of social support, family relations, peer pressure and school activities, problem behavior occurs due to high peer approval, low parental control and the incompatibility between parental and peer expectations (Diclemente *et.al*, 2001; Shane *et.al*, 2003; Nash *et.al*, 2005) .

According to Jessor (1987) problem behavior is manifested when the personality system and perceived environment systems clash. The elements of adolescent personality include: impulsivity, risk taking, perceived invulnerability, struggle to find personal identity and though errors as a result of peer influence and normative peer culture and rebellion towards authority. They may also include clash with the norms and expectations of culture and

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<sup>55</sup>Deviant categories emerge , evolve and fall out of favour just as social control agents chose to apply or ignore particular deviant categories ( Best, 2004)

society. The young people are expected to abstain from intoxication, adopt aspects of positive peer culture and practice health sexual adjustment. But problem behavior manifests itself in participating in risky behaviors such as illicit drug and substance abuse, vandalism, school misconduct, theft, general deviance and other problem behaviors (Vaszonyi *et.al*, 2010). Thus, it is implied that interventions for positive youth development must aim at cultivating protective factors with the aim of reducing the risk factors for the individual.

### **3.3.2.2 Social and community responsibility theory (SRCT)**

According to the social and Community responsibility theory, irresponsibility and harmful behavior towards other members of society results from the lack of being connected in a manner to create awareness of the harm and injury due to lack of moral awareness. The former takes place due to the lack of the cognitive skills necessary for determining moral and community responsibility. Borrowing from the work of Kohlberg (1987) on moral reasoning and development, Yokley (2010) has advanced the community and social responsibility approach for the treatment of deviant and anti-social conduct. Kohlberg's theory contends that moral development progresses in stages<sup>56</sup>. At the initial stage, doing what is right is targeted at avoiding punishment and receiving reward, while at the second stage, performance of a right or wrong action is for either nurturing or harming a relationship and enhance social obligation. At a higher level, doing what is right corresponds to fulfilling morally based responsibilities to society as a whole.

The non - possession of the potential for moral reasoning, a situation referred to as *cognitive deficit* usually prevents the individual from understanding the impact of their behavior on others (interpersonal empathy). These deficits are seen to have an impact on the person's relationship to the community as they prevent him or her from having *socio-centric empathy*. The community empathy enables an individual to be aware of the harm or injury that a deviant conduct does to an individual or society. Thus, addressing cognitive deficits leads to pro- social and responsibility that comply with norms of society (O'Hara, 1997).

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<sup>56</sup>The six stages are grouped into three levels, namely: Pre conventional morality, Conventional morality and Post Conventional morality. The first level consisting of first two stages is regarded as ego centric and common in Children. In the second level comprising of the third and fourth stages is common in adolescents and adults alike and is marked by the acceptance of the society's norms and values even when there are no imminent sanctions for obedience and /or disobedience. The last level, comprising mainly of the fifth and sixth stages is marked by the realization that individuals being separate from society may disobey rules and norms inconsistent with their own principles in the belief that rules are not absolute dictates that must be obeyed without being questioned.

### **3.4 Conclusion**

This chapter has presented the major theoretical orientations that help us to understand the main concepts and processes that are dealt with in this study. Beginning with socialization, it has been shown that two sets of paradigms can be discerned. First, those that regard the young people as helpless entities in need of prescriptions and norms, whose internalization will enable them, function appropriately in their respective. On the other hand, the growing individual is considered as an active participant in organizing and interpreting their own socialization experiences. Nevertheless, both perspectives fall short of according the individual young people, the agency to appropriate the social environment and contribute as equal partners in charting the course of their socialization experiences. Hence the symbolic interaction framework comes in to bridge this important gap. It is considered more appropriate because it offers a holistic framework and a possibility to adopt a contextual approach to studying the phenomena of study. Similarly, theories of studying deviance have also been discussed. Lastly, the various perspectives of deviance have been examined, with special focus on the young people.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **STUDY DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY**

#### **4.0 Introduction**

The study sought to examine the factors that influence adolescent and youth socialization in Masaba Sub - County in rural, south- western Kenya. It focuses primarily on the role of socio – cultural changes and how they impact on individuals in their daily interaction within the salient structural characteristics of the contemporary society, which are characterized by abrupt and massive changes leading to dysfunctional socialization. This chapter presents the methodological framework underpinning the study. It begins by describing the study site and the research methods adopted for the study. This is then followed by the description of the target population, sources of data and the sampling procedures employed in the study. The next section describes the techniques used for data collection and the procedures utilized to implement the pilot study. Section four presents the description of the fieldwork experience while the last section describes the data analysis procedures.

#### **4.1 Research site description**

The study was conducted in Masaba South, a Sub–County situated in South Western –Kenya. Based on the 2009 Kenya Population and Housing census, the population of the county was 1,152, 282 Million (Kenya, Republic of, 2014) and is estimated to reach 1,226,873 and 1,306,652 in 2015 and 2017 respectively (Kenya, Republic of, 2013).

Masaba Sub - County is one of nine Sub–Counties that form up Kisii County. It covers an area of 161.9 KM<sup>2</sup> and is sub - divided into five Divisions, Sixteen locations and forty eight Sub – locations. Being the third - most densely populated of the nine Sub- Counties<sup>57</sup>, the current population stands at 138,470 and is projected to reach 144,418 by 2017. The Sub – County was officially inaugurated in February, 2007 having been carved out of the then Kisii Central District in Kisii County. It borders Kisii Central to the South, Nyamira and Manga to the North, Borabu to the East and Transmara to the West. The District covers an area of 302 Km<sup>2</sup>.

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<sup>57</sup>Bobasi and South Mugirango sub – counties are the most densely populated sub counties in Kisii, followed by Masaba South and Kitutu Chache South recording the lowest Population Density.

**Map 2: Map of Kisii County**



*Source: Kenya National Bureau of Statistics, Nairobi, 2014*

Of the total population, 65,399 are male while 73,071 are female. By 2017 the projected population will be comprised of 68,208 and 76,210 males and females respectively (Republic of Kenya, 2012). According to the current and projected population data, the population for young people will continue to rise. The rise will do so uniformly for the major cohorts of 10-14, 15-19 and 20 -24 and the current population momentum will be expected to remain intact. However, as shown in the continued steady rise of the combined 15-29 age – cohort, and the primary and secondary schools projected categories; the rise in the demand for social services is expected to increase in the study area.



## 4.2 Methodological approach and research design

This section presents the methodology adopted for the study. It begins with the description of the research methodology and then followed by the research design for the study.

### 4.2.1 Research methodology

Methodology occupies an intermediate position and is a crucial component in a research design (Novikov and Novikov, 2013). It is defined as a systematic endeavor aimed at solving a research problem which is under investigation. It constitutes the various steps that are adopted by a researcher in studying his research problem along with the logic behind them (Kumar, 2008) and the techniques and instruments used to obtain the required data and knowledge (Porta and Keating, 2008). At the ontological level (what is being studied or the object of investigation), interpretive enquiry was employed in the study as the major aim was to obtain contextual knowledge<sup>58</sup>. As observed by Porta (2008: 112):

*Interpretive analyses keep a holistic focus, which could be an individual, a community or other social collectivity and stressing the importance of context.*

The study lays emphasis in studying how both continuities and change in culture<sup>59</sup> can be accounted for over time in the society under investigation (see chapter 5) and explains the connection between individual decisions and the aggregate behavior of society as a whole (see chapter 6). However, the need to obtain information on individual attributes which is essential for explaining the collective behavior as a sum of individual actions called for focus on the individual (Keating, 2008). This research methodology influenced the researcher in adopting the sequential mixed methods research design. The study design adopted for the study is explained in the following section.

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<sup>58</sup>In addition to the question of the phenomena being investigated, a major ontological question is how the world fits together and how we make sense of it. For the interpretivist, social reality exists as both objective and subjective and is intrinsically linked.

#### 4.2.2 Research design

Research design is described as a logical sequence connecting empirical data to the study's initially formulated research questions to be answered and ultimately to its conclusions (Yin, 2003: 12). It acts as a blue print for guiding the investigator in the process of collecting, analyzing and interpreting his study findings (Nachmias and Nachmias, 1996). According to Clough and Nutbrown (2002), the purpose of the research determines the methodology and the design of the study. The choice of the study design adopted for this study was influenced by the goals of the study, theories adopted, the subject matter and the subjects to be studied and the community. As the study aimed at examining the factors influencing the socialization of young people, the sequential mixed methods research design was adopted. As already pointed out, studying adolescent socialization is best understood when the proximal social settings in which interactions take place are interrogated (See chapter 1 section 1.6). The task involves studying multiple actors (respondents) who supply the various types of the data sought. Obtaining valid information from the respondents necessitates the adoption of a multiplicity of approaches and techniques.

Mixed methods research entails selecting and synergistically integrating appropriate techniques from quantitative and qualitative and mixed methods to more thoroughly investigate a phenomenon of interest (Tashakkori *et al.*, 2008 119). The *methodological eclecticism*<sup>60</sup> provides the researcher with the freedom to combine the methods deemed to be the best tools for answering his research questions (Ibid). Sequential exploratory design involves an enquiry where the initial data collection informs the subsequent phase of the inquiry (Creswell and Clark, 2009). The design is often used in research, when the researcher's intention is complementarity, whereby information gained from a qualitative study, is said to enhance understanding of the quantitative, which is often seen as the primary component of the design (Hesse – Biber, 2010).

The study was carried out in three phases or waves; beginning with the qualitative, then quantitative, and finally the qualitative phase (See Figure 6). The initial phase was aimed at obtaining data for informing the development of survey instruments. During this phase, key informant interviews, semi - structured interviews and observations targeting the parents, knowledgeable individuals in the community's culture and young people were employed. The themes and statements generated from the qualitative study informed the development of the

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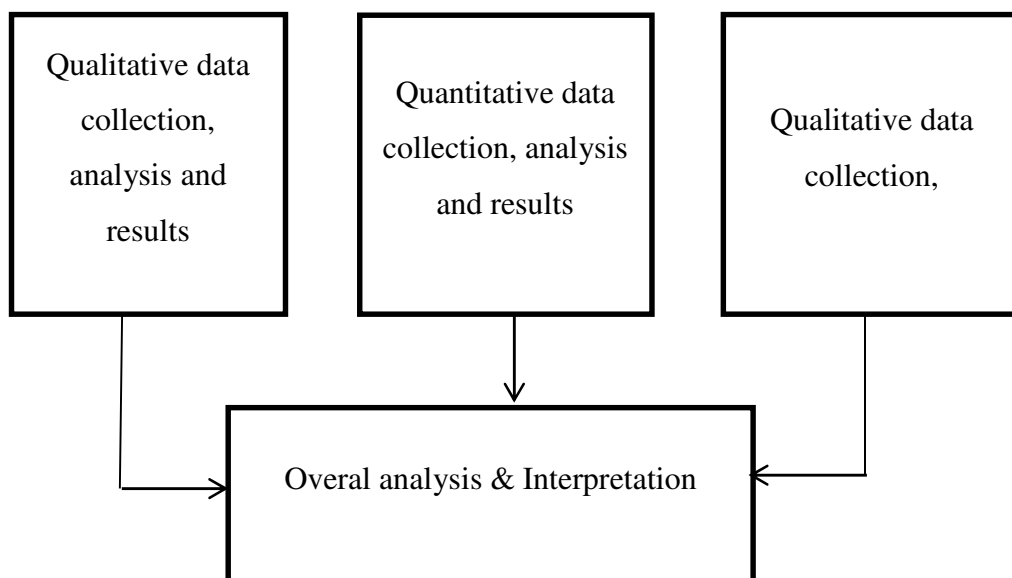
<sup>60</sup>Yanchar, S.C and Williams, D.D (2006) *Reconsidering the incompatibility thesis and eclecticism: Five proposed guidelines for method use*: Educational researcher. Vol 35 (9).PP. 3- 12.

survey instrument used among the young people in the study area. The questionnaire was subsequently administered to young people aged 12- 24 in the second Phase.

In the second phase (Quantitative phase), the young people were targeted for study. During the phase, the elements of the emergent theory from the qualitative data obtained in phase one provided the researcher with a “dualistic perspective” that combined the young peoples lived experiences (from the structured interviews) with a broader set of findings (from the survey). With the quantitative findings, the researcher was able to broaden and generalize the earlier obtained (qualitative) findings in a way that aided the study to make arguments for social change and social policy initiatives<sup>61</sup>

During the last phase (Qualitative phase), the study sought to deepen the understanding of the emerging themes from the first two phases. This involved focus group discussions and further key informant interviews among parents and young people. Figure.5 shows the diagrammatic presentation of the key stages followed in the implementation of the study design.

**Figure 5: Exploratory Sequential Mixed Methods Research Design**



**Source:** *Tashakkori and Teddlie (2010)*

The use of sequential mixed methods was adopted due to its various advantages: First, it enabled us to, not only mix methods in the data collection but also in the analysis of the data. Secondly, it made it possible for me to use one type of data to inform the other and compare

<sup>61</sup> Spalter – Roth and Harthmann (1996) argue that numbers seem to connote scientific method and rigor which often appeals to policy makers.

the inconsistencies, rather than trying to triangulate the data to fit a given situation. Nightingale (2003) observes that it is helpful to use several data sets to answer research questions and that in such a case both data sets are equally important and none pre-empts the other. He further asserts that “by setting the data sets in relation to each other, a researcher allows for both to be acknowledged and situated”. Secondly, as the design allows for a final overall interpretation, it creates room for “multiple sets of data to dialogue with each other” (Katsulis, 2009). Thirdly, the qualitative and quantitative aspects adopted complemented one another. In starting with a more qualitative method, I managed to successfully incorporate the rich discussions into the construction of the Adolescent Survey questionnaire and superbly capture better the multi - dimensionality of key study concepts. Similarly, as identified by other researchers, the focus group discussions enabled me to establish the importance of adolescents’ conception of care and support, one that i could have completely missed out, had i jumped immediately into the more quantitative method (O’Neil, 2009; Lekenby *et.al*, 2007).

#### **4.3 Study target population**

The study targeted all the young people in the study area. Both in and out of school youth were of interest to the study. In addition, the parents (both male and female) were included for study. In order to obtain pertinent information on the community’s way of life, the community’s elders, religious elders, and community opinion leaders were targeted for inclusion in the study.

#### **4.4 Sampling**

Sampling is the selecting of units of analysis in a manner that maximizes the researcher’s ability to answer the research questions set forth in the study (Tashakkori and Teddie, 2003). The study used both probability and non-probability sampling procedures. This is in line with the requirements and demands of mixed methods research that calls for the need to use different sampling procedures for various research respondents. Typically also, a mixed methods study includes multiple samples. As observed by Teddie and Tashakkori (2009), the researcher has the responsibility of creatively combining the various sampling techniques. In this study sequential mixed methods sampling was adopted as the strategy for picking the study respondents.

Purposive or judgemental sampling was used for selection of the research setting to be studied. According to Babbie (2001) a researcher selects a setting or a sample based on his prior knowledge and purpose of the study. In this study, as I was interested in studying young

people in a rural setting, Masaba South Sub-County, which is a rural frontier region, provided the perfect setting for this purpose. There is critical need to focus on young people living in rural areas as majority of Kenyans (around 81%) reside in rural areas where poverty is highest. Secondly, studies have shown that the rural youth are a disadvantaged lot (Haller *et.al*, 1993). As such, their accesses to the requisite social services, such as educational and vocational opportunities are limited. This has led to their tendency towards educational expectations to be lower than those of their urban counterparts. Furthermore, employment opportunities in local communities are constrained and there are fewer appropriate role models. However, more critical is the fact that rural adolescents and young people live under severely restrictive social, cultural and gender norms that impact not only on their but also on their social psychological well-being .

Purposive sampling was also used to select the adolescents and youth aged 10-24 years, parents (men and women), religious leaders and community opinion leaders who were involved in the qualitative component of the study. In carrying out the task, I was guided by Patton (2002)'s assertion that "there are no universal rules for sample size determination in qualitative inquiry". However, scholars have suggested that "saturation of information" can be a useful guideline for this purpose (Strauss *et.al*, 1998; Krueger *et.al*, 2000). It involves conducting interviews or discussions among several individuals and groups continuously until the researcher is not obtaining any new information to aid him or her in theme development.

The sampling for the survey respondents was undertaken in three steps. First, a household listing was compiled based on the data<sup>62</sup> obtained from the local Sub- Count Development Office. A household listing form was prepared prior to the commencement of the exercise and was used to list all members of the households. During the exercise, the enumerators listed all the information pertaining to individuals residing in the particular households. Documented data for each person included: names, age, gender, marital status, school attendance status, highest level of education, employment status and relationship to the household head. All households with eligible respondents were earmarked for the data collection exercise. A total of 680 households were enlisted for data collection. These provided the sampling frame. In the end a total of 384 respondents were included for the study. The sample size for the youth respondents was determined based on criteria suggested

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<sup>62</sup>This comprised a comprehensive list of all households clustered into enumeration areas which was prepared prior to the conducting of the 2009 Kenya Population and Housing Census.

by Bartlett et al, 2001 and Wunsch (1986)<sup>63</sup>. According to the criteria, in mixed methods research, using a confidence limit of 0.5, an estimate for determining the sample size is based on the population size of the study area. The population size ranges from 100 to infinity as shown in appendix 5.

#### **4.5 Design of data collection tools**

After a thorough review of literature and examination of the research questions on adolescent socialization, the researcher embarked on the development of the data collection instruments. As the study adopted a Mixed Methods Research Design, both quantitative and qualitative data collection tools were prepared. In total, a set of four data collection tools were developed. These were:

1. The adolescent survey questionnaire
2. The focus group discussion guide for adolescents
3. The focus group discussion guide for parents
4. Key informant guide

##### **4.5.1 The adolescent Survey questionnaire**

The adolescent survey questionnaire comprised both closed and open ended questions that were meant to capture important information on young people in the study area. It included data on background information of the study respondents. The second set of questions sought to obtain information regarding family composition and communication strategies by parents towards their children. The third section sought to obtain information on the social activities that the young people were involved in, including their habits. The fourth section consisted of questions on the reproductive health and information by the young people, while the remaining part contained questions on the young people's heterosexual relationships and their use and perception of health services in the local health facilities. The detailed questionnaire is attached (Appendix 1).

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<sup>63</sup>The criteria involves the use of probability samples generated from mathematically defined estimates of the number of cases required to estimate the characteristics of the population within a proscribed margin of error of 0.05)

#### **4.5.2 Focus group discussion guide for young People**

Focus group discussion instruments are useful for obtaining data on social norms and cultural expectations (Hennink *et .al*, 1999). This qualitative instrument contained items whose main purpose was to obtain knowledge on young people's experiences on the socialization process, parent-child interaction, peer interaction and the role of mainstream social institutions in providing for the needs of young people in contemporary society. Specifically the study tool contained questions on the young people's perception of the major problems in the community, the role of parents and other care givers in the socialization of young people in the community and the strategies of punishment employed by parents in the study area. The second section comprised of questions regarding the role of religious and educational institutions in meeting the socialization needs of the young people in the study area. The last section included questions on the role of the mass media and peers. The focus group discussion guide for young people is attached (See appendix 3).

#### **4.5.3 Focus group discussion guide for parents**

The focus group discussion for parents (both male and female) focused on the main issues regarding the socialization of young people and major factors hindering effective child upbringing and socialization in the study area. The questions aimed at obtaining information on the problems encountered by the parents in the socialization of young people, the role of parents and the extended family and kinship ties in the socialization process. Other items sought to inquire the parents' perception on the role of educational, religious institutions and the media in the young people's wellbeing.

Due to the high literacy levels and the inability of most respondents to comprehend issues in English, it became necessary to translate the focus group discussion guide into the local language (Ekegusii). Using forward translation, the English questionnaire was translated to the Ekegusii version. The forward translation method was adopted because it works in such a way that the conceptual equivalent of the words and phrases in the English version is maintained (WHO, 2015). Moreover, as Bullinger, *et.al* (1998) argue, data collection tools should be translated to the main language of the respondents with the aim of adapting them for language and cultural appropriateness. The focus group discussion guide for parents is attached (appendix 2)

#### **4.5.4 Key informant guide**

The key informant guides are tools used to obtain information from individuals selected for their first-hand knowledge on the topic of interest. They are important for interpreting quantitative data and were instrumental in this study as they provided preliminary information necessary for designing the quantitative phase of the study (USAID, 1996). The Key informant Interview guide contained questions aimed at obtaining data on indigenous cultural values related to the socialization of young people; the changes that have been experienced in the community as far as child rearing techniques are concerned. There were also other questions regarding the challenges faced by the community's key institutions such as the family, educational and the religious institutions in the rearing of the younger members of the community.

#### **4.6 Organization of the study**

This section describes the preparations carried out in readiness for the data collection activities in the study site. These included seeking research clearance and the recruitment and training of research assistants.

##### **4.6.1 Field work preparation and research clearance**

Preparation for field work started in the second week of January, 2013 with obtaining clearance from the National Council for Science and Technology ( permit to conduct study in appendix 9). Thereafter, the researcher proceeded to the Kisii County headquarters for further clearance from the County Commissioner and the County Director of Education (See Appendix 8). This was followed by recruitment and training of research assistants. It should, however, be noted that although the researcher was provisionally permitted to commence research activities in the study area in early January, 2013, the actual clearance permit was granted in mid – June, 2013.

##### **4.6.2 Recruitment and training**

A total of eight research assistants were recruited to aid in data collection and processing. The main criterion adopted was that eligible candidates had to possess a Bachelor degree in the Social Sciences and Humanities and be residents of the study area. The recruitment was done in three stages. At first, two qualitative research assistants (RAs) one male and the other female were engaged for two months, starting the third week of February until the third week of April, 2013. They were additionally required to have reasonable experience in conducting in–depth interviews and focus group discussions. They were then trained on qualitative data



collection skills, confidentiality and rapport building and on how to use probing in the course of qualitative interviewing and general data collection.

For the sample survey, a second set of four research assistants were recruited. For ease of logistical constraints, the researcher had earlier sought affiliation to the local County's Kenya National Bureau of Statistics establishment, which was readily accorded. As a result, the County statistical officer, the Assistant Statistician and Community mobilization assistant were incorporated into the research team. In the end, the research team comprised of one Coordinator (Researcher), two supervisors, one mobiliser, and four enumerators. A two day's training was conducted at Ichuni Catholic parish grounds on 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> May, 2013. The training was facilitated by the study coordinator and the two field supervisors. It mainly dwelt on the main roles of the various members of the research team, questionnaire administration skills, piloting and recording of the respondents' responses. Other issues tackled included ethical concerns and overcoming logistical challenges in the field. At the end of the training, the team reviewed all the questions in the questionnaire and dummy administration of the same was carried out. Two data entry clerks were recruited and trained on 23<sup>rd</sup> July, 2013 in Nairobi. The training was done by the researcher and a data specialist at the Population studies and research institute (PSRI), University of Nairobi.

During the last phase of the data collection exercise which started in March, 2014 until August, 2014, the researcher sought the services of another two qualitative research assistants. One of the recruited researchers had just completed his course work component in a Master of Arts degree in Sociology at the University of Nairobi, while the second had recently graduated in History. Before embarking on the pilot and data collection exercise, the research assistants were adequately briefed on the data gathering procedures and any questions on their part answered appropriately.

#### **4.7 Pilot study**

A pilot study plays a key role in examining the feasibility of the approach that is intended for use in the main fieldwork (Leon *et.al*, 2011). Hence, it is a requisite initial step prior to the actual data gathering, if the researcher aims at attaining methodological quality (Beurskens *et.al*, 1998). As the study adopted the exploratory sequential mixed methods study design, the data tools were pre - tested in pilot studies at appropriate periods prior to actual data

collection. Both the cognitive interviews and piloting of the questionnaires was done through a pilot sample survey.

#### **4.7.1 Cognitive interviews**

Cognitive interviewing<sup>64</sup> consists of in depth interviewing which pays explicit attention to the mental processes that respondents use to answer survey questions. It aims at understanding how the respondents come up with their answers and what ambiguities or difficulties are created for the respondent during that cognitive process (Campanelli, 2008). The cognitive interviews help the researcher to identify problems in the survey questions and their causes and hopefully suggest solutions (Beatty, 2004; Collins 2003). A total of 28 and 35 questionnaires were administered for this purpose at Bocharia and Riamoni areas in Masaba North for the Qualitative and the quantitative tools respectively. The sample size was determined on the basis of Presser *et.al*, (1986) and Sudman *et al.*, (1996) recommendation on the range of the sample size<sup>65</sup>. The items were then reviewed and re – worded where necessary in readiness for the main data collection activities.

#### **4.7.2 Pilot data collection**

Prior to embarking on the actual qualitative and Survey data gathering, the in-depth interview guides and survey questionnaire were piloted on diverse dates in two enumeration areas at Nyamesocho and Amabuko areas in Masaba South. The two areas were located outside the actual sampled study areas. The questionnaires were pre – tested for three days between February, 18<sup>th</sup> – 20<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> – 11<sup>th</sup> May, 2013. According to Turner (2010), the pilot - test assists the researcher to determine if there are flaws, limitations or other weaknesses within interview design and allow for necessary revisions prior to the implementation of the study. The findings from the pre- test helped point out some of the questions that were ambiguous and duplicated. Consistency and clarity was ensured through rephrasing and rewording the relevant items in the data collection tools.

#### **4.8 Field work experience**

The collection of primary data commenced on 25<sup>th</sup> February, 2013 and ended on 24<sup>th</sup> August, 2014. In between the data collection sessions, the researcher took two breaks off the field

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<sup>64</sup>For a detailed discussion of the procedure and techniques of cognitive interviewing, see Willis G, B (2005) Cognitive Interviewing: A Tool for Improving Questionnaire Design. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications; 2005 and Presser, S; Couper, M.P; Lessler, J.T; Martin, E; Martin, J; Rothgeb, J.M and Singer, E (2004) Methods for testing and evaluating survey questions. Public Opinion Quarterly. 2004; 68(1):109-130.

<sup>65</sup> Irrespective of the population and study sample size, Presser *et.al* (1986) recommends a sample size of ranging from 25 to 75 while Sudman (1983) suggests a range of between 20 and 50.

each year to attend the mandatory residential study sessions at the Universite de Pau et des Pays de l'Adour – France as per the requirement of the Doctoral training programme. These periods fell between the months of September and December, 2013 and September and December, 2014. The data collection was conducted in three waves as per the dictates of the adopted study design (exploratory sequential mixed methods research). As already pointed out the first wave ran from February 2013 to April 2013, while the second wave followed from May 2013 to August 2013. The last wave was conducted between March and August, 2014.

#### **4.8.1 Wave 1: Qualitative data collection**

This was the initial wave, which involved in - depth interviews and unstructured interviews among adolescents and youth aged 10 – 24 years, community elders, religious elders, educationists and other opinion leaders. The researcher also interviewed key government officials at the regional level and obtained important secondary data contained in documents available at the Sub - County level. With each lasting close to forty five (45) minutes, the semi - structured interviews with the parents sought to obtain knowledge of parents regarding their views on the importance of adolescence and youthfulness as a key step in a person's transition to adulthood. Socialization and rites of passage among the Gusii community were also explored. Additionally, the place and role of social institutions and the current changes experienced in terms of role transitions were targeted for inquiry. Selected adolescents and youth were also interviewed for information on their perception on the role of parents in care provision, own experiences on parent – child relationships and conflict and role of mainstream social institutions in addressing their welfare. The data was captured using modern Dicta – Phone and Video Camera. In all, a total of forty two (42) interviews were conducted in a span of two months. Important aspects of the preliminary findings were incorporated into the tools for the subsequent phases of the study as per the study design's requirement.

**Figure 6: Focus group discussion in progress at Ichuni Catholic Parish grounds**



*Source: Researcher, 2013*

#### **4.8.2. Wave II: Quantitative phase**

This targeted the collection of quantitative data. The quantitative data collection team was divided into groups, comprising of a team leader or supervisor and two enumerators (One male, one female). The researcher was responsible for the overall coordination and overseeing the fieldwork, while the mobilization assistant played the liaison role and participated in guiding the team to the earlier on identified eligible households.

**Figure 7: Interview in Progress at Geteri Village**



*Source: Researcher. 2013*

The quantitative data obtained comprised that of background information of adolescent and youth, family composition and communication and their social activities and habits. The adolescent's reproductive health information and knowledge and use and perception of reproductive health services were also captured. In addition to the above, the household demographic information was captured. Each questionnaire took an average of forty Minutes to administer. The teams converged at the end of each day and upon verification by the team leaders, the filled - in questionnaires for each day were submitted to the study co coordinator for safe keeping.

### **4.8.3 Wave III: Qualitative data collection**

This formed the final phase of the study. It mainly utilized Focus group discussions and Key informant interviews to obtain data. The investigator served as the moderator for all the twenty four (24) sessions, while the two field assistants took the responsibility of note taking and recording. For the adolescents, participants included both the young men and women, while separate sessions were held for men and women. All the sessions for the youth were conducted in English while those held with parents (men and women) were conducted in Gusii language. All the discussions were recorded in Audio and video recording versions. The FGDs for the young people focused mainly on the role of parents in care - provision and socialization, strategies of punishment adopted by parents, comparison of childhood and parenthood and the role of social institutions in the lives of young people. The themes dealt with in discussions with parents, ranged from the changes experienced in the contemporary society and their impacts on child rearing and socialization processes to their views regarding how to adopt current social set up to better prepare the communities' young people for the future.

The FGDs were adopted for use in the study at this stage in data gathering due to their importance for various reasons: Firstly, they offered an opportunity for negotiation of the meaning of the thematic issues attained during the previous two phases of the study through intra and inter - personal debates (Cook *et.al*, 1995). They also enabled the researcher to explore issues where diverse views are held (Morgan, 2002). Secondly, as the approach utilizes group dynamics, they allowed the researcher to capture the shared lived experiences of the community members, which the other methods failed to unearth (Steward *et. al*, 2007). But more importantly, they enabled me to uncover, crucial aspects of understanding, which as I came to understand often remained deeply hidden during the conventional structured and

in-depth interview sessions. Indeed the FGDs offer the possibility to explore the gap between what the respondents say and what they do (Conradson, 2005).

The key informant interviews were conducted to obtain further information from a wide range of individuals such as community leaders (past and present), professionals and elders to provide insight on study questions and offer recommendations and suggest solutions (Kumar, 1986). A total of 23 participants took part in key informant interviews.

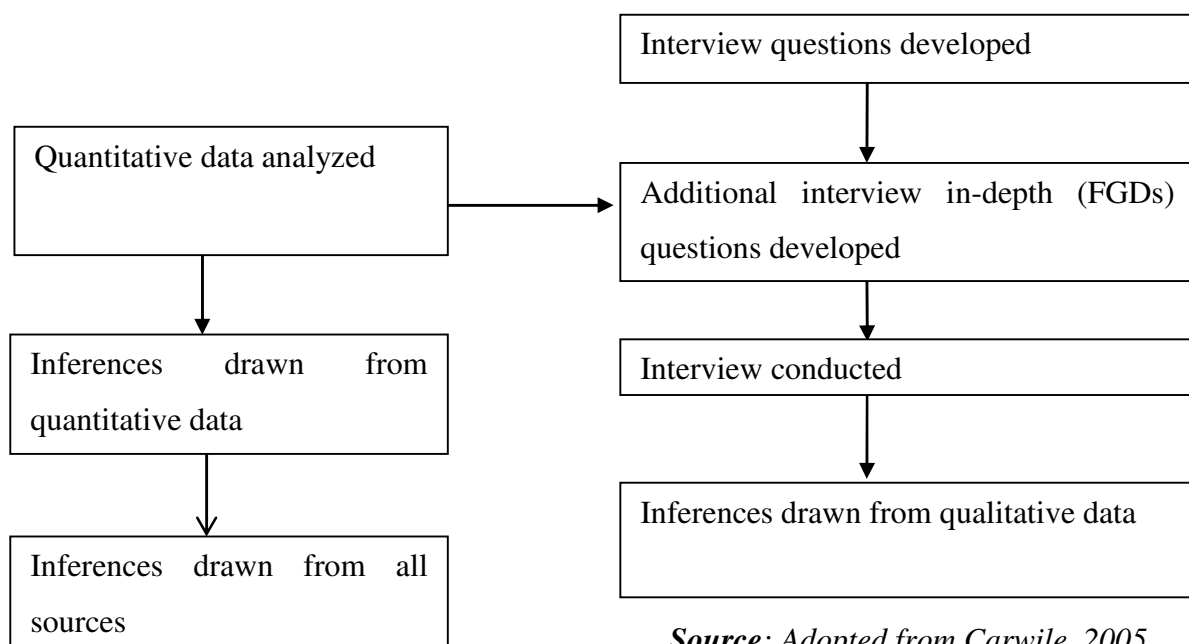
#### 4.9 Techniques of data analysis and interpretation

As the study design adopted the use of both qualitative and quantitative techniques, the sequential mixed methods analysis was utilized for analyzing the study data (Tasshakori and Teddie, 1998). The data was then interpreted and presented appropriately.

##### 4.9.1 Data analysis

At the stage of analyzing the collected data in a mixed methods research study, the researcher analyses both the quantitative and qualitative data. He then integrates the results that stem from both quantitative and qualitative analysis in a coherent and meaningful way so as to yield strong Meta-inferences (Onwuegbuzie and Combs, 2010). The inferences from the qualitative and quantitative findings are then integrated into a coherent whole or two distinct sets of coherent wholes (Tashakkori and Teddie, 1998) as shown in Figure 8.

**Figure 8: Sequential mixed methods data analysis model**



*Source: Adopted from Carwile, 2005*

#### **4.9.1.1 Qualitative data analysis**

In analyzing qualitative data, the researcher seeks to answer four core questions. They are: What do we notice? Why do we notice, what we notice? How can we interpret what we notice? Can we know that our interpretation is the right one? (Hollway and Jefferson, 2007). After all the qualitative data was transcribed and audited, the technique of content analysis was utilized to analyze the data. It involved examining the transcriptions of the recorded verbal communication and making inferences by systematically and objectively identifying the special characteristics of the messages. Thereafter, category building as espoused by the grounded theory approach was done. Grounded theory is characterized by the constant comparison of data with emerging categories and theoretical sampling of different groups to maximize similarities and meanings (Glaser, 1992). The data analysis involved searching out for concepts behind the actualities by looking out for codes, then concepts and finally categories (Allan, 2003). The data was taken through the three stages of coding<sup>66</sup> after which codes were then analyzed and those that were found to relate to common subjects were grouped together according to higher order commonality referred to as concepts and themes (ibid).

#### **4.9.1.2 Quantitative data analysis**

Quantitative data was analysed using the SPSS for Windows 21.0. The data was cleaned and entered into the computer. The basic descriptive statistics was run to derive respondents' background characteristics' measures and frequency distributions.

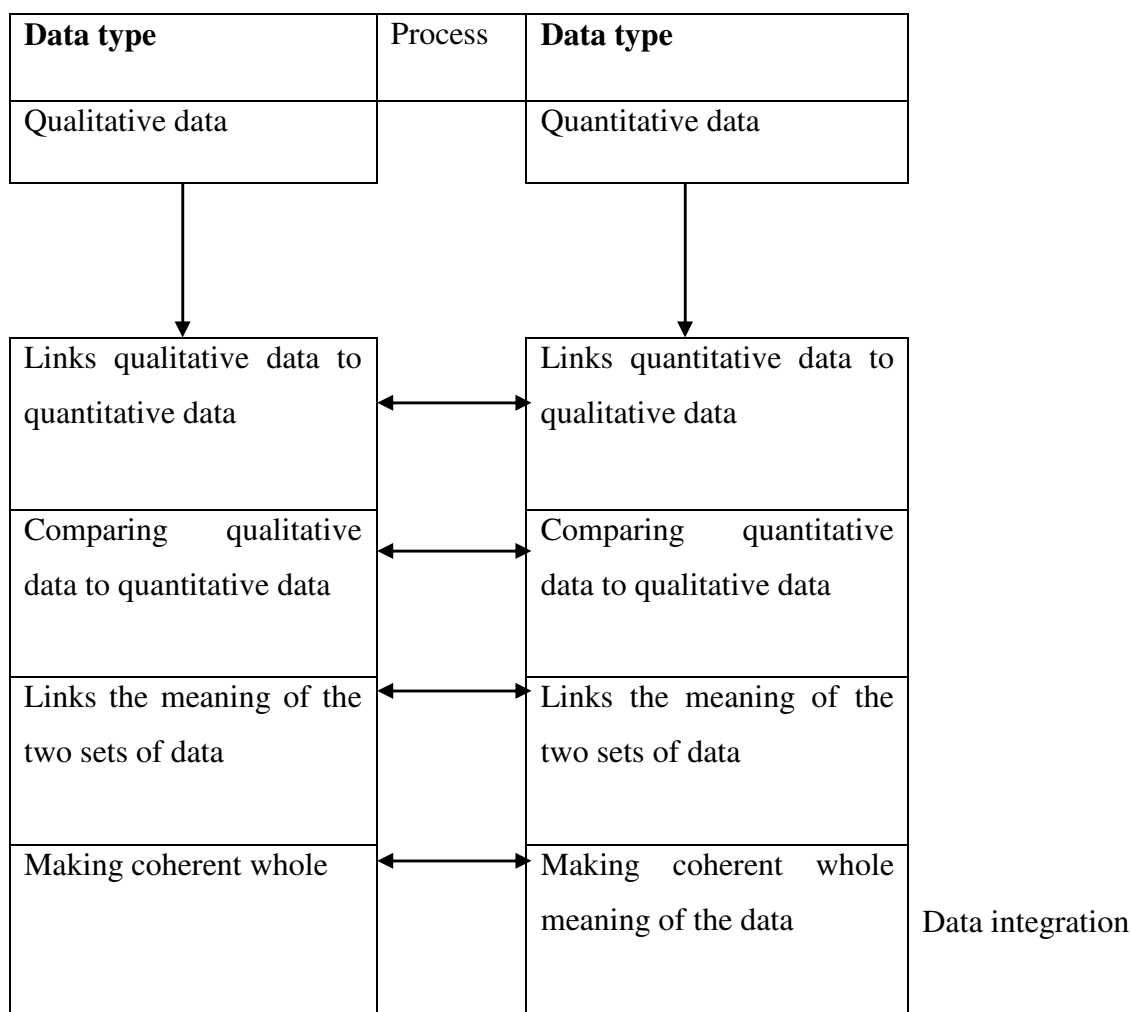
#### **4.9.2 Data interpretation**

The mixed methods data interpretation approach was adopted. The interpretation and conclusions are based on the inferences made from the analyzed data. The study adopted (with modification) Onwuegbuzie and Teddlie (2003) model in the data interpretation. The process involved linking and comparing the qualitative and quantitative data sets, linking the meaning of the two data sets and lastly making a coherent whole of the datasets as illustrated in Figure 9.

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<sup>66</sup> According to Strauss and Corbin (1998) the three phased coding of grounded theory involve Open (breaking down, examining, comparing, conceptualizing and categorizing), axial (assembling, drawing logic diagrams to identify a central phenomenon) and selective (integration of the categories) describes the flexible guidelines for coding qualitative data.

**Figure 9: Research data inference process**



*Source: Adopted from Onwuegbuzie and Teddlie (2003)*

By employing the above mentioned strategy, the validity of the results and conclusions were strengthened (and hence more accurate) as it enhanced data triangulation and complementarity (Greene et.al, 1989; Kruger, 2001).

#### **4.10 Conclusion**

In this chapter, the methodological and study design adopted for the study have been outlined. It has emerged clearly that the research questions derived from the phenomena under investigation called for the adoption of the mixed methods approach whose data collection and analysis were best suited to enhance inference quality. Moreover, the adoption of the methodology was deemed suitable as it provided a broad methodological framework



for the study. For as observed by Dominguez and Holstein (2014: 65) ,“a narrow focus on either qualitative or quantitative research strategy does not capitalize on the full explanatory potential as it systematically excludes certain insights and aspects of the phenomena under investigation. The study adopted sampling, data - collection, analysis and interpretation procedures which conformed to the requirements of the sequential mixed methods study design that required the data to be collected in three waves.

**PART TWO**  
**CULTURE, TRADITIONS AND MODERNITY: CONFRONTATION AND**  
**COMPLEMENTALITY**

**CHAPTER FIVE**  
**CONCEPTUALIZING CULTURAL INFLUENCES ON SOCIALIZATION OF**  
**YOUNG PEOPLE IN RURAL KENYA: CONTINUITY AND CHANGE**

**5.0 Introduction**

This chapter presents the findings of the various aspects of the Gusii community's socialization of its young people and how it has evolved over time. In the first section, indigenous cultural values that guide the transition of individuals from late childhood to adulthood are given. The second section deals with the changes that have occurred among the contemporary social institutions, while the third section of the chapter analyses the impact of these changes. It is observed that the main challenge confronting Kenya's rural communities in the task of preparing the younger members of society to take up adult roles result from the paradoxical and contradictory nature of the emerging guidelines for their upbringing.

**Section I: Cultural influences on the socialization of young people among the Abagusii, rural South Western Kenya**

**5.1 Socio-cultural values and influences among the Gusii: constant, changing and /or contradictory**

Globally, all societies and communities possess their own unique codes and organizational structures which are relied upon by their members to adapt and internalize their norms, values and shared behavioral expectations. Other than the specific social norm transmission, Perez – felkner (2012) contends that the socio-historical context within which a given society's children and adolescents get socialized is of paramount importance. Hence, any comprehensive understanding of the socialization of an individual must deal seriously with the issue of socio-cultural and historical context.

The study set out to examine the importance of socio-cultural norms and values in guiding how young people were socialized among the Gusii community. According to the findings of the study, traditionally, the community's norms and values which provided guidelines on how the young people should be initiated (socialized) were regarded as very important because of the role they played. The most important of all was that they ensured the uniformity of the procedures to be employed and the standards of practice to be followed. This is brought out in the conversation with an elderly respondent; Onderi Okirigiti aged 83 years at Nyamasibi village:

Researcher: *Do common cultural norms and values play any role in socialization of youth in this community?*

Respondent: *Yes, as without these, then the process falls sort of being of importance to the community itself and the young people whom it claims to serve.*

Researcher: *Why do you say so?*

Respondent: *In this community (among the Gusii), the events taking place and all the ceremonial features contained in them, had the purpose of propelling the young people to enter into a new phase of life. This is not a light matter, and had to be witnessed by everybody as the usefulness goes beyond the realm of the individual.*

Researcher: *What do you mean, being witnessed by everybody?*

Respondent: *The initiation (socialization) is performed collectively by the entire tribe, unlike for example, marriage which remains a family affair and as such common rules and ways were necessary. Therefore, our customs regarding the bringing up of young people must be protected and used by every parent and adults if it is to make any sense.*

Another respondent indicated that community values and norms gave the process of child upbringing the authenticity and sanctity that such tasks deserved. Pointing out that every community has its own cherished ways of educating its young people, in an interview at Riuri village Ongubo Omayio 68 years observes:

*The practice of socializing young people differs from one community to the other. In our community, we emphasize that a person becomes a grown up upon going through the act of circumcision. Without this, it is unimaginable that a person has what is required to be a grown up. One will always have problems in his life for he will have difficulties in living and doing things done by grown-ups in our community. But in other tribes, like for example those that live close by to us... i mean, the Luo and the Teso, they have their own ways of doing this (do not circumcise).*

The emphasis brought out in these conversations can be attributed to the social organization of the Gusii community. Firstly, as observed by Levine and Levine (1966:34) the society's social grouping was strongly based on a lineage system derived from varying degrees of

common locality and mutual interest whose relationships are explicitly patterned on sex avoidance and unilateral respect among members of adjacent generations (ensoni)<sup>67</sup>. Secondly, much of the social teachings are aimed at preparing young people in matters concerned with adult sexual life, marriage, procreation and other family responsibilities (Monyenye, 1977). The information passed on to young people offers them thorough knowledge of sex and the necessary sex education to enable them handle marital sexual matters when they get married. All these were derived from the values and ideals that formed the core of the Gusii indigenous education curriculum (ibid: 389). Lastly, the indigenous education aimed at producing individuals with attitudes and values that embrace communalism. Hence the development of loyalty to one's family, clan, and even ethnic group form the core purpose of the teachings received.

The third important role served by the community values and norms is that they safe guarded the role of individuals and institutions in the socialization of the young people. Communities have rules regarding the relationship among the young and the older members of communities. For instance, among the Gusii, children are required to respect all persons of parental generation. Levine and Levine (1966: 162) observe that those caught misbehaving were often punished and reprimanded by any adult member of the community, who came upon such incidences. Similarly, Grandparents bore the responsibility of educating their young grand children in a jokingly and almost relaxed ambience of their houses. The extended family also plays an important role, as does the family authority system which "taught by example that dominance–submission relations obtain between the generations and sexes and peer relations (ibid: 194)". The importance of the order that prevailed and respect for "agents of socialization" is underscored by Okongo Sirweri of Mote Onyoni village aged 72:

*The children and young people did not only belong to their parents, family and clan but were made accountable by the expectations of the community to hold in high regard any member of the community that was older than him. It also remained the responsibility of every parent and grown up members of the community to show what is right and correct any wrong doing by inexperienced children and youth whenever they came across such cases. This made it possible to help*

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<sup>67</sup> Appropriate behavioural norms of restraint and familiarity that guided the conduct of people and their relationship to one another.

*the young of the community grow up in proper ways as everyone knew what to and what could befall him if caught or suspected of impropriety.*

This implies that when the norms and values are universally acceptable to all members of society, the uniformity of thought enhances adherence, and enforcing them becomes real. From the foregoing conversation, it is clear that societies have what can be regarded as the standard rules and principles that they consider necessary in directing human actions. This notwithstanding, socio-cultural and historical factors have been under-emphasized or neglected altogether in some of the scholarly thinking concerning adolescent and youth socialization.

According to Feldman and Masalha (2007), culture is the most neglected aspect in studies that examine risk and resilience among young people. Generally, culturally salient values inform and promote resilience processes of youth. Studies have also argued that the African youth's resilience processes are informed by traditional African culture, rather than in ways that echo the Eurocentric theories of resilience, which regards indigenous knowledge as old and outdated having been handed down from generation to generation unchanged (Theron, 2012; Theron et.al, 2013). However, this view has been invalidated by the argument that, on the contrary, indigenous knowledge is adaptable and its dynamism renders it suitable for adoption based on the prevailing socio- economic and cultural environment.

According to the findings of the study, some research participants attributed the problems currently facing families and the entire community in their efforts to effectively parent and bring up young people as being caused by their lack of understanding of the culture of their communities. The local County Director for Culture for instance, believes that today's children lack the basic cultural knowledge that is imperative for their healthy functioning in the community. To him, they have substituted the local cultural values with those obtained from elsewhere:

*The children and young people of these days do not have even small amounts of cultural knowledge that can offer them values for successful living. They rely on little information that they obtain from their age mates and the television. These do not contain any*

*meaningful values to be relied upon. When someone misses out on his own culture, then he will be forced by circumstances to borrow. However, whoever relies on borrowed culture is bound to perish.*

From the above sentiments, it is clear that the older members of society hold assumptions about the cultural experiences of young people from the lenses that assume the agency of the real lives of the young people. In their criticism of this particular point of view, Wood and Hine (2009 : 13) argue that the most appropriate way for “understanding the worlds of young people is to consider as they themselves define and experience it, not as the adults do”. Other respondents saw the failure by the parents of the children to be knowledgeable in the society’s norms and cultural values as the cause of socialization problems in the society. As observed by Matundura Araka (66 years):

*The current generations of parents do not themselves have the knowledge and values to pass on to their own children. So it is not possible to pass on what, they themselves do not possess. Instead, the children and young people simply pass over growing up without being taught important matters of the community life which are available in the community’s rich morals and value system.*

The views advanced by Matundura raise pertinent issues. For instance, questions can be raised to find out whether socialization can be said to have failed when new generations adopt social structures and modes of behavior that are different from those of the generation of their parents. According to Maccoby (2006) the transmission of specific patterns of behavior gets disrupted. Again, however as observed by Robbins and Wardlow (2005: 5), in all change, there is continuity. For meaningful adaptation by the community and its members to navigate the constrains brought about by contemporary changes, there is the need to provide for larger pathways through life for acquiring positive development (Staub, 1979). According to the study results, it is possible to tame the disruptive elements inherent in contemporary families and communities’ institutions so as to realize positive socialization results among the youth. A key informant, Marcella Otuke observed that for this to be realized certain conditions that prevailed in the past must be nurtured:

*In the past, every individual knew and did their roles and obligations, which are not taken into consideration nowadays. It is common today*

*to find that our local families are not properly delineated. There is no concern with the setting up of clear rules and specification of the consequences for those breaking them. Neighbours are not in any way trying to take responsibility for tracking and supervising the behavior of the young in the villages. .... even parents themselves and other grown-ups cannot offer positive model as examples to the youth. In the local communities, it is the teachers and parents that are looked upon to instill high expectations in students and children, but nowadays, they never bother to do these things.*

The significance of the views expressed by the above informant emanates from the need for every relevant individual and institution to fulfill their obligations and mandate to institute the neighborhood boundaries so as to harness a suitable environment for nurturing the young people. But as Griswold (2004: 106) has argued, with the globalization processes affecting culture in a scale never seen before, the tendency has been to “foster a world culture without boundaries, while at the same time encouraging a renewed sense of cultural particularism characterized by new boundaries rooted in ethnicity, religion and geography” Furthermore, the postmodern era is characterized by a “*culture of surfaces, a play of images denying depth, history and meaning*” (Harvey, 1989). Griswold (2004 : 168) further asserts that : “*a culture that denies depth and history ..... rejects any larger story of its past and future wherein anything can be combined with anything else; such a culture to put it mildly, does not sound promising as a foundation around which community can be built* Therefore, although the changing cultural environment is expected to positively contribute to better nurturance of young people, the findings of the study confirm that this is in fact not the case as the resultant situation of walking the traditional–modernity tightrope produces contradictions. Hence, an important question to ask is: To what extent, if any, do modern values and institutional practices serve as bridges to tradition or as facilitators for modernizing the young people’s socialization practices? In the following section, we examine the traditional cultural procedures for socializing young people in the study area.

## **5.2 Socialization of adolescent and young people and the traditional Abagusii culture**

An elaborate system of transition from childhood to adulthood (adolescent socialization) existed among the *Gusii* people of South–western, Kenya. For both girls and boys, an initiation involving genital operations (*okwaroka*) followed by a period of seclusion (*obware*)



was conducted annually. This marked an important step in the lives of the initiates as it marked the stage of assumption of the roles of an adult male (*omomura*) and adult female (*enyaroka*) respectively. The importance of the respective rites of passage which accompanied the physical operation that was seen as an important socializing process is emphasized in the interview with Onyambu Nyanchwani aged 72 years at Ichuni Village:

Researcher: *What ways are used to teach the young on how to become responsible adults in your community (socialization)?*

Onyambu: *Since time immemorial, it is the tradition of our people (Gusii) to teach the young ones in a system of “obware”, in which all these lessons are taught.*

Researcher: *This was the practice long time ago, is it still relevant today for both boys and girls?*

Onyambu: *Everyone will inform you that it is our traditional practice, which can never be substituted by anything else.*

Researcher: *You mean there can be any problems if this is the case?*

Onyambu: *We will witness promiscuity and many deaths from diseases like AIDs in our village. The young people will all along remain to be children.*

Researcher: *Is it really the case?*

Onyambu: *Yes, and that is why anybody that does not follow this important rule will be socially stigmatized and ridiculed by everybody in the community.*

The respondent's views are expressive on how the ritual is linked to the wellbeing of not only the young people, but also the community as a whole and how the teachings offered to the initiates are considered still relevant in the modern set up. Prior to this, the young people occupy the inferior status of “little girl” (*egesagane*) and “little boy” (*omoisia*) in which they were tasked with household chores such as the nursing of young infants for girls and herding cattle for boys (Mayer, 1953). The rituals of circumcision among boys and clitoridectomy in girls were, therefore, important milestones in the making of adult males and females in the society<sup>68</sup>. Additionally, they were fundamental in conferring the male and female gender identity (Silberschmidt, 1999) as an uncircumcised person is not considered a fully grown up member of the community<sup>69</sup> (Njue and Askew, 2005). Further, analysis of the study data

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<sup>68</sup>Detailed accounts of the rituals are described in detail in the works of early anthropologists. See Mayer (1953); Levine 1966

showed that the members of the community believe that if the young people are not taken through the circumcision rites, then they will miss the special training that enables them to acquire important social values and life skills. A key informant summarizes the importance of the teachings acquired during circumcision as follows:

*The boys and girls go through special training where they are taught rules of being men and adult women and the rules of respect (chinsoni) to old members of society.*

According to Akama and Maxon (2006) the acquisition of the unique statutes (*Chinsoni*) which defined the social behavior governing the Gusii community was only possible at circumcision. The (statutes) *chinsoni*, which were largely undocumented were an important asset as they were used by every adult *Gusii* Man and Woman to teach and bring up their children in what is considered rich moral norm. In the next sub-section we examine the meaning and importance attached to the rites of passage experienced through circumcision in the study area.

### **5.2.1 The meaning and importance initiation rites in the traditional and contemporary<sup>70</sup> Gusii community**

The indigenous initiation ceremonies constituted temporarily erected institutions for the formal teaching and learning (socialization) by the youth during the seclusion immediately after undergoing the ritual of circumcision among boys and clitoridectomy among girls. The various stages of the initiation ceremonies formed what is termed as the “adolescent education” necessary for preparing the young members of the community to successfully navigate the “adult world”. The study respondents were asked to mention important goals that were targeted in the provision of information during the period of initiation. Some of the participants of the focus group discussions provided the following responses:

Moderator: *What Goals were targeted in the information provided to the Socializees (FGD.P Q6?)*

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<sup>69</sup>Monyenye, S (1977) regards the indigenous education offered to the young people during initiation through circumcision as the last one in a series of a well-crafted curriculum, deliberately and systematized body of knowledge. Before one undergoes this rite of passage, he will normally be considered a child.

<sup>70</sup> This refers to the socio-economic, cultural and political characteristics prevailing in the present period in the community

FCD Participant 1: *Enable the recipient to fit into society*

FGD participant 2: *Accord the individual the status of adulthood, with the expectation that he is ripe for autonomous living in society.*

FGD Participant 3: *Give identity and belonging to the initiate as a full-fledged member of the community.*

FGD Participant 4: *Instill the virtues of hard work, patience, self – control, co-operation and responsibility*

FGD Participant 5: *Provide sex education to the young initiates*

From the responses, it is evident that the initiation procedures served important socialization functions as they instilled values and skills necessary for the survival of the young people in the community. Without these requisite skills and norms, young people were not considered as being responsible and, therefore, unfit to take up adult roles and responsibilities in the community.

In the traditional African setting, among the *Gusii*, the values and skills imparted were mainly passed on through rigorous initiation activities. However, due to the changing circumstances in the contemporary society, whereas the practice is universally conducted for both boys and girls<sup>71</sup>, the teachings that used to accompany the physical ritual are absent. The study sought to investigate the reasons for the continuance of the practice of the rites of passage, devoid of the teachings that usually accompanied the ritual. The major reason often given, especially for the practice among the young girls is that it is a cultural practice handed down from the previous generations and can therefore not be abandoned. According to a key informant, the practice cannot be abandoned because every member of the community went through it and it is every parent's obligation to ensure that the young people undergo it as well. This is brought out in the words of Yuvinalis Asuta Nyandemo (54):

*We are what we are today because of the system that our parents made us go through when we were growing up. It is therefore, my turn and that of every parent with children today to help them grow up in the ways of our people. This is by taking them over the initiation ceremonies which earn them the sense of identity and belonging to*

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<sup>71</sup>The 2008/9 KDHS data indicated that the prevalence rate for FGC in Kisii stood at 96 % while a recent study by Okemwa et.al conducted in Bosongo Location, Kisii central sub county, recorded the prevalence rate at 99.2 percent.

*our community. If the practice is not continued then a curse can befall us and our children.*

From the conversation, it is evident that the desire to initiate young people is motivated by the inter-generational influences. Additionally, on its part, FGM is thought of as a means to control female sexuality by treating excessive sexual desires, as when part of the clitoris is removed; the sexual desire in a woman goes down. This is captured in the conversation with Angeline Otondo (38 years), a nurse at Matibo dispensary:

*The operation helps curb the desire which leads the young girls in the locality to run up and down and engage in promiscuity. So an operation for partial removal of the clitoris to bring down the appetite is done for this purpose.*

Thus, despite the perception that being knowledgeable, she could be expected to be aware that FGM has no known benefits, Angeline points out that the most important thing is to ensure that the harm on the health of the individual is minimized by carrying out 'slight cut'. In men, the strict application of religious reasons for the rituals' importance as a means of maintaining the community's greatly valued identity has put pressure on the younger generation to undergo the rite as a means of maintaining its culture and identity. According to a religious leader, the requirement that male youth undergo initiation is aimed at fulfilling the desire by God that all communities do so. This is emphasized by Eliud Nyakina (49 years):

*Initiating the youth is fulfilling the law that was given to us by God. You See, a law between God and an ordinary man is binding and if it is broken under any circumstances, then the community will receive a big punishment. So we do this (initiate young people) to ensure that we abide by god's commandment.*

Therefore, Nyakina's argument demonstrates how in other instances, religious explanations converge with the secular ones to account for the continuity of the community's cultural initiation practices such as circumcision of the young people as the gateway into adulthood among the abagusii. In the next sub-section we analyse critically the rationale for the continued practice of the rites of passage among the abagusii in the contemporary society.

### **5.2.2 Interrogating the cogency of youth rites of passage in contemporary Gusii society**

The study findings show that in spite of the innumerable changes and a proliferation of the new value systems brought about by modern living, new political and religious ideals and far reaching transformations that the area has ever known, the local Gusii people still continue to be enchaind into acting out fashions of the past. Male circumcision is a globally accepted practice owing to its religious, cultural, social and medical usefulness (WHO, 2008), but the law prohibits subjecting of young girls to FGC<sup>72</sup>. However, the practice is still widely practiced to near universal levels in the study area. This is in spite of the fact that the leading mainstream Christian denominations (Seventh Day Adventist and Catholic Church) which are dominant in the study area condemn female genital cutting. The observations of the study are in congruence with the findings in a recent survey to obtain data on the situation of women and children in Kisii County. The data showed that 94 % of the women respondents interviewed observed that they had undergone the practice of FGM (KNBS, 2013:111).

In Central Kenya (Kikuyu land), when in 1929, the church of Scotland and PCEA mounted campaigns against the abolition of female circumcision, the argument put forward in defense of the practice was not so much in the surgical operation per se but that “it was an essential element from which the enormous educational, social, moral and religious value drew” (Kenyatta, 1938; Lambert, 1956). When the cultural practice was no longer tenable, the Kikuyu community abandoned it with current estimates indicating a low 21.4 % (KNBS, 2009). According to Monyenye (2006: 334), the educational values and sense of identity that the practice(s) were supposed to bestow upon an individual is “no longer tenable in the modern world, which is increasingly becoming a global village” However, in contemporary Kisii, the practice continues unabated, even though the teachings that used to go hand in hand with the ritual in the indigenous set up are completely absent in today’s rites of passage. The nature of the initiation that the young people presently undergo in the study area is captured in the conversation with Mary Nyabayo aged 44 years (Suguta village):

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<sup>72</sup>The prohibition of female genital mutilation Act of the Kenyan Government, which became operational on 4<sup>th</sup> October, 2011, criminalizes the aiding and abetting of FGM, procuring a person to perform genital female mutilation in another country and the use of ones premises and possession of tools or equipment of performing FGM. Any individual who commits the offence will be liable to an imprisonment term of three years or a fine of two hundred thousand Shillings or both.

*Today's children (boys and girls) are secretly taken to hospital for the operation and left to go home like any other patient, without being taught "important matters of life" that previously used to go hand in hand with initiation. The initiates who are products of today's initiation cannot differentiate their mother and sister nor father and brother.*

The respondent's argument clearly shows that as presently conducted among the abagusii people, the initiation practices have lost their transformational role, in which the adolescent was seen as having acquired the full-fledged status of an adult. The status was conferred upon when an individual was presumed to have acquired the ability to adhere to all explicit and implicit forms of regulations, moral values and family relationships based on the *Gusii* code of *chinsoni*. Monyenye (2006: 106) observes that the code entailed certain behavioural avoidance and restraint when dealing with people of different age-sets and genders. Levine (1966: 29) further notes that the *ensoni* feeling is considered to be at the core of the morality of the *Gusii* and it is strongest between father and daughter, father and sons, and mother and sons. Nyabayo's reference to the "children not able to differentiate neither mother nor father from their age mates" means exactly the failure by today's socialization practice to meet this important target in the community.

Similarly, Nyabayo implies further that today's young people lack the opportunity to be provided with the knowledge that can guide them in making decisions concerning marital relations. The former consisted part and parcel of the "curriculum" taught to the youth during seclusion. According to Mayer (1950), regulations which governed marriage relations among the members of the various clans were taken seriously. The findings of the study showed that some cases of young people getting into love relationships with members of their kin have been identified in the study area. This is emphasized by an adolescent mother; L. N aged 15 years at Bonyameyio village:

*Most of the young girls that have borne children and dropped out of schools are impregnated by their close relatives. The same happened to me as the father of my child is my uncle, although we were in the same class in school and are of the same age – group.*

L. N case presents a serious breach of the community's "moral governance" codes. Sexual encounters and marriage among members of the same clan is forbidden, as all members are regarded as relatives. In reality, however, today's young people bear no responsibility for contravening this important regulation in the community. According to a respondent, Jane Monyangi (48 years):

*The adults, whose responsibility is to safeguard this norm are no longer keen nor are they interested in following the culprits and to make it clearly known to every young person that it is a serious offence to have any relationship with your "brother" or "sister". Modern changes lead people to put emphasis in enhancing that children succeed in their schooling so as to have a solid economic base, so issues like these (social relations) are given less attention.*

In actual sense individuals are only permitted to marry from other clans. Inter - marrying clans were enemies and the marriage was meant to create bonds between fighting clans, hence the Gusii saying "those whom we marry are those whom we fight" (Silbersmidt, 1999).

In the following section, we examine the principles underlying the socialization of young people in the study area. Both the past and contemporary contexts are examined with a view to pointing out aspects of discontinuity.

### **5.3 Principles guiding the socialization of young people among the Abagusii: Divergence and convergence**

In his analysis of the major principles guiding the indigenous Gusii society, Monyenye (1977) argues that the system was guided by among others the principle of *communalism*, *perennialism* and *rote learning*. In emphasizing *communalism*, it served the purpose of *socialization* rather than *individualization* where the interests of the individual are subordinated to those of community. On the other hand, the principle of *perennialism* requires an individual to acquire and accept the already established knowledge and utilize it in its form without interrogating it. Any emerging new skills or innovations are resisted strongly. The method used to transmit knowledge to the young people is that of *indoctrination*. The learner is simply expected to believe in certain aspects of the physical and social environment

without any justifiable reason. In the contemporary society, these features of socialization cannot be tenable due to various reasons:

First, in today's highly fragmented life, "modernity fosters perpetual segmentation and personal separation from family, home, community, work and even self (Loyal, 2003). Ferdinand Tonnies argues that community life is characterized by the lack of mutual cooperation in which the traditional community (*Gessellschaft*) was build (Harris, 2001 161). He observes that "the people remain separate in spite of everything that unites them and nothing happens that is more important for the individual's wider group than it is for himself.

Secondly, in the modern society, it is impossible to attain (Cultural) collective representation. According to Emile Durkheim (1958: 27), people can be sorted in many ways: They have (or aspire to join) different occupations, different fields of knowledge and expertise and hold different beliefs. By comparing this to the earlier less differentiated social state which he referred to as mechanical solidarity, in whose people's lives were characterized by similar living (doing similar work, followed similar religion, thought, believed and feared in a similar way), he says the former community's shared beliefs and understanding constituted their collective consciousness, which governed their thoughts, attitudes and practices (Durkheim, 1958). In essence under today's conditions in which the world is fractured and increasingly unglued, it is not possible to find vestiges of Durkheim's *mechanical solidarity* nor attain the state of collective representation as culture is socially produced (Thompson, 2005).

Thirdly, indigenous socialization is characterized by the principle of *Perennialism*, which advocates for the adherence and conformity to the old believes, values and attitudes of the society, no matter how unjustified they may be. This results in an individual who is reduced to a mere conformist denying his intellectual capacity to explore deeper into the meaning of his life. Such an individual does not question things and lives a fairly static life (Ibid.) In contrast, in the contemporary society, complex problems require individual or collective context based decision making. Furthermore, the tendency in contemporary discourse is to encourage free and open debate which protects the rights of individual groups and offers the larger society away of reaching optimal decisions (Fleeley and Steinberg, 2008). According to Grace Bonareri, the local community is presently torn between adopting the above principles which require a carefully thought out balancing between the individual and community's interests. She observes:



*the Gusii society is presently caught in between the individual and the community's interests, and this is no exception when it comes to the rearing and socializing of its young people. As such, it should be viewed as normal, since, as societies undergo basic changes in their social structures and culture, the definition of individual and community's interests and the required mechanisms for their reconciliation are altered.*

The respondent's views are apt since in today's societies, the challenges posed by the demands on individuals puts them at odds with the societies' expectation. This often made worse as the individuals are often left in a state of ambivalence, as there are no uniform set of norms available to serve as guidelines in their day to day interactions. For Bonareri, therefore, the clash between individual and the community orientation calls for reconciliation, as the current state of affairs shows that the two are at odds with one another.

As noted earlier, several conditions are required to prevail for the communities' institutions and individuals to effectively play their role in socialization of the young people. However, the study data shows that some of the principles work against the smooth realization of the goals in the study area. For instance, while the members of the community desire and have high regard for cultural rites that are performed to mark the transition of young people to adulthood, the accompanying teachings are not given due consideration. The study aimed to examine the reasons for this state of affairs in the study area. What follows is the discussion of the factors explaining the phenomena.

### **5.3.1 Fear of losing the abagusii community's cultural rites**

As already pointed out, this section seeks to find out the reasons that have led to the Abagusii community's insistence on performing the cultural rites on young people without providing the educational component that is meant to go hand in hand with the physical acts.

Culture is defined as the "socially learned ways of living found in human societies that embrace all aspects of social life, including both thought and behavior (Harris, 1999). According to Akama and Maxon (2006), culture constitutes the integrated sum of learned behavioral traits manifested and shared by members of a society. As already pointed out, the socialization of young members in society was carried out through an elaborate culturally sanctioned procedure involving the "attack of the genital organs". However, even with the

watering down over the years of the ritual performances and their accompanying teachings totally neglected, the Abagusii still stick to them, claiming that they constitute a core component of the community's culture whose world they are fast losing. During the fieldwork, it became apparent that, although, almost all the families in Masaba saw to it that their children undergo the circumcision rites, none were offered the requisite teachings that traditionally meant to go hand in hand with it. As a respondent put it:

*The physical operation (traditionally) was just but a stamp or certificate to ascertain that the young person has received the education necessary for adult living. If the training is skipped while the initiates undergo the cut it therefore does not serve any meaningful purpose, but just an exercise in futility. The children are, therefore, made to grow "masomberera. People in the community are just clinging on to values which lost their meaning a long time ago. Their actions belong to the world that we have already lost and have little to offer today.*

This therefore, implies that the continued operation of the genitals devoid of any form of teachings is a fatal flaw to the effective socialization of the young members of the community. But even so, this occurrence is not only applicable to the Gusii alone. Shorter (1974: 80) had earlier on observed a similar trend among the other east African communities such as the Agikuyu, Gisu, Yao and the Makonde. He writes: *Puberty rituals have declined everywhere.... Little has remained of them other than a somewhat unhealthy pre-occupation with a physical operation on the organs of sex. The wealth of instruction that formerly accompanied the operation and gave it meaning has largely disappeared.* In the following sections (5.3.1.1 & 5.3.1.2), the discussion provides the reasons for the continuing emphasis on the physical operation without any accompanying life lessons.

### **5.3. I.1 Desire for maintaining community continuity and identity.**

The study sought to investigate the rationale for the continued operation of the traditional rites of circumcision for both boys and girls, despite the fact that these were not accompanied by their traditionally mounted teachings. The sole reason cited is that this was the only way that one could prove to be a member of the community. This is brought out in a key informant interview with Joshua Isaboke Nyakeruma (68 years) at Nyambogo youth polytechnic:

*The operation (circumcision) has no alternative since its operation aims at fulfilling what our forefathers and ancestors expect us to do as a community. It is the only way for making sure that our boys and girls have been registered as community members for life. And you see those teachings and knowledge have alternatives today since the child can get them in school and may be from other members of the family wherever need arises.*

The respondent's reasons for the community's practice of rites without teachings concur with Weigert et. al's (1996: 60) observation that the main reason why contemporary communities tend to practice genital operations that are not accompanied by teachings is explained by the community's desperation to enhance the continuity of their identity, albeit, blindly. He says: *(In the minds of the people) it is unthinkable to have a society in which individuals have no identity that remains the same .... the identity must remain continuous across space ..... It must somehow remain continuous across time as well.* Similarly, Davis (1979) contends that in their modern quest for continuity and the centering of their identity, the community members deploy “*cultural and biographical nostalgia*”. Nostalgia involves a yearning for a different time – the time of one's childhood and a sense of critical reflection on the modern condition which incorporates nostalgia commonly referred to as *off – modern* (Boym, 2001). Though indicative of an obsessive engagement with the past, it amply colludes with various temporalities to construct continuity (Fox, 1999; Sedikides et.al, 2014).

### **5.3.1.2 The myth of traditional harmony**

A second reason cited by the study respondents for clinging onto the retrogressive cultural practices without due regard to their educational importance was that the values, beliefs, customs and behavioral norms of traditional people lead them to live harmonious lives. According to a key informant, Wilfred Areba, 48 years):

*These rites of passage (FGM and male circumcision) are the only ones of our remaining customs that are common to all regions of our community (Gusiiland). They are the ones that to this day give us a sense of unity and a coherent system that will never undergo any*

*substantial modification, like what has happened to our language, food and the other aspects of life that we lead nowadays.*

Areba's views exemplify the phenomena of *ethnocentrism*, which encompasses a failure to recognize by a people or community of the diversity of cultures and of the relativity of one's own culture (Fleury 2011: 3) which can be used to justify the notion that truth is relative to cultures. Thus, the assumption that beliefs and practices are good if people in a given culture believe them to be so has been regarded valid even among contemporary communities whether such practices bolster their welfare or not. Hence, in such a context, the question of whether the cultural traditions will perpetuate retrogressive or obsolete cultural practices such as FGM that are harmful to members of society is not given much thought. This leads to conclusion that in adhering to this notion, the community members fail to realize that they possess the agency to change, modify or replace the customs. More so, as Bradshaw (2002) observes, as their customs have been *reified*, they take control of them for eternity<sup>73</sup>. Nevertheless, the validity of the "myth of traditional harmony" has been challenged as, it is impossible for a community or state to move forward if its people continue to live in an earlier era. "Modern life dictates that men and women perform their duties as members of a community larger than that of the kinship network and make judgments on the basis of objective evidence and follow authorities legitimated not by tradition or religious sanctions but by technical competence (Inkeles and Smith, 1974). However, it should be noted that while this holds true, the case of the Asian sub-continent presents a unique scenario, especially the case of the Chinese and the Japanese. The two communities have changed without erasing their cultural practices in general.

In the next section, the changing nature of the major social institutions in society is examined. Emphasis is laid on how the changes encompassing the institutions have affected the socialization of young people in the study area.

## **Section II: Change, social institutions and socialization of young people among the Abagusii**

As already pointed out, this section, seeks to find out whether the key social institutions that play the important role in the socialization of the youth in the study area have undergone

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<sup>73</sup>In Kenya, there are many of the retrogressive cultural practices, which are still held dear by all people irrespective of their socio - economic standing in society. Examples include: Levirate marriages – commonly referred to as "widow inheritance" and polygyny among others.

transformation. The specific changes and whether the changes have had any impact on the socialization process are examined.

#### **5.4. The changing nature of life and the key social institutions among the Abagusii**

The community contexts or social institutions in which individuals are brought up plays a key role in shaping up their specific standards and behavior and the acquisition of the norms and values that are unique to the social group. As already shown in Chapter one, social institutions are dynamic as they “change continually in response both to the endogenous pressures and exogenous forces” (Breit et.al, 2003:9). The changes in turn affect the micro-level practices and interactions of its members. The findings of the study confirm that various changes can be discerned among the social institutions and the life of the people in the study area:

##### **5.4.1 Common values, beliefs and socialization of young people in contemporary Gusii**

The study sought to examine the interplay among the goals of the community in the socialization of its young people and the actual interests of the youth with regard to modern living. In reality, the conditions in the modern society are significantly different from those that existed several decades ago. One of the major changes observed among the Gusii is the disintegration of the common values and beliefs that supposedly held the community together. At the family level, the relatively and clearly defined social unit described by Levine and Levine (1965 : 67) as being firmly in the grasp of the homestead head, whose “orders regarding the economy, defense and marital affairs of the homestead were commands which had to be obeyed has disappeared”. The result of this is captured in the words of Vincent Nchore (42 years) a key informant, interviewed at Suguta village on 8<sup>th</sup> July, 2014:

*The many problems which the youth encounter in the village are as a result of the prevailing situation. Nowadays, the parents and older people here have little or no “power” at all and as such the lines of authority which could otherwise provide a clear guidance on how young people and those older than them should relate is unclear. Today, there are no known sanctions to moderate the behavior of the people in the family. It is today a very normal thing to witness cases of conflict and violation of the simple rules involving all sorts of people, be they children, the youth and even the elders.*

The respondent's assertion points to the tendency of the lack of common direction in modern families. This is due to the proliferation of multiple actors at that level, which makes it difficult to come up with common rules of engagement. Looked at from another perspective, however, this development offers positive results for the family and its members because it provides an increased opportunity for maintaining the respect for individuals and their needs and desires alongside those of groups such as the family or society and perpetuates human rights' norms, particularly those of freedom and equality (McGlynn, 2006 : 11). However, other respondents viewed the desire to seek the balance between what is good for the society and its individuals as running counter to the supposed ideals of the family and community unity. These should be considered as necessary prerequisites for the healthy social growth of young people. According to a respondent, Osoro Manduku, (aged 68):

*when the community or the government preaches to us (in the hearing of children and young people) that they should have a say and freedom, their message is interpreted to mean that the parents are bad and government (Chief) is good. When they say that the children and young people can do as they wish without necessarily being subjected to parental consent, they cause a big damage because what they are telling our children is that the people they count on most, cannot be trusted with their rights and what they need is to be protected from their parents who cannot act in their best interest.*

Manduku's argument aptly captures the concern in the developing societies such as the Kenyan one, where it is often reasoned that given the stage of the civil development, too much emphasis on the autonomy of young individuals can become counterproductive. Fineman, (1995: 199) observes that when this is the case, the "development of a concept of society's collective responsibility for children and young people is impeded".

Educational institutions have also been seen to contribute to the "confusion" that has marred the common values that guide the socialization of young people in Masaba. As shown in chapter two, the findings of the study confirm that access and enrollment to education at all levels have increased steadily over the years, but the educational reforms have been found to

be detrimental to the interests of the larger society and effective socialization of the youth. As observed by Kemunto Mochungo (38 years):

*Kaimenyi<sup>74</sup> has given today's young people a big head. Children no longer have respect for teachers and parents. A child fails exams and when a teacher asks him, they simply get annoyed and do nothing to step up the effort to correct their mistakes. The young people of today are not accountable to anybody. They are not required to sit competitive examinations, attend to remedial classes to catch on difficult areas in their study work. They only sit internal examinations, which they never take seriously. If a child fails in an examination due to negligence, he cannot be asked to repeat the class. Such kind of children cannot be expected to grow up to be responsible adults.*

From the excerpt, parents are of the view that the reforms in the education sector favour the young people, who have been given too much freedom. On the other hand, the parents see themselves as having been relegated to the periphery. This implies that the reforms initiated in the sector, have not only prevented parents from the participation in the moulding of their children, but also made it difficult for the teachers and other stakeholders to be actively engaged in discipline of their learners. Woolman (2001: 42) maintains that schools should assist in meeting the objective of character development, respect for elders and established authority, which is only possible if the institutions integrate the various stakeholders in ways that foster association, intergroup understanding and mutual cooperation.

On their part, the religious institutions in Gusii have not been spared the current wave of the social changes that have engulfed the region. Hence, although the dominant denominations in the study area comprise the Seventh day Adventists and the Roman Catholics, these have undergone major transformations internally and many more religious groups are evident in the religious landscape in the locality. As explained by a local religious leader:

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<sup>74</sup> This is the name of the cabinet secretary responsible for education in the country at the time of the study. The people in the study area acrimoniously accuse his portofolio of framing up regulations and other agenda for school reforms without consulting important stakeholders such as parents and the community at large to provide their input, especially on their efficacy in producing good children.

*A lot has changed in this locality as there are many smaller denominations owned individually by pastors and sometimes their families, which have opened up shops at the local shopping centres and these tend to target young couples and youth alike. Leave alone that, people here are ardent followers of the many evangelical preaching programs on TV projected daily with the sole aim of targeting to coincide with the days and even the exact hours of the worship times of the big churches (Mainstream churches). These churches also organize occasional crusades which attract huge gatherings of young people.*

This demonstrates how in the context of religious plurality, the contemporary churches have moved away from the traditional role of spiritual nourishment to the pursuance of the secular goals of social and financial possessions. The declining religious view and the alternate ascendancy of secular and materialistic culture espoused by individualism, rationalism and instrumentalism sounds more attractive to the youth. According to Saliba (2003: 87), adolescents tend to fall victim as they are in the course of searching for their identity, which they may fail to obtain in the big churches. The mainstream churches usually stress on rules and observance of uniform behavior at the expense of the satisfaction of the individual needs of the young members of their congregation, rendering them precarious.

The mass media has also been seen to play a key role in influencing the changing nature of the life of individuals and the agents of socialization in the study area. Specifically, the new media has led to a multiplicity of values and beliefs. In Kisii, there are multiple outlets and this allows for diverse content. As observed by Lilian Nyabonyi (64 years):

*In the 90s (approximately, two and half decades ago) the local residents used to listen to two radio stations. One, which used to provide longer period of listening was the one transmitting in the Kiswahili language. The Kisumu station gave people a few hours of listening in the morning and the evening for news and “announcing of the people that had died” (funeral notices). On Sundays there was no broadcasting. Nowadays, there are many to choose from that speak our local language. All of them do this the whole day and night.*



The extract, clearly demonstrates that the local people enjoy unlimited access to the radio broadcast, unlike it was two decades ago. The emergence of many media outlets can be traced to the liberalization of the media industry in Kenya, when the sole monopoly by the Kenya Broadcasting Corporation (KBC) ceased with the entry of other entities such as Citizen Radio and Television into the scene. As pointed out by the respondent, the services provided then were limited as the radio provided the listeners with news items and announcements, at least , going by those that were transmitted in vernacular. This therefore limited the benefits accruing to the local populace from the media. It is important to note that majority of the residents in the study area are illiterate and hence, only comprehend the local vernacular language, *ekegusii*. Therefore, although many programmes were offered in Kiswahili, these were not of much benefit to the older generation (parents). Presently, radio is still the most important, with the vernacular radio stations such as *egesa* FM, *Minto* and *Sayare* the most preferred. These broadcast programmes in health, agriculture, civic engagement and culture. For young people, the various local broadcasters organize events that are appropriate for the youth, ranging from roadshows for their entertainment to dancing cultural shows such as the annual *esagasaga ribina* night.

In terms of new media, the internet and the mobile telephony has also been seen to be widely used among people of all ages, and is increasingly being seen as an alternative to the broadcast media, especially among the young people. On the extent into which the use of these has been adopted in the study area, Richard Nyansimera (35 years) observes:

*Nearly all elderly men and women own a mobile phone which they mainly use to talk to their children who live in urban towns and to receive and withdraw M-PESA<sup>75</sup>. The people of my age and even the younger ones also possess the mobile phone for messaging and to send and receive voice mail. But more, it is used for internet functions such as access to social media sites like facebook. Occassionally also, the youth visit the cyber café in the shopping centre to play games and send and read emails from their friends.*

Hence, the various components of the new media that are owned by the various categories of the local people serve their unique needs. The researcher sought the views of the respondents

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<sup>75</sup> This is the name of a mobile phone – based money transfer system launched in Kenya in 2007 by Safaricom and Vodacom mobile network operators in Kenya and Tanzania.

on whether the utilization of the media services contributed to the positive development of the recipients. Varied responses were received, with for instance the older generation pointing out that the proliferation of the media has complicated the functions of guardianship that is the domain of the parents and elder people in the community. In the same vein, it was indicated that to some extent, the vernacular radio, especially had contributed immensely to the revival of the cultural values that are nowadays at the verge of extinction. However, it was pointed out by the older respondents that the obstacle is that the young people are neither patient enough nor proficient in the local vernacular language so as to benefit from the cultural teachings offered in the media.

#### **5.4.2 Extended families and the socialization of young people in contemporary Gusii:**

Bradford (2012) argues that the presence or absence of the extended family phenomena provides an important parameter for the understanding of the situation of the young people's socialization in the contemporary society. Traditionally, the Abagusii organized themselves in the form of the extended family, whose "territorial units as localized lineages were relied upon to provide a kinship framework for relations within the community" (Levine and Levine, 1966: 19 - 20). The extended family was instrumental in the provision of collective care for children and young people. As emphasized by Levine and Levine (1966: 125- 126), taking care of the little children was everybody's responsibility: *"Aside from the mother and child nurse in polygynous families, co-wives sometimes take care of each other's children and feed them when the mother is a way. If the child's paternal grandmother is living, she may also be involved. The wives of the brothers in an extended family may care for each other's children in much the same manner as co - wives"*. Similarly, parental control was the responsibility of all elder members of the extended family, including the control of aggression. Levine and Levine (1966: 156) further notes: *"Children learn, for the most part before they are 5 or 6 that they must not fight or indulge in sex play in the presence of adults. Any adult stops children he sees from doing such things"*.

During the organization of initiation ceremonies, which marked an important turning point in the life of the young people's transition to adulthood, the local community collectively took part. Levine and Levine (1966: 165) again note that these were organized on the basis of *risaga*: *"The initiation cycle is woven into the life of the neighbourhood in such a way that nobody is unconcerned. All parents celebrate their respective children's entry into and*

*emergence from seclusion..... some of the old people ..... Bless the novices at the end of the seclusion”.*

From the above, therefore, every aspect of socialization among the young people in the community involved the relevant members of the extended family. Hence, the extended family system came in handy to support the process. However, as demonstrated by this study’s findings, the extended family system is no longer feasible due to the loosening of kinship ties among members of the community. This reality is well expressed by Marcelina Giteya (52 years):

*Todays changes have altered everything, you cannot find “true relatives” or neighbours. Previously, titles like cousin, step–brother and step – sister were simply as good as brother and sister and the aunts and uncles were in reality as good as parents. The young in the community looked up confidently to all kinsmen for necessary support and guidance. All the neighbours and the related and distant kinsmen cannot offer the necessary goodwill for us to pull together for the sake of our children.*

The necessary forces such as blood and neighborhood ties among members have therefore not been sustained at the community level. Several reasons were cited for the lack of the cohesion, chief among which included the escalating poverty levels and the inequality among the families and individual members of the families. At the family level, the problem is captured in the conversation with Machuki Moruri (42 years):

*Many of us no longer stay together. Even for those who do, we and our children do not know each other. There are so many quarrels among brothers and relatives coming up from the misunderstanding over land sharing and the boundary disputes. They make everybody to be suspicious of their relative and it becomes difficult to do anything together.*

This then implies that the numerous domestic misunderstandings at the family level make it difficult to continue shouldering the extended family system. The situation is made worse by

the fact that in such instances, every member of the household, family and even the entire neighborhood gets involved as the conflicts escalate. In her study to determine the changing household reproduction among the Abagusii, Raikes (1990: 97), found out that such cases of intra – household tension involved brothers and step–brothers, women who were co-wives and even the entire neighborhood. In one case, dissention between sons of different wives (step - brothers) involved a strip of land measuring 20 metres by 2 metres. Her respondents were also involved in “antagonistic behavior resulting from the rivalry between different halves of families over land which often continued past the division of the farm between the two wives and their off springs. Furthermore, in many of the women she interviewed, the researcher found out that the conversation consisted of episodes touching on drunkenness, beatings and fights and poisoning, arson and witchcraft within the extended family.

The above notwithstanding, contrary to the assertion by scholars such as Orvis (1986), who see a doomed end to the phenomenon of extended family in the area, the study findings demonstrate that there is a resurgence of alternative networks, such as those seen among women of unrelated keen in form of merry go round ( *ebiombe*). The savings and benefits are mainly meant for use in buying food, household utensils, cutlery, furniture and school uniform and even fees. All this go into providing for the needs of households. There are also strong community neighbourhood groups that are mainly constituted by adult members of the same family, to take care of benevolent needs of its members. When a family member dies, everybody contributes a given sum of money, usually ranging from fifty to two hundred shillings in cash, and vegetables, firewood and maize floor.

Religious institutions also provide an avenue for the formation of social networks within the community. In Ichuni area, people have formed groups locally known as *chichumuia*, whose membership is determined by the closeness and proximity among households and families. The groups cater for spiritual as well as the economic and social needs of its members. Meetings are held alternately in the houses and homes of the members. Whenever emergencies come up, community members use the *chumuias* as vehicles of mobilizing for monetary and moral support.

In the schools and other institutions of learning, the parents from the catchment area have pooled up their efforts to support the achievement of the mission and vision of these institutions by providing ideas and even participating in manual activities. When the parents

and communities join hands, they provide the collective platform for maintaining the discipline and general wellbeing of the young members of the community. In a similar version, this will provide a sense of social solidarity and team spirit, which is an important virtue to be copied by the young people through role modeling (Arthur, 2000).

Putting aside the aforementioned advantages, Gulliver (2004) has warned that researchers should take caution so as to avoid romanticizing the extended family system as it can be detrimental to positive living in the context of the modern era. The findings of the study show that, in the context of the changing economic circumstances in the study area, the communal tendencies that come with the extended family system have rendered it disadvantageous and modern norms can no longer support it. As observed by a Key informant, Daudi Nyambega (42 years)

*Today's society is moving towards small families and the messages that are passed through radio tell us to have small families and live in smaller groups. The education received in our schools also emphasize on merit and the individual's success and self-sufficiency.*

Therefore, whereas it is beneficial to maintain the extended family system, its continued existence is contradicted by the prevailing socio- cultural and economic circumstances. According to Aschenbrenner (1978), certain conditions have to be met in order to support the African extended family model. First, the responsibility to children must be diffused to throughout the extended family. Secondly, there must be frequent fosterage of children with relatives and neighbours. However, in the modern society, these conditions coupled with the emergence of the conjugal family are not easily realizable. Some of the reasons that were cited by the study respondents for the failure to sustain the extended family norms include: the trend towards individualism and the belief that the extended family contributes to higher poverty levels. According to a respondent, Edwin Gesicho (38 years):

*In today's world, people have become individualistic, so it is an accepted way. Nobody can be blamed for this as life in the community has become competitive and this makes it difficult to think of another person's children and problems. The circumstances dictate that everybody must think and act on his own for the best interests.*

*Success also comes to individuals since those who excel most acquire the greatest benefits.*

The respondent implies that the contemporary circumstances in the communities have no regard for collective efforts as achievement results from competition. Similarly, today's believe in the progress, which is only attainable through personal effort leads people to regard communalism as an obstacle to society's advancement. Thus the members of the community like elsewhere believe in individual effort as the path to success of the individual and the community. Moreover, in today's highly stratified societies, it is impossible to maintain commonness or equality, which is the underlying principle in the extended family system. Further, it was also noted that the emerging challenges of insecurity and the failure to maintain a safe neighborhood renders collective responsibility for the socialization of young people undesirable. First, the study respondents observed that the prevailing high poverty levels have led to the emergence of a "jealous" and "mischievous kin" class of people in the neighborhood. The attributes of this category of villagers is described by Rebecca Bitutu (55 years):

*Some of the neighbours get unhappy when their relatives prosper. Therefore, since they can harm your family, people tend to be careful by not revealing their issues as you never know how your brother will feel. There are also mischievous relatives who can go to the extent of causing harm to your property and even children. Therefore everybody conceals his progress and cannot share good Ideas with others, which could otherwise be of benefit to them.*

It therefore, follows that harnessing collective environments for nurturing young people in the community is hampered by the mistrust that has been cultivated in the study area. In the course of the data collection exercise, instances of industrious individuals being targeted through destructive feelings of jealousy were narrated, for instance in the case of Pacifica Obwocha (64 years):

*My young son who works in Busia planned to build a permanent house for himself after working hard and saving money for seven years. He bought all the required building materials and transported them home here from Kendu Bay and Kedowa. On the day of putting up the building which was to start by digging up trenches for a firm*

*foundation, he found a head of a chicken and blood spills thrown in the place of digging up the foundation for his house. He abandoned the project and went elsewhere to buy a piece of land to build a similar house.*

Events such as these cause panic in young people, who could otherwise prosper and lead their lives in the village like the other of their close relatives and neighbours. The main reason for doing these things is captured in the interview with Richard Nyansimera (62 years):

*Researcher: Why do people in this area frighten people to discourage them from personal development endeavours in this area?*

*Nyansimera: It is simply a matter of rivalry that develops because of jealousy mainly by one of the family members who may be aggrieved by the prospects of one of their kin's advancement.*

*Researcher: What can be the problem if it is through own hardwork and sacrifice that such a neighbor's son or daughter has achieved the resources to do the development?*

*Nyansimera: The desire to frighten the relative or neighbor's child is motivated by the feeling that it should be the transgressors child who should have been doing the development.*

*Researcher: Is this only unique to this area?*

*Nyansimera: This is just mere jealousy, which happens everywhere.*

*Researcher: Does it also happen to people who are unrelated or distant?*

*Nyansimera: Of what use will anyone be interested with a stranger, whose endowments he is not versed with. This mainly happens to people that one is closely related to. This is because it comes up due to some people having more than others with whom they have close or extended relation.*

The foregoing conversations allude to the application of witchcraft to harm other people in the community, especially among those who are in close kinship relationship among the Abagusii. It emerged that the community members, who though appear to subscribe to the use and power of witchcraft, loathe to openly discuss its existence in the community. Hence, its implication on the socialization of young people could not be substantively verified in the study.

Secondly, there are presently escalating cases of child abuse in the study area. This calls for the parents to be vigilant so as to enhance the safety of their children. It used to be a usual thing in the community for children and young people to visit and stay with relatives, especially during holidays. As explained by Martha Maisiba (58years):

*When I was newly married here, I used to dispatch my older children, who were then in their upper primary classes (standard 4 to 7) to Botondo (Matrineal home), where they could stay alternately in the houses of my parent and my brothers during the whole period when schools were closed. This was important because it gave them an opportunity to provide assistance in household activities and farmwork labour to my ageing mother; in return they received advice from her, interacted with my brothers (uncles) and their children (cousins). On returning here, they were provided with school uniforms bought to them by their uncles and this saved me the trouble of having to provide it to them. They also carried home food produce for our consumption. In the subsequent holidays, they visited to stay with my sisters and the sisters children came to stay with us.*

Martha's case demonstrates how the community deployed the mechanism of "child stays" to harness family bonding that also came with reciprocal and mutual assistance to all the parties that were involved. It is important to note that this was possible because of the tranquility that characterized the rural life at that particular time. Quashigah (1999: 65) has reported that the present prevalent abuse of child labour, child prostitution and the general child abuse were vices that were very uncommon to the pre- colonial African societies". This has been attributed to the emphasis that was placed on the collective social institutions such as the family and neighborhoods, whose network of concerned individuals beyond the biological parent provided a powerful deterrent to child abuse. It also worked to reduce the likelihood of child maltreatment while at the same time guaranting that someone will intervene when the standards of child and adolescent care are violated (Kilbride, 1992: 186). In Kisii, Levine and Levine (1981: 36) observed that battering and sexual molestation was uncommon. Moreover, although corporal punishment was prescribed for the young people, it was hardly practiced but instead reserved for serious contravention of family rules.



In the present society, the entrusting of children and young people to their kin or distance relatives has been found to bring untold suffering to the youth. Such children are likely to experience negligence, sexual abuse and exploitation at the expense of their healthy growth and development. Naomi Borura (52 years) explains that:

*It is obvious that children who spend moments of time with relatives will nowadays not be treated equally like the others in the home. Even your own relatives, who are as closely related by blood such as a sister will treat them without love. What we fear most is that the children themselves do not realize the boundaries of intimate friendship and sexual encounters with their cousins and will most likely misbehave when the encounters are facilitated during such visits since they will not be closely monitored. You will be surprised that our men (uncles) take advantage and abuse the children of the relatives who come to stay in our homes. This thing is also very common among our younger sisters.*

The prevailing situations therefore, expose the young people, especially girls to exploitation by the individuals that are best placed to protect them. It is also noteworthy that most adults are not in a position to offer guidance to the young people on how to relate favourably with their distant relatives such as cousins and the uncles who join them for the occasional stays in their homes.

In the following section, the impact of the changes among individual and social institutions on adolescent and youth socialization is examined.

### **Section III: Impact of change on older individuals, key social institutions and the socialization of young people among the Abagusii**

Rapid social change has had far reaching implications on the contemporary socialization of the young people in all communities. As explained in chapter one , although communities possess a wealth of cultural values and traditions that are handed down from one generation to the other for use in rearing the younger members of their societies, the fast changing contexts render them unsuitable for adoption. The incompatibility results from the changes in people's attitudes towards the prevailing cultural norms and values and the changing nature of the key agents of socialization (Heise and Mackinon, 2010: 42).

## **5.5 The changing attitudes towards children and young people**

A society's desirable goals motivate its members towards particular attitudes which result in actions that are derived from the prevailing social values (Schwartz and Bardi (2005). Traditionally among the *Gusii*, the "desire for children is one of the strongest motivations in their culture". This explains why in the community, procreation was and is still considered essential to marriage and parents often strive to bear as many children as possible (Levine and Levine, 1966: 111). According to the findings of the study, while the aforementioned was true in the past, today's parents are no longer motivated to the prospect of seeing as many of their children as possible grow to be healthy members of the community. The study sought to examine the main reasons for the declining value of young people as an important component of the society's population.

### **5.5.1 The declining value of young people among the Abagusii**

Young people are presently not seen as being of value to the older generation members of the society. The reason for this is explained by Keremensia Nyagechanga (74 years):

*Having a young child of your own is not today a valuable thing as it used to be when my parents bore us. Young people were seen as very important for the homestead since they constituted the cadre of people who foresaw to its wellbeing in carrying out both in and out of house chores. When boys grew up to be youth, they participated in grazing and eventually brought home a wife who stepped in to assist her mother when her sisters married – off. For young girls, when the time of being married came, this meant bride wealth to the family. Young people could also take care of the mother and father when they grew old.*

Therefore, having children and young people around the homestead was an economic and social imperative due to their involvement in household chores and prospects of moving forward the family lineage. In the past, the young people generally, and specifically, male youth took charge of the grazing areas, *ebisarate*, herding livestock and protecting the community from cattle rustlers from the neighboring communities like the Kipsigis and the Maasai. However, in the present time, Charles Mokuia Ochenge (68 years) observes that:

*The children and youth spend all their life away from us in the schools. When they grow up, they take up jobs and settle with their families in the distant places or urban areas, and only take regard of their wives and children. It is true that majority of the people wish it this way for their young people, but some often see them as not having fulfilled their obligation of being close to their parents and consider them as not being important.*

From the above the parents, therefore, experience little motivation to aspire to benefit from the younger generation due to the changes in the prospective benefits. In stark contrast to the above views, other research participants opined that modern parents like to have many children and rear them effectively so as to become functional members of the community. However, the parents lack the capacity to do so. As observed by Obonyo Omurwa (age 52 years):

*Having a child who will grow up to be an adult is the desire for our people. The youth are the ones who will bury us when we die and our inheritance will be passed into them. Without the youth, then our lineage will die and so nobody wishes to face that kind of situation. The problem is that although we clamour to procreate, the demands of nurturing children to the expected standards have become too high and no parent in the village has the ability to satisfy it.*

Thus, it is paradoxical that whereas the community members like young people, the potential to successful socialization is hampered by the poverty and inability to provide for their needs in terms of material needs and parental engagement.

The young people have also been regarded as problematic. In Africa, it is widely perceived that being young is problematic and that though considered vulnerable and precarious, the youth are often regarded as dangerous and detrimental to the wellbeing of society (Abbink, 2005, Golaz and Thibon, 2015). According to the findings of the study, in light of this perspective, the adults view the young people in various ways: To begin with, the study respondents observed that the young people have become a “thorn in the flesh” in the villages

when it comes to tackling of the local challenges of insecurity. Augustine Okindo (45 years) emphasizes the role of the youth in the study area as follows:

*The people responsible for all the criminal activities in this area are our youth. Majority of those that have been incorporated into the vigilante to help us do community policing in our village are always named by the victims whom they wrong or assault. Instead of bringing about justice, they do the other way round. Yes, I know that they are maintaining security, but they do it more violently and this makes it less fair and just. Many of the school going children in this area are also found to always carry out thefts in their neighbours' farms and homes.*

Hence, with the young people, who were traditionally regarded as the custodians of community safety being responsible for the insecurity of public spaces, the adult members of the community have persistently considered them as being the “bigger part of the problem”.

Secondly, Jernigan (2001) has argued that today's adults view the youth as lacking in capacity to adjust accordingly into playing their roles as expected by the larger society. The young people are often blamed for lacking the agency to create opportunities for themselves. According to the local provincial administrator:

*the youth in this locality are very unique compared to those that I have experienced in many divisions and districts in which I have served as a government officer. The young people here dread the opportunities that the government has availed in terms of youth funds. The excuses that they often put forward for their fear is that they don't want to experience what they see often done to those members of groups, whose property such as household goods and even their family's livestock being taken away when they fail to repay back the advanced monies. As a result, the money always lie idle here unlike what I see young people scrambling for funding in the lower Eastern and Central provinces where I have worked for the last seven years prior to my coming to this county.*

The youth, therefore, fail to take their rightful place so as to improve their wellbeing. In their article, *Adolescence and adult work in the twenty first century*, Shanahan et.al, (2002: 112), argue that young people can be denied the opportunities to develop their capabilities of agency and choice as they grow into becoming adults. “When they are denied choices by their parents or teachers and thrust into dependent and passive roles, like children, their sense of competence is undermined”. This can be perpetuated by the communities in which the youth live, if for instance, the parents provide the essential services profusely without leaving them to improvise on some solutions to their problems. Alice Mboga (38 years) states that:

*In Kisii, most parents faithfully provide for the needs of their children without knowing that they also need to be challenged to do without some of it or that they need to go out of their way to initiate comparable solutions to their own needs. This makes them to become slow thinkers in the hope that their seniors will provide for them forever. Among other people (Kenyan communities), children are let “off the hook” of their parents when they reach a reasonable age. You will be surprised that their parents show them ways which they use to buy for themselves what they require and sometimes pay for their fees. These ones cultivate important skills and even when they finally get their employment, they behave responsibly with their earnings.*

The Sub – County Commissioner adds that the major problem with the youth in this regard is that in the locality:

*It is a serious omission that the youth lack serious people that they can look up to as role models. I have observed that leaders of all levels and well of people do not live here. The politicians and others come shortly for the funerals of their departed relatives and “harambees”<sup>76</sup> and leave immediately these activities are concluded. However excels also moves to live outside of this area, so the growing*

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<sup>76</sup> This is means “pulling together” and refers to the public fundraising activities for collecting money for individual or public projects in Kenya

*young people have nobody to inspire and challenge them to aim higher.*

Thus, without any frame of reference, the youth are left on their own. Mahama (2008) contends that when the young people receive little attention from those in power and are relegated to the negative spirals of hopelessness, they are left in a state of optimism.

Thirdly, in the contemporary society, largely based on their propensity for the non-observance of social boundaries, young people are regarded as problematic and deviant. In the global west, the post – World War II youth came to be regarded as a social problem by adults as a consequence of their reactions to the youth rather than on the basis of the nature of their activities. This process in which young people become the source and focus of social anxiety has been described as moral panics (Goode and Nachman, 2009). In echoing this concern, Yunia Oyaro (Age 44) says:

*We have clear rules that have been very helpful in guiding us on all things we do and those that we are supposed to avoid, and this depends on whom you are. Every young person in this village has his or her goal to break every rule. They see the elderly people as hopeless and out of touch, who know little. Today, one cannot differentiate young people from adults and this has made their life difficult as they have failed to take counsel.*

Oyaro's concerns bring into focus the blurred boundaries, which are meant to put up a clear border line on how relationships are held between the older and younger members of society. The lack of this leads to a lack of well-defined limits. Ineffective limit setting sets both the parents and young people up for conflict, as strong relationships are dependent on clear cut rules and boundaries. Moreover, this may lead to disconnect among the two parties, with the younger generations being left on their own without any serious guidance from the older members of society such as parents and teachers.

### **5.5.2 The perception of young people on the commitment of society towards their wellbeing among the abagusii**

On the side of the young people, they feel that they are a neglected lot. The lack of adequate commitment is manifested in the failure by the parents and the other adult members of the community to closely monitor the young people and provide guidance on important matters which will help them to avoid way ward behavior. Eliud Nyakina (14 years) explains:

*My father is never at home to help me and my brothers with the guidance on what is to be done. He spends all his days in the market place and when he arrives home late, we have no opportunity for such discussions. At school, the teacher (s) are also very demanding and only emphasize that we must do a lot of reading work so as to pass highly in the continuous assessment tests and the form four examination. There are no moments dedicated to deliberating personal and social challenges confronting us with the parents and teachers.*

The failure by the important members of the society such as parents and teachers to provide attention to young people leads to frustration and suspicion between the youth and the other members of the community. In a study among American mid-adolescents, Clark (2004: 9) found out that the major challenge confronting the wellbeing of her respondents was the lack of concern by the parents and the other important stakeholders. One of her respondents observed: “..... *the truth is that nobody cares, nobody listens. Teachers and Coaches and parents don't even know who we are. ...*”. This further leads to skepticism, and the rift among the parents and the young people grows wider and the youth lack trust in adults. The young people eventually find themselves engaging in unconventional activities, such as the participation in proscribed movements such as the *sungu sungu* vigilante group. According to the findings of the study, the lack of closeness between the parents and the youth contribute to the failure by the young people to work hard and excel in school which in turn propels them to engaging in unlawful activities. According to Joshua Gwako (42 years):

*the youth whose parents are unconcerned are the ones who present trouble to the community. They are the ones who happen to perform very poorly in school and any slight provocation by the teachers to aid them to excel makes them run away from school. Once out here in the village, such boys have nothing good to do but end up in the*

*groups such as sungu sungu to be hired to violently punish people that do wrong to other people in their families.*

This again intimidates the parents and other older adults in the community leading to societal over-reaction, in which such youth are made to bear a symbolic baggage (Downes et.al, 2007). In his study to investigate why Sudanese young men engage in violence, Madut (2005: 147) found out that the participation of young people in unlawful activities was a culmination of feelings of frustration. In the opinion of one of his respondents, in their efforts to keep off their parents who will hurl insults at them for being lazy around the home, the youngsters opt to hang around the market places where they may run into acquaintances who could buy a meal or a cigarette. On whether the young people deliberately plan to engage in destructive activities, the respondent observed: *One does not go out with a plan to rob or fight or chase girls ..... it just happens, and you say that was just a mistake I will not repeat it, but before you know it, you are assaulting another person and everybody begins to talk about you as a bad human being. Once you have been written off and your reputation is gone, you don't care anymore what they say.*

Therefore, the young people's participation in activities which make them to be portrayed negatively result from the conditions that are brought about by the social disruption in the contemporary societies. The disruption is brought about by the paradox and contradictions emerging from the consequences of modern development (Rotimi, 2005).

#### **5.6 The impact of changes within the family and the educational institutions on the socialization of young people among the Abagusii**

The study sought to examine the impact of the changes on the socialization agents like the family and the educational institutions on the socialization of young people in the study area. The changing socio – cultural environment has altered the functioning of the family, which was previously considered as the sole socializing agent of the young people in all societies. Moreover, the emergency of the educational institutions (schools) as active agents of modern socialization has led to important shifts in the relations between the older and younger members of the community. Although the classical modernization theorists argue that modern changes will lead to better conditions in all people, the youth included, in certain instances, it results in the re – definition by society's individual's on their places and even lead to their dislocation from ascribed spaces in local communities to much less pre- defined positions of



contemporary societies (Morley, 2009 ; Wagner, 1994). Hence, current youth–elder relationships in most Kenyan societies are presently experiencing the rapture that is created by the rapid socio–economic changes. The reason for this is provided by Philes Kamanda (64 years):

*Elders have the responsibility to transfer the local knowledge to the young people and impart into them important cultural values. However, the modern education has separated the youth from the elders, the extended family and the larger community and this has made the elders to lose their pride and dignity as they are under the impression that they have nothing valuable to transfer to the young people.*

Hence no meaningful socialization can take place unless the older members of the society are regarded as the custodians of the past and present knowledge and wisdom, while the youth are considered as the key to the future of the society.

#### **5.6.1 Changes in the socialization goals in the contemporary gusii society**

Another major consequence of the modern societal changes that are increasingly being felt in the study area is the changing goals of socialization that the families and educational institutions aim to attain. Among the Abagusii, children were expected to be molded in particular ways so as to end up as responsible adolescents and respectable young people. A study by Nerlove (1969: 74), sought to investigate what the Gusii children were expected to grow towards. In the views of one of her respondents, an ideal young man (*omomura*):

*Should have his own house ... not be staying in his mother's house, be polite and gentle. Should attend only a few night parties. Should abstain from girls as they may interfere with his education. He should avoid early marriage. He should respect all elders, parents, younger brothers and sisters. Help members of his family. Obey his parents, be neat, smart and avoid roaming in the market and stay at home most of the time.*

Similarly, an ideal young girl (*omoiseke*):

*Should relieve her mother of most of her domestic work. Avoid useless walks around the community. Help her mother in gardening and never have serious engagement with any boy. .... Avoid guitar parties as there are all sorts of corruption in such parties. Avoid early marriage; obey parents, particularly the father. She must never elope, but have a sound marriage under dowry to her parents and have regards for all members of the family.*

The children are, therefore, obliged to observe moral restraint and integrity of the highest standards. Furthermore, due regard for parental and adult authority were considered key rule to be observed by the young people. Most important, however was the requirement for loyalty to the parents and family and observance of family cohesion. Additionally, the ideal norms on socialization emphasize gender segregated chores for boys and girls. However, in the modern setting, the parents and teachers alike emphasize the acquisition of knowledge and skills for participation in the competitive social and economic environment. As observed by Isaboke Tirimba (42 years), today's world requires the young people to possess traits and aspirations such as:

*Obeying school rules like being punctual and working hard in school and at home. Not bullying other children in school and avoiding bad behavior like smoking. Going to church and keeping the company of honest and good friends (peers). Aspiring to pursue a marketable career like medicine and engineering and have the prospects of securing a well-paying job and buy own land in the future.*

The expectations of the modern parent as well as teachers express the desire for a child whose aspirations will lead to self-sufficiency and independent living in the future. The emphasis is more on material acquisition and having a passport for future employment. The parents' response also show minimal regard for the young people's extending help to other members of the family. Other than the requirement to obey teachers and going to church, there is no evidence of pressure on the young people on acquisition of strict moral values. This therefore demonstrates that today's institutions have backed down on the traditional emphasized and push for demand on young people to prioritize character and moral values as the goal for living. Secondly, unlike in the past, the parents expectations have no regard for gender and as

such, similar expectations are put up for both boys and girls. Kemunto Maisiba (52 years) explains that the demand on the life of the child does not discriminate on the gender orientation of the child or person, but life's requirements cut across the gender-divide. She observes :

*The challenges of young people these days as the people that will need to secure reasonable employment and start up their own life does not know if one is a boy or a girl. The young children today will face similar environments and therefore should be helped to access similar skills and capacities for facing their individual future lives.*

The changes in the socialization goals are justified by the fact that in the contemporary society, owing partly to the tremendous global changes affecting the pathways through the life course, compared to previous generations, young people today face a different set of choices and constraints (Evans and Baxter, 2013). More importantly, with the changing of actors in the socialization process, especially, the schools and other educational institutions taking many of the functions that were previously in the domain of the family, many of the previously informal goals and targets have been replaced with the more formal ones leading to changes in the socialization practices as discussed in the following section.

### **5.6.2 Changes in the socialization practices in the contemporary gusii society**

According to Rosengren (1994), an examination of the socialization practices revolves around the characteristics of the two parties that are involved in the process. These are: society as represented by its agents and the individuals that are being socialized. The major socializing agents are the family, educational institutions such as schools and the religious institutions. On the other hand, the older members of the community, children and the youth make up the individuals that are involved in the process.

According to the findings of the study, in the past, the extended family and the family itself played a key role in the socialization of its members. To begin with, below the age of six, the mother played a key role in the training of the child and controlling their behavior. Robina Ogucha (67 years) observes that:

*Mothers are the first teachers tasked with the responsibility of instilling teachings and behaviors to the young. The child is made to*

*fear by the technique of threatening that they will be eaten by wild animals such as Hyena. Later, when of age (at about 6 years), they are caned and reprimanded for obedience. On attaining the age of 6 years, they are often regulated by being deprived of food.*

The mothers then handed over the child to the extended family, for when a child turns 8 or 9 years for boys and girls, they undergo the initiation ceremonies. The schools, therefore, played virtually a peripheral role in the past's socialization of young people. In contrast, today's social set up has tasked the schools with a greater role in the socialization process. As described by Yunia Onderi (42 years):

*when children turn four years, the nursery and the elementary schools take over the child's socialization tasks which were previously managed by the house help. In some of our rural households the child is, however virtually left to fend for themselves, often in the company of other rural children of his age.*

It is, therefore, clear that the parental involvement in child rearing has become minimal with the educational institutions taking over the role at a very early age. As argued by Muchira (2001), the key feature of contemporary socialization is that the breakdown of the extended family coupled with the transformation of the market economy has led to the function being left in the hands of school teachers. In the next chapter (Chapter six), the role of parents will be examined.

## **5.7 Conclusion**

This chapter has presented the socio – cultural values that guided the socialization process in the study area. Specifically, it has been shown that while the values and norms performed an important function, such as safeguarding the role of individual and institutional stakeholders in the important process of socializing young people in society, their dynamism is hampered by the changing nature of communities and their institutions which lead to a proliferation of new values and norms. Their applicability in the contemporary setting has, therefore, been questioned, as these have been shown to be contradictory and hence incompatible to the modern circumstances. However, this notwithstanding, they have equally been shown to play a complementary role in bridging up the gaps left out due to the impacts of modern changes.

**CHAPTER SIX**  
**SOCIALIZATION OF YOUNG PEOPLE AMONG THE ABAGUSII, SOUTH**  
**WESTERN KENYA: VIEWS OF THE GUSII YOUTH**

**6.0 Introduction**

The aim of this chapter is to present and discuss the data concerning the views of the young people on the role of parents and other members of the community in the upbringing of young people in the context of the contemporary Gusii cultural landscape. The survey data was collected from a total of 277 adolescents and young people in the study area. The survey was necessitated by the need to obtain the background characteristics of the youth component of the study population. According to Liku (1997: 80), it is of paramount importance for researchers to establish the type of population that their studies are dealing with. This is reflected in the background characteristics which give insight into the type of respondents that the investigation encompasses. The survey data obtained for this purpose include among others, the respondents' age, educational attainment, religious affiliation, parents' marital status, and occupation. In conformity with the study design adopted for this study, which was informed by the nature of the problem of investigation ( **see chapter four**), the survey data was complemented with qualitative data obtained from a total of 10 Focus Group Discussion sessions with the young people and 42 key informant interviews. The chapter begins with the presentation of the distribution of the study respondents by age, followed by their educational levels and religious affiliation. This is then followed by the percentage distribution of the study respondents by levels of education and religious affiliation. The findings of the study indicate that the period spent at the category of adolescence and youth has been elongated both downward and upward, with the age at first sexual intercourse and age at marriage moving downward and upward respectively.

**6.1 Background characteristics of the youth component of study respondents**

As already pointed out in **section 6.0** of the thesis, the basic characteristics of the study respondents included age, educational levels and religious affiliation. In the study of socialization of young people, it is hypothesized that the socio economic characteristics of young people and their parents and other care – givers are likely to determine the parenting and child outcomes and resiliency at particular ages.

### 6.1.1 Age of study respondents

The ages of the study respondents ranged from 12 to 24 years. Of these, 153 (55%) were male while 124 (45 %) comprised of females. The mean age of the study respondents was 18.2 years. 38% of the study participants were in their teenage years (i.e. 15 – 19 age brackets) while 39 % were above 19 years. Table 13 shows details of the distribution of the study participants.

**Table 13: Percentage distribution of study respondents by age-group**

Age Group	No. of Males	%	No. of Females	%	Total
10-14	30	19.6	33	27.0	63(22.9%)
15-19	56	36.6	48	39.3	104 (37.8%)
20-24	67	43.8	41	33.6	108 (39.3%)

*Source: Survey data, 2014*

### 6.1.2 Education levels of study respondents

The categories of respondents' highest level of schooling completed were classified into: Primary, secondary, Technical and commercial or secretarial, teacher training college, University and postgraduate. The educational levels of the study participants varied widely with those who had attained primary school education comprising 70% of the sampled respondents. Those who had attained secondary education and post – secondary levels were 26 % and 5% of the study population respectively.

### 6.1.3 Religious affiliation of the study respondents

According to the study data, two religious groups appeared to be dominant in the study area. Of these, 163 (59%) respondents belonged to the Seventh day Adventist group, while 69 (25%) belonged to the Roman Catholic Church. The rest were shared out among three different religious faiths namely; Pentecostal 30 (11%), Jehovah witness 3 (1%), and others denominations 7 (2.5). Only 5 (2%) indicated that they did not belong to any religious group.

## 6.2 Transition to adulthood in the contemporary Gusii society

The study sought to examine the role of the socialization contexts in enhancing effective socialization of the young people in the contemporary Gusii society. The findings of the study show divergent views with regard to the situation of the contexts in which the young

people are growing up. On the one hand, the young people are nowadays seen as being in a better situation because of the advantages that they reap from the improved society's conditions. A key informant, Basweti Amwata (58 years) observes:

*Nowadays, there are far better resources for the young people today than it used to be during our time. Life then was full of hardships for young people and most of the basic provisions were out of reach for many of our families. Nowadays, the world has opened up so much and for the young people life is much simpler especially for those growing up as they will get virtually all the necessities of life. Those who make maximum use of the many available resources and services will realize that the sky is the limit. In the past, individuals found it difficult to engage in personal initiatives in the community, and thus mostly relied on the community to propel them forward, there were collective regulations that prohibited one from venturing into positive progress alone, but today's life has given everybody, especially the young people a free hand to do as they deem necessary.*

The above assertion concurs with studies which have shown that important transformations in young people's lives are underway, with young people now having more opportunities and time than ever before to acquire skills and information necessary for their effective individual and collective participation in decision making (Mortimer and Larson, 2002; Lene, 2015; Konstam, 2007). However, while the latter presents an opportunity for the growing and upcoming generation of the young people in society, it also poses a challenge, in that, in the contemporary period, their transition intersects with that of the world's movement towards a more integrated and dependent globalized world (Mills et.al, 2005). As such the youth today are not only in transition from childhood to adulthood but also in transition between two different ways of life (Aitken, 2001). The impact of the dual – transition among today's young people is captured in the conversation with Psychologist Selvam Sahaya:

**Researcher:** *Is it true that today's contexts have been modified to better accommodate the needs of young people as they grow up.*

**Selvam:** *It is paradoxical to hold the opinion that the world is better now for the nurturance of our youth. On the contrary, the local communities today present devastating contexts for the young people to thrive. They are unlucky because they hardly have any social references,*

*leave alone any sense of belonging that the young people of the previous generations had. The problem with today's world is that young people borrow alien norms from here and there, on which they build their character. All these render them emotionally fragile and lacking inner stability.*

This observation is apt because emotional stability is considered important in aiding young people to cultivate positive identities. Identity formation is considered a major determinant for adolescents and young people as they advance towards adulthood.

The globalization's relentless reach has resulted in the transformation of the identity of the youth in various aspects: To begin with, most youth develop a hybrid or bi - cultural identity – rooted in their local culture and the other stemming from an awareness of their relation to the global culture. Secondly, there is the pervasiveness of identity confusion in non-western cultures and lastly, self – focused identity exploration in love and work stretching beyond the usual adolescent years of between 10 – 18 into a post-adolescent period of “emerging adulthood” falling between 18 – 29 years (Arnett, 2005). Hence, the creation of a viable identity remains a great challenge for today's young people than it was in the past. In the modern world, globalization has eroded and altered altogether, the traditional ways leading to the demand for the creation of identity in a more active basis than before, so that identity comes to be based more on individual choices and personal decisions rather than dependent on prescribed roles (Giddens, 2002). Consequently, some young people respond to this responsibility with identity confusion and a socially ruled path towards adulthood has been lost (Leccardi and Ruspin, 2006).

Additionally, glocalization has led to a situation where the media has, literally replaced the role of parents, schools, peers, religious institutions and the primary socializing institutions in both the urban and the rural Kenyan society. Thus, the media has come to be referred to as the “parents” and the “teachers” unfettered by local custom or control and largely influenced by the norms and global point(s) of view. As a result, an undeniable imperative is that today's young people must learn to navigate the “global village” from an early age, unlike in the past, when they were expected to learn to navigate their relationship with only their local village and its customs. As Walkosz et.al (2008: 6 -7) argues:



*Children (and young people) are still children. They continue to require guidance and the need to learn the skills to become critically autonomous and be able to navigate the global waters. (They) need to be taught an age old process in a new way .... a set of skills for questioning their experiences ,and independence in making their own decisions about who and what they interact with in accordance with their own values ..... parent themselves and negotiate their relationships in society on a life-long basis.*

The bestowing upon the individual(s) in society, the requisite competencies, support and capital will derive from the inherent family configurations ( Widmer and Sapin, 2008 ) and the network of care ( Hansen, 2005 ) that is often provided by parents and other agents within the wider social system ( WHO, 2007 ). The following sections of the study examines the interaction of adolescents and young people with their parents and the adult world and deals with the question of whether social institutions or the agent(s) are adequately prepared and suited to offer the required support to the young people in the contemporary Gusii society.

### **6.3 Young people's perception on role of parents in care provision in the gusii family**

The role of parents is culturally constructed as important for shaping children to become productive and independent members of society. In playing this crucial role, the parents do not act in a vacuum but are also undergoing a process of socialization in which they are supervised and their “own autonomy as parents is negotiated in relationship with other parties such as the extended family, local media and even the state” ( Rutherford, 2011). Unlike in the traditional setting where uniform norms applied to all individuals (See section 5.2), Rutherford contends that in the modern world, the *one-size-fits-all*, prescriptions of rules and regulations guiding young people is impractical in the sense of the matter and has, therefore, led to the establishment, negotiation and re- defining of rules for different families and communities. In the western developed countries, especially, the United States of America, the diversity and proliferation and legal acceptance of various family forms other than the two - parent nuclear family has led to plurality of child rearing and family care provision by the parents. In the course of parent-child interaction, there has emerged the need for both parties to engage in constant negotiation so as to draw a balance between freedom and

constraints, and how these are understood and shaped for both the adults and the young people.

In Kenya, Edwards and Whiting (2004: 14) have shown that the country's family institutional structures are becoming equally diverse, but that they are still highly salient. Their study indicated that some functions such as support and care for children and the elderly are as strong as ever, although they are changing in form and perhaps are not as homogenous and reliable as previously. For instance, contrary to the expectation that care – givers, especially grandparents will utilize inductive strategies in their day to day relationship with young people in Kenya , the widespread use of power assertive and coercive forms of punishment such as physical punishment is the norm rather than the exception (Oburu and Palmers, 2003). In their recent study aimed at exploring parenting strategies among Kenya's Luo and Kipsigis communities, Wadende *et.al* (2014: 275) have noted that despite going through rapid social and cultural changes, Kenyan parenting has portrayed dynamism and responsiveness by maintaining both the traditional elements, while simultaneously adapting to modernity. According to the findings of the study, corporal punishment is the most common form of correcting young people's mistakes among the Gusii parents. This is captured in the conversation with young people during an FGD session at Nyanturago:

Researcher: *What do parents do to you when you make mistakes at home?*

Participant I: *If I do a mistake, my mother must cane me or rebuke me a little bit telling me that there I did a bad thing and I should not repeat.*

Participant II: *When I do a mistake, my mother tells me girl there you have done a mistake. Truly, she is very strict when you do a mistake, she tells you to lie down and she can even undress you completely.*

Participant III: *Both of my parents are alive. If there is anything in the house which I have done wrong, my mother cannot leave you like that.*

The study, therefore, demonstrates that although the use of violence is regarded as a violation of the rights of individuals, especially the younger members of the society, its widespread use is a clear indication of the management crisis at the household level among Gusii parents. Similarly, the study shows that women persistently employ this technique as compared to their male counterparts in the study area. This is brought out in the assertions by the study participants at Matibo village as follows:

Researcher: *Do both parents punish you when you commit mistakes at home?*

Participant I: *If there is a mistake, you must get caned. For both of my parents, the one who can beat you is my mother but not my father.*

Researcher: *What about your father? How does he act towards you when you make mistakes?*

Participant I: *I don't know how he is. He does not beat people up. He only tells you by word of mouth and leaves you alone.*

Participant II: *Most of the time my father is away working, when I do a mistake, she (Mother) beats me up thoroughly.*

The findings of the study concur with those of Nerlove (1969), whose investigation on the main techniques used by mothers in punishing young Gusii children, showed that 56% of the cases were subjected to physical punishment for children involved in simple disobedience. The main reason for this is that Gusii child rearing customs emphasized on compliance. As pointed out by Levine (1996: 264), conversations between the mother and the child are not encouraged or expected. Levine further observes that the parents expected this technique to produce “children that were easy to manage as infants and continue to help their parents when they became adults. This type of socialization has been shown to be counter – productive since it only emphasized “blind obedience” to parental authority and deprives the young people of useful skills for modern living. As pointed out by Levine: *Failure to provide the child with skills of self-confidence and assertive and the excessive emphasis on compliance to authority instead of equality and independence leaves the child without the skills and virtues .... Needed in the modern world. (ibid 264 - 265).*

Interestingly, the young people in the study area applaud the parent's methods of discipline. They contend that the discipline is a requisite for effective parental care. This is echoed in the conversation in a focus group discussion at Matibo village participant:

Researcher: *Do you feel your mother has oppressed you for beating you?*

Participant I: *In disciplining, when I make a mistake, I won't be forgiven. When I am being disciplined, I can't say I am being mistreated because I am being corrected and obviously, whenever you make mistakes, there are consequences of breaking rules. After being beaten up, you will be guided and told what you are supposed to do. What I can say is that she takes care of me well by administering the punishment in this way.*

Researcher: *And do you think her beating was justified?*

Participant I: *Yes. You have to follow the rules or else face the mother's discipline. You have to adapt to the environment of your parents since you will not get another parent rather than your parents and you have to continue with your parents.*

The above excerpt shows that the young people have been socialized to regard as normal the use of corporal punishment as the only way of discouraging unacceptable behavior, since this is what they have grown up with, both in the homes and at school among their teachers. According to a report by UNICEF (2014: 106), Kenya is ranked among the leading regions in which violence is meted on young people, both at home and in the schools. Violent disciplinary practices have also been common in schools in Kisii County, at least as highlighted prominently in the local print media (Daily Nation, 24<sup>th</sup> October, 2014). There are many risks associated with the parents' use of corporal punishment. Moreover, there is lack of evidence that corporal punishment improves children and young people's behavior. Instead, its use leads young people to perceive their parents as being hostile and rejecting, and this has a negative net – effect on their social relations in their adulthood stage.

#### **6.4 Parents' and adolescents' rights and obligations in the socialization process among the Abagusii**

The question of the “right parent” being tasked with the responsibility of forming the “right child” (transforming knowledge) remains the central focus of contemporary studies on socialization. The main sociological concern has more often than not revolved around the contemporary expressions of authority, social control, autonomy and agency. In this study the participation of the various actors such as the parents (both father and mother) and children in coming up with rules and regulations that guide the conduct of young people in the family setting is of key concern.

##### **6.4.1 Parents (fathers and mothers) participation in decision making among the abagusii**

According to the study respondents, the regulations governing the conduct of young people are in most part determined by the father. This is brought out in the conversation with young people during an FGD session at Amabuko as below:

Researcher: *At home, who makes laws or if there is an important decision to be made, who makes this decision?*

Participant I: *Father since the mother can't question his decision whether she approves it or not, his decision is always final.*

Participant II: *All parents, but mostly father.*

Participant III: *Father and rarely mother*

Researcher: *Can your Mother give her input to what the father suggests?*

Participant III: *She can point out. Like one day when my father decided that we should be sleeping early but my mother refused and decided that we should not again sleep before 10 P.M. But my father flatly refused to accept her suggestion.*

Researcher: *Do you recall a situation in which your mother disagreed with the father's decision?*

Participant IV: *My mother wanted me to join a school in Kericho, but my father wanted me to join this one. The father's decision ended being taken up since this school is nearer home and had lower fees requirement.*

The narratives show that mothers are denied the opportunity to contribute equally to decision making, in matters concerning the rearing of young people in the study area. However, in some homes, mothers participated in decision making, especially when the father was absent or in case the home was of female headship type. The findings of the study show that in certain instances, the insistence of mothers lead to open conflict among couples and therefore disruption of harmonious relationships within the household. This scenario is captured in the conversation with a focus group participant at Metembe:

Researcher: *Has there been a situation in which your mother disagreed and insisted on not accepting your father's decision? What happened?*

FGD Participant: *Yes, there has been a situation, like when I was in class seven my father wanted me to sit for KCPE in the same school that I was in, while my mother wanted me to sit in a different school. There was a disagreement between them for quite some time. My father began to quarrel her and they "divorced" for about three days. She went to her parents' home but she came back.*

Researcher: *So was that the punishment that your father gave to your mother? What happened to her when she came back?*

FGD Participant: *No, she went out on her own will. Nothing happened; they just lived normally after she came back. It was a form of protest.*

Researcher: *So it means your father's decision ended up being implemented?*

FGD Participant: *Yes. She did not protest anymore.*

The failure to enhance the participation of both parents equally in making joint decisions for the benefit of the youth presents a great challenge to the community. More so, the non-inclusion of the young people in the decision making process makes the situation worse. In the next section, the role of young people in the process is examined.

#### **6.4.2 Provision of rules for young people among the Abagusii**

According to Marx Weber, social control is wrapped up in authority and the belief in the rightness of the system of domination. The parents thus, beliefs that for effective guidance, they must of necessity ensure that their children are relegated to the insubordinate role: that of being mere recipients of the adults' prescriptions. According to the findings of the study, the young people pointed out that they were troubled with their' parents' method of guiding them because the older people failed to "lend an ear" to their views regarding their own issues and solutions to their problems. This aspect is brought out in the words of an FGD participant at Getengereirie market:

*Our parents look down upon us and dictate their wishes for us to abide by even when we know that what they require us to do is not of any benefit in meeting our aspirations and life plans. When we inform them so (refuse to abide by) they label us "bad children".*

Parents need to involve their children and other young people in coming up with ways in which the young people should follow. When parents value the import of their children, it creates trust between the young people and their parents. It will also nurture understanding and help form effective social interactions that are guided by mutual trust. The young people observe that the parents' failure to involve them is unjustified because it raises unnecessary suspicion among the two parties. This is brought out by an FGD participant as follows :

*Researcher: Do you think the rules provided by parents without your involvement are justified?*

*FGD Participant: No. The parents always fear that we are always out to break their rules and they are much mistaken.*

*Researcher: What do you mean by mistaken?*

*FGD Participant: I mean for example, that my mother at times might get you talking with someone, even those you are schooling with together and think that person is my boyfriend. She feels bad about it and might not know while she is away what I could be doing. This gives you the morale to do bad things.*

It is, therefore, important to ensure maximum involvement of young people so as to keep the communication channels open for the children and young people to be able to confide in the adults. When parents perceive that their children are transparent and open to them, they will embrace bi – directional relationships and hence avoid suffering from insecurity that results in mistrusting their children. On the other hand, if the young people strongly perceive that their parents believe in their contribution to the rules that govern their conduct, they will not want to engage in any delinquent behavior that could hurt or embarrass their parents and adults.

The main reason given by parents and care givers for the non – involvement of young people and allowing them to have a say in what is good and bad for them is that most young people do not value the importance of leading morally upright lives and are even not interested in good future (s) for themselves and their off springs. For the adults, therefore, they believe that the positive outcome of the socialization process cannot be dependent on the young people but will result from the sole efforts of the parents and the adult society. They are thus not obligated to accord some or equal say to the young people. According to a key informant, John Mosoti, aged 76 years:

*Parents have overreacted to the numerous scenes and occurrences about the problems of young people's behaviors that take place in the village and other places as highlighted in the media. They have been led to worry more and more and therefore believe that the young people have no capacity for self – regulation and control over personal issues and strongly believe that they must continue to retain sole control over all situations in the life of their children, as failure to do so could lead to compromise over the safety and security of the young ones.*

It is, therefore, evident that the parents' behavior of completely locking out the young people leads to an imbalance in power relations in their interaction process. Emersion's Exchange theory of Power relations avers that such imbalanced exchange relations results from power inequalities among actors since one or all the parties involved do not think that they are equally dependent on each other for ( productive) exchange ( Cook and Rice, 2001). The argument put forward by the adults is, nonetheless, irrational as; the failure of the participation of both parties in the process is bound to be counterproductive. Furthermore, the

interaction among the two should be regarded as serving a good course for both the parent (adults) and the young members of the society as in the Gusii customs, successful children are considered valuable for their role as descendants (who) will give their parents advancement in the life course and a proper burial (Levine *et. al.*, 1996: 104). Thus, if the said relationship leads to successful socialization, mutual benefits will accrue: continuity for the parents and the benefits of good health and positive well-being for the young people.

#### **6.4.3 Young people as active agents in the socialization process**

Young people are seen as “competent social agents in their own right, rather than as apprentice versions of adults” (Hutchby and Ellis, 1998: 8), hence, regarded as social actors who purpose to order their interaction with adults (Allison, 1997). According to Garfinkel (1991), Social action is created and lived by individuals and / or groups of actors working in co - operation with one another through their efforts to give it coherence and meaning (Garfinkel and Rawls, 2005). Similarly, Marx Weber considers social action as involving an actor, orienting their behavior in regard to that of others. He sees social relations as involving a plurality of actors, each taking account of the behavior of each other (Halewood, 2014). Children and young people actively make conscious efforts of making sense of their social interactions. As such, the youth possess a systematic and differentiated way of thinking about their social world. Hence, as Smetana (2010: 4) observes, contrary to what most socialization perspectives assume, while they are bombarded with many different types of rules, prohibitions, and expectations, young people do not simply view such prescriptions as things that their parents and adults want them to abide by but actively make sense of the rules they encounter, the transgressions they experience and even perpetrate. For instance, majority of the matters that parents and young people argue about are considered by parents as concerning the codes of right and wrong. On the other hand, the same issues are seen by the teenagers as matters of personal choice (Steinberg, 2001). This is brought out in the words of a Focus Group discussion participant at Geteri village as follows:

*If you look at my mother, everyone has his or her own life. You are the only one who makes decisions about your life. You will know that if I do this it is good if I do this it is bad.*

From the excerpt, it is clear that the young people are not passive recipients, but active participants in their own socialization. According to the study respondents, parents and other



adult socializers will provide positive parental aid by desisting from the use of rigid, controlled and exclusive rearing techniques. This is echoed in the sentiments of a focus group participant at Amabuko as follows:

*It is not good. It is your life so she (parent) ought to sit down with you and guide you so that you make your own choice. Not that she restricts you. For example, she can say if I get you with this person.*

The young people, therefore, have their own unique abilities that enable them to make choices and act as autonomous entities within a given system of norms and constraints. In this study, it became imperative, therefore, to seek the views of adolescents and young people on their experiences and thoughts with regard to their parents' role in their growth towards adulthood.

#### **6.4.4 Classification of Parents among the abagusii**

The main aim of the study was to interrogate the strategies that parents and other caregivers adopt in their day to day interaction with the young people. Consequently, the parenting styles are of key concern in the study. Studies have shown that children and young people's socialization outcomes depend on the parenting practices. It has also been shown that parenting styles are systematically related to the young people and children's competence (Selin, 2014). The parental behaviours and parenting styles emanate from cultural practices that are reflected in parents' child rearing behaviors and values. For instance, among the Chinese, the traditional parenting strategies cannot be understood outside of the predominant values and socialization goals in the Chinese culture (XU et.al, 2014). Findings from the study indicate that the commitment of parents towards their children varied from authoritative to authoritarian and neglectful parenting. Generally four categories of parents are discernible, as examined from the young people's evaluations. Young et.al, (2011) and Grusec and Goodnow (1994) have recommended the use of children and young people's perception of the parent's messages, actions and punishment as the most accurate index for measuring the child's internalization of values and their influence on the child's socialization outcomes.

##### **6.4.4.1 Authoritarian parenting**

The young people explained that most of their parents made many demands of them and forcibly exercised strong control and in return offered no affection and any communication. Additionally, they generally exhibited the following attributes: Lack responsiveness, Place

high emphasis on obedience, are not interested in encouraging the spirit of give and take between themselves and young people and fail to provide for the needs of the children. In the focus group discussion with the young people at bogeche village, the following responses were offered:

Researcher: *In your homes, what do you dislike about how your parents take care of you?*

FGD participant I: *When I make a mistake, every evening it is a must I will be beaten up. My parents require me not to be walking around the village, I am also supposed to obey whatever they tell me without questioning.*

FGD Participant II: *Six o'clock should not find me outside the house and I am not supposed to sleep early.*

FGD Participant III: *We must attend church together and if I am left behind, my father will be quarrelsome. I can only be left behind when I am sick or if something has happened at home.*

FGD Participant IV: *In my home, you are not supposed to leave home without giving a notice of where you are going to.*

FGD Participant V: *If you get out of the house in the evening, you will not be allowed back home. You have to spend the night where you were.*

FGD Participant VI: *When I get home cooking is my job and whenever my sister makes mistake, it is my responsibility to discipline her and then report her to my mother.*

FGD Participant VII: *It is a must to read every day. You are also not allowed to walk around with other village girls. You shouldn't try to question parents' decisions.*

FGD Participant VIII: *I am not allowed to walk around. My father also requires that I must never question my mother's decisions.*

FGD Participant IIX: *If my father comes home early from work, he must not find you playing around. You should be reading instead.*

The aforementioned responses show that the parents of this category of young people in the study area have adopted a pervasive pattern of disregard for the basic rights of their children. The parents of this category of children portray harshness and have imposed strict and inflexible restrictions on their children. Baumrind (1991) contends that when young people are subjected to this kind of ordeal, they turn out to have less optimal social and academic outcomes. Such individuals, he observes will be deficient of important life skills and traits

such as self-reliance, forming lasting social relationships and personal initiative. Additionally, when parental behavior towards a child is not supportive, the child's brain develops in an altered form and he or she subsequently fails to develop a secure state of mind upon reaching adulthood (Klebanov and Travis, 2015)

The parents of these children explained that they resorted to the use of authoritarian style because the situations and period in history demanded them to do so. As one parent at Ramasha shopping centre observed:

*The children of today are masaa\*<sup>77</sup> and this calls for us parents to be extra hard on them, rest they wrestle you to the ground. They are all the time resisting instructions from the elders. During our time, we obeyed all the older people, irrespective of whether they were our relatives or distance acquaintances. When you give them money for use for personal effects, they squander it in the shopping Centre playing pool\* all day long. They forget that I wore a pair of shoes for the first time, when I was admitted to study for secondary schooling.*

The response above shows that how parents treat their off springs can be explained by the way they make sense of their own childhood. How this is constructed has a profound effect on how they parent their own children as well. Those who had a difficult childhood re – create the same negative interactions with their own children and this will usually be passed down through generations (Siegel and Hartzell, 2003). The adoption of this kind of parenting is, however, bound to produce negative consequences on the young people. The parents are also seen to portray aggressiveness and lack affection towards their children. These may prong the young people into delinquent behaviours. The young people that are brought up in these kind of households are also likely to portray disengagement from family activities, disobey their parents, other adults and teachers and even perform poorly in school.

#### **6.4.4.2 Uninvolved and neglectful Parenting**

Some parents do not make demands on their children, either primarily because they are disengaged from the needs of their children or are altogether physically unavailable for prolonged periods of time from their homes working in neighboring farms. In the two sub - locations of Sosera and Ekwere, respondents reported that their fathers usually worked in the

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<sup>77</sup> Common term in the study area, literally implies knowing more than is necessary at one's age

settlement area\* and only came back home fortnightly or once a month. A key informant, Alfred Nyachoti (47 Years) from Nyasike village narrates his personal experience:

*When I and my family used to live in ololulunga, I had plenty of resources that I used to provide for all my children. When things became difficult we all relocated here at home where we had nothing having lived in Narok for twenty one years. I have only this cable mabati room and therefore this cannot offer me the authority to face my wife and children's needs. I am forced to take up a job as a care taker at Chepngombe farm where I live permanently. I visit here occasionally usually at the end of the month to see how the family is going on. My wife joins me there every morning at six o'clock and returns home in the evening daily.*

Both the father and mother are therefore unavailable to their children as they spend virtually all their time away from home hecking a living in the distance farms. Furthermore the remuneration from their undertakings is hardly enough to provide for the family's livelihood. Similarly, some mothers that fell under this category in the study area were mainly from Ichuni, Giensembe, Amabuko and Bogeche sub locations. Majority of the mothers were majorly involved in informal trade and occasionally moved with their wears to neighboring market centres such as Masimba, Metamaywa, Nyacheki, Nyangusu, Magena and Magombo. The respondents observed that their occupation required them to move from one market to the other and this did not leave them with any time to attend to the needs of their young families. Their tribulations were brought out during an FGD at Ichuni village as follows:

**Moderator:** *As mothers in the home, you have an important responsibility to be close to your spouse and children at your respective homes. When do you take care of their needs?*

**FGD Participant I:** *I have no time left to stay idle at home to look after children. My husband's income helps us to pay school fees for our children and buying their school uniforms. It is my obligation to work hard and ensure that I bring home enough money from the business to feed them and buy household items and all of what is required for them to obtain their daily bread. He has to struggle*

*hard to make enough profits from his cow and goat selling business and I also the same from this. He wakes up early and I also follow him and then we meet again late in the evening when the children have come from school and long gone to sleep.*

*Moderator: Don't you realize that it is important to spare sometime to monitor the children and just be close to them?*

*FGD Participant: If this were to happen, then we will all go without food. What is more important, after all? Starvation or staying idle. Those who have enough for their families can afford to skip some of the market days and take a rest but not for those of us that are struggling to feed our children.*

*Moderator: What about the fathers?*

*FGD Participant: Our husbands have more time at their disposal. However, they prefer to come home later, even if they finished their business early enough. You know, they argue that they come home latest once everyone is already home. The women can't be the last to arrive home.*

*Moderator: You mean they intentionally come to the home late? Where do they spend their time until women come home?.*

*FGD Participant: He stays in the local bar until the time for going into the house reaches.*

The prolonged absence from home by parents especially fathers denies the young people the opportunity to receive paternal love and guidance. When fathers spend reasonable amount of time with their children, they achieve better in school, develop higher self-esteem and tend to be more secure in their relationship with partners of the opposite sex. Specifically, as Lamb (2003) observes, in the absence of a male parental model, boys fail to acquire strong masculine identities or sex roles and the many paternal roles—economic, social and emotional go unfulfilled. The other respondents indicated that the parents were not only unavailable, but

also unconcerned about the welfare of their children. This is brought out in the conversation with a focus group participant at Amabuko:

Moderator: *How do your parents take care of your daily needs at home?*

FGD Participant: *I have both parents, one is active but the other is dormant, I don't know why. My father always relies on drugs, he does not take any step. He is not even concerned with my education*

This shows that some parents intentionally neglect to fulfill their obligations in providing for the basic needs of their children as is shown in the above case in which the father may fail to lend support to his wife in the household. Studies have shown that when fathers support their wives, they experience lower levels of family stress and derive greater satisfaction from their role as mothers (Martin et.al (2010).

Several explanations have been offered for the lack of concern and non-involvement by both the male and female parents. The local leaders observed that the high incidences of poverty in the study area undermine the coping abilities of the care givers in their parenting endeavours. According to a local administrator (Assistant chief - Nyasike), parents of children in “at risk families” are in most cases overcome by the stressors resulting from poverty at individual, family and environment level. This is in agreement with previous findings of studies on parenting, which have shown that parenting difficulties and breakdown is correlated with social inequalities and parental deprivation (Ghate and Hazel, 2002: 15). Specifically, it has been shown that at the community level (exo-system), living in an impoverished environment that is characterized by a high concentration of poor families undermines parenting abilities. At the household level, high levels of poverty and material disadvantage, characterized by lone parenting and the inhabiting of poor dwellings has consistently emerged as a leading correlate of parenting problems.

On their part, the young people attributed the negligence, especially by fathers as a resulting from their excessive consumption of local brew, mainly *changaa*<sup>78</sup>. This is captured in the conversation with a young male FGD Participant:

*When my father gets money, he drinks all of it, so I rely on one parent. That is a challenge and you find that in my rented room here*

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<sup>78</sup> Locally brewed illicit alcoholic

*in school, sometimes I go without food, sometimes I go without books.  
Like now I don't have form two books. This contributes to me failing  
in my exams.*

Alcohol consumption can, therefore, lead to family stress because the alcoholic parent abdicates responsibilities and only one parent is left to struggle single handedly in the provision for the family. It can also lead to decreased academic performance among young people. In her study two decades ago, Silberschmidt (1999: 119) made similar observations. She asserts: *My informants informed me that the intake of alcohol (beer), is commonplace and it is actually the main reason why husbands had become increasingly irresponsible to their families.*

Alcohol consumption dependence by parents in rural communities leads to the neglect of paternalistic and maternalistic roles by abdicating their social role performance and depleting the meagre family financial resources (Sirera and Mwenje, 2014). In addition, children of drug abusers (including alcohol) are exposed to the risk of conduct disorders, depression, anxiety and academic difficulties. Similarly, the “environmental effects of exposure to parental substance abuse are known pathways to young people’s own substance use and abuse (Shannon, 2010).

In Masaba, although alcohol consumption was regarded as a social activity several decades ago, it has increasingly become addictive<sup>79</sup> and the men (especially the very young fathers) mentioned that it had become an “indispensable diet” as it enabled them to “drive the day” and “forget the heavy burden placed upon them in providing for their family needs”. As a consequence, the mothers are left to shoulder the responsibilities single handedly, putting enormous stress on them. There were also isolated cases that were pointed out of alcoholic mothers, especially in the female headed households and among elderly widowed women at Ichuni, Amabuko and Bogeche sub -locations. According to Forrester and Harwin ( 2011), when mothers take to excessive and routine consumption of alcohol, their ability to take proper care of the home is impaired.

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<sup>79</sup> The study informants confided in me that the addiction was enhanced by the lacing of the beverages with addictive inducements. In the case of local brew, the brewers used locally made concoctions that were added into the alcohol, while the modern wines and spirits were laced with strong preservative substances.

Another important reason that was provided for the negligent behavior by parents is that they lacked the capacity to take care of their families. The elderly respondents argued that in most part, the failure by the parents to take their socializing roles within the family more seriously is due to the lack of parenting skills themselves. According to a key informant, Matagaro Matonda “requiring today’s young parents to be effective mothers and fathers, could be expecting a blind man to lead a fellow blind person”. He adds:

*Today’s young parents are artificial<sup>80</sup> and cannot be expected to undertake the parenting tasks to the expected standards. They themselves have not been taken through the necessary teachings of community life. When they suddenly find themselves faced with the tasks, they find playing truancy as the only available option available to them.*

Therefore, the Parents who neglect their parental responsibilities have not been adequately socialized to be effective fathers and mothers.

#### **6.4.4.3 “Helicopter parenting”<sup>81</sup>**

Lack of actual involvement of children and the young people as self-conscious actors in their own socialization has been shown to have negative impacts on their wellbeing (Lieten, 2008). The involvement grants them autonomy which in turn motivates them to be more open and receptive to events and information (Chirkov et.al, 2011) and in turn leads to successful parenting. In well of families, the older adolescents pointed out that their parents, especially, mothers were over protective and were inclined to “micro–managing” their routine activities. As one respondent at Amabuko observed:

*My mother supervises my activities and every move that I make.  
she thinks that I can never make a correct decision on my own.*

When parents insist on physically being too close to their children’s activities they deny the growing individual the opportunity to develop appropriate skills for solving task oriented challenges (Lemoyne and Buchanan, 2011). Moreover, controlling parenting or “helicopter

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<sup>80</sup> This has been translated from the local word, *abegarori*, as used in our conversation with the respondent. It means something that is a copy of the original or insincere, feigned or an imitation of something natural.

<sup>81</sup> This is an American concept that is often applied to describe parents who pay extremely close attention to their children’s experiences and problems.



parenthood” among young people may lead to low self-esteem, higher levels of depression and anxiety as well as less perseverance.

According to the finding of the study, the adoption of this style by the parents does not often translate into effective provision of care for the child. This is echoed in the words of a youth participant at an FGD at Amabuko:

*By demanding to watch over every move and plans that I personally make it does not mean that my mother is concerned with me. As for my case, I feel I need to be left alone to choose some of the ways that I need to plan for my future. There are also some of the issues that require that I consult my friends and not the parents. So although my mother gives me everything that I need, she has not given me my own space that I require to make independent decisions.*

Hence the young people’s desire to be allowed to jointly have a say in the decisions regarding their own lives implies that despite too much physical presence by their parents in their lives, psychologically wellbeing remains unfulfilled. According to a Key informant, the parents who deploy this style of parenting hope that their maximum presence will work positively towards instilling good behavior in their children. This view is captured in the words of a key informant, Nathan Makori (62 Years):

*I have to know where my children are every time because if you don’t know this, they will probably mix with the bad elements whose parents don’t care what they are doing. When parents report to the chief or to the school master that their children have done this and that, the common question is: where were you when so and so did this and that? So good care of a child is not giving them all they require, but knowing what and where they do certain things all the time. If you succeed in tracking the whereabouts of the child, then you have managed to keep him away from bad company*

Hence parents usually have good intentions for their children and by demanding to watch over them prominently, their anticipation is that they will become successful members of society. As children grow up and strive to become independent adults, their need for

autonomy increases and parents should progressively cede intense involvement in their lives. However, studies have shown that most parents often fail to do so, in the hope that they are providing adequate guidance and emotional support (Padilla–Walker and Nelson, 2012). On the contrary, it often leads to dissatisfaction with family life and the children become more psychologically distant from the parents (Segrin et.al, 2012).

#### **6.4.4.4 Authoritative Parenting**

The study respondents also pointed out that their parents provided for their needs when required to while at the same time put up high expectation on their children. The style of bringing up children in a family whereby parents exhibit a high level of expectations of their children, while at the same time providing the required level of support and warmth or responsiveness is regarded as authoritative parenting (Kudo *et.al*, 2012). The findings of the study indicate that this was the least practiced parenting style in the study area. This method of rearing young people is captured by a focus group participant as follows:

*I have both parents. When I request of them to provide me with whatever I need, they will do this promptly. During the holidays they will not allow me to walk around anyhow, they usually tell me to stay at home and do the work that I am assigned.*

Authoritative parenting has been shown to be the most ideal way of raising up children as it results in bringing forth competent individuals. For instance, studies by Klein and Ballantine (2001: 46) have shown that children that have been raised in authoritative homes score higher on a variety of competence, social development, self-perception and mental health than those raised in authoritarian, permissive or neglectful homes. When young people are free to share with their parents, they will benefit in important ways, especially with regard to their sexual and reproductive health challenges. According to the findings of the survey data, only 17.8 % of the study respondents had discussed sex related matters with their fathers, while 34.5 % had done so with their mothers. Overall, school teachers were rated by the respondents as the most important source of information about puberty, with 64.9 % of respondents reporting obtaining the information on sexual and reproductive health at school. This finding has far reaching implication since research has linked parental influence to the positive sexual and reproductive health among adolescents and young people. Flowing from this, studies have recommended that the programs meant to improve adolescent sexual and reproductive health should include dimensions of parental involvement with the aim of strengthening the

programs' specific behavior change (Biddlecom, et.al, 2009). However, with the continued lack of parents and parent – figures being close to the young people, such initiatives are bound to achieve maximum impact on the community.

In the following section, the role of the educational and religious institutions in the socialization of young people in the study area is examined. In addition, the study looks at the impact of the mass media as observed from the perspective of the young people and the older members of the community.

### **6.5 Other social institutions and the socialization of young people among the Abagusii**

The socialization of young people in society is a multi-faceted phenomenon and majorly occurs in the context of the micro – level social institutions. Although the parenting which plays out the initial role of socialization (as already pointed out in **section 6.4**) occurs in the family arena, what happens in the household(s), is simultaneously affected by the functions and roles of the other mainstream social institutions such as the school, the church and neighbourhoods, which are in themselves an integral component necessary for accomplishing change (Bryant and Peck, 2006). Sociologists contend that when communication breaks down among any of these agents of socialization, then dysfunction in the passing on of the social and historical norms which shape the experiences as well as the provision of “social tools” which enable members of society to forge a productive life for themselves occurs, leading to numerous problems in society (Garth and Williamson, 2006). The study, therefore, examined the roles of these social institutions in the study area and how the contemporary changes have impacted on their contribution towards positive norm implantation among the young people. In the following sections, the results of the findings are presented:

#### **6.5.1 Education, schooling and the socialization of young people among the Abagusii**

Outside of the family, schools are regarded as the most important agents for socializing young people. It has been observed that in the modern world, children and young adults spend more time in school(s) than elsewhere and the institutions and teachers are often regarded as the “second parent”. As Hudley and Gottfried (2008: 78) observe, schools place controls on how individuals offer judgments of particular social norms and also foster change and facilitate the preparation of a diverse range of individuals for involvement in society. According to the findings of the study, the school takes over the socializing function early in the life of an individual. Furthermore, much of what is initiated in the family is refined further once young people come to the educational institutions. This is reiterated by the local Area Education official:

*The family only instills the rudimentary principles to the child and young person and it is the duty of our teachers and schools to sharpen further what has been started at home. If the initial moulding is not done satisfactorily, then the teacher is handed an impossible task to fulfill. On the other hand, when the home has done a good job, then “releasing the child to school is like removing fish from one bond to another one”, where it will thrive and not die. The teacher simply continues the work of the parent in “a home away from home”.*

This, therefore, means that educational institutions have the task of providing the young people with new and broader horizons for understanding phenomena and social issues. It also provides a new social network for the support of the individual in acquiring new values and further shaping those already acquired in their individual homes. According to the findings of the study, the greatest challenge lies in ensuring a smooth transition and cooperation between the schools and the family in enhancing this important task. In the next section the relationship between the family and educational institutions in the socialization function in the study area is examined.

#### **6.5.1.1 Policing the home – school boundary for continuity between home and school among the abagusii**

It has been observed that one of the challenges faced by young people is the lack of continuity between school and home (Warzon and Ginsburg, 2008). The main borne of contention is the dilemma over the extent into which parents and the community on the one hand and teachers and the schools on the other should participate in shaping the young people’s lives. Thus, the home - school linkage and the roles of the two institutions working in partnership remains key towards successful upbringing of young people as it ensures that a situation of dissonance is avoided. When this is realized, good parenting is promoted (Boulanger et.al, 2014, Vincent and Tomlinson, 1997; Leithwood and McElheron-Hopkins, 2014). Studies by Epstein et.al (2002) have shown that the overlapping spheres of influence among the two institutions necessitate a paradigm shift on how the main actors (members of community, parents, teachers and young people) should operate. Emphasizing that today, the changes experienced in the communities are profound, the local education official further observes:

*In the good old days, the division of labour between home (family) and school was clear and the authority of the educational institutions (schools) was undisputed. The school authorities (teachers) expected parents to bring to school a child that was ready for formal schooling (academic), in knowledge that the social and psychological needs of the child had received prior attention (at home). On the other hand, parents expected the teachers to teach the children, whatever they expected to know. Nowadays, the numerous reforms carried out in the political and social domains have undermined this state of affairs so that the division of labour and responsibilities are no longer self-evident.*

According to the local education officer, the above shows that in today's world, although there have been curriculum reforms carried out to improve the provision of educational services; these have brought in new challenges. As such, therefore, the myriad of problems and failures faced by rural communities in their endeavor to bring up socially and morally competent young people, should not only be attributed to the competence but also on the floating and contested "boundaries" between the authority of the parties. To bridge the aforementioned gap, Ericsson and Larsen (2002) have proposed the need to put in place strong collaborations between the educational institutions and the home and community in general as this will provide a more stringent control over young people. This will lead to: exchange of information between teachers and parents, so as to influence children's school work and behavior and change the problematic aspects of the young people's life at school and at home once the boundaries between school authority and home authority are blurred. This will result in ensuring a seamless connection between home (community) and the school. Hence, the traditionally related but separate (independent) satellites which operated within their own orbit(s) in the lives of the children and young people can work together to achieve this important aim.

#### **6.5.1.2 Limited emphasis on character formation and the teaching of life skills**

A second major shortcoming that emerged from the findings of the study is the weakening of emphasis by the stakeholders on the importance of emphasizing character moulding among the learners. In Kenya, parents often aspire to raise their children to become individuals who possess desirable traits and personalities imbued with a strong sense of morality, destined for doing right things for the right reason(s), even when faced with strong inclination to do otherwise. One of the country's goals of education is to provide for the development of knowledge, skills and attitudes for enhancing the acquisition of sound moral values and assist

children to grow up into self – disciplined and integrated citizens (K IE, 2002). However, the findings of the study show that only limited knowledge on life skills and character formation is offered to the young people. This is brought out in the conversation with focus group discussion participants at bogeche village:

*Researcher: At school, there are things we are taught, the core subjects, are you also taught life skills and how to relate with other members of the society, such as peers, leaders and parents among other*

*FGD Participant I: Us as girls we are taught. The teachers arrange once or twice per term to give us guidance and counseling sessions. These sessions also involve visitors and teachers from other schools who come to give us advice on how to live as and how to change our ways.*

*Researcher: Do boys in your school also have similar sessions?*

*FGD Participant II: On my side, us boys it does not concern us much. It is majorly girls' issue.*

From the conversation, it is evident that only token session on character building and life skills are provided to the young people. Life skills are important to the young people because they integrate character and creativity. The recipients attain important aspects of life such as good citizenship, environmental consciousness, honesty, relationship skills, sexual responsibility and leadership capabilities, which are crucial to the development of the whole person. However, as observed by Shorter (1994), modern schooling places undue emphasis on intellectual development, self-reliance and personal prosperity. Nowadays, young people are often obsessed with the mechanisms of preparing for and passing written examinations. Consequently, little if any time is spared for moral education or character building. It also emerged that, the young boys are often left out when schools plan for such sessions. The study participants indicated that just as these sessions were of great importance to female students, the boys could also benefit a great deal. This is captured in the conversation with the focus group participants:

*Researcher: Are these sessions also important to boys*

FGD Participant I: *It helps those for example who wanted to join bad companies to abandon their ways. The boys require the sessions but they are not available.*

FGD Participant II: *Yes. Even we need to be guided and be told what is good for our behavior.*

Hence, like the female adolescents and youth, their male counterparts also require bolstering their moral values and understanding their behavior so as excel in academic and co – curricular activities. At societal level, the life skills education enhances the wellbeing of the society and promotes positive outlook and healthy behavior.

### **6.5.2 Religious institutions and socialization of young people among the Gusii**

According to the findings of the study, majority (68 %) of the survey respondents indicated that religion is very important to their lives. Only 1.9 % of the adolescents and young people observed that religion was not important to them. Religion is regarded as an important primary socializing agent for adolescents globally since, more than any of the other social institutions, religious institutions have elaborate moral codes which serve the purpose of guiding human behavior. In the lives of young people, studies have shown that religion influences their attitudes and behaviors in ways that are commonly regarded as positive and constructive (Smith, 2003; Verona, 2011). In her study on the impact of religiosity on maltreated youth, Schreiber (2013) found out that religion promoted their resiliency by providing social and material support as well as coping mechanisms and meaning making.

Whereas this study acknowledges that religion is not the only source of moral order<sup>82</sup>, as supported by the findings of the study, despite the challenge of enforcing the many prescriptions of the religious teachings, religious life does indeed play a central role in shaping individual's decision making among the young people in Gusii. The young people indicated that religious institutions play a key role in shaping their lives in several ways. First, it provides important teachings which provide them with virtues that guide them in their lives. This is echoed in the conversation with Focus Group participants in the study area:

Researcher: *Do you think the church is of any relevance to young people's lives?*

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<sup>82</sup>There are several other means and contexts through which the Kenyan youth can gain the requisite skills, knowledge, practices and dispositions including within the family, schools and voluntary associations for their healthy well-being.

FGD Participant I: *The church is like a school. You are told of good people and how to live like them. For example, you are taught to be kind. While in school, you might be having more than one pen and someone is in need of one but there are some of us who are selfish. She will give it to you but when you are about to use it, she will ask for it back again. She will inform you that she requires all of them one for writing the topic, the other for writing the questions and the third one for answers, when in actual sense, she is being selfish. So there are some good values that we are taught at the church, like not being selfish.*

FGD Participant II: *The church is very important to me because when you go to church, there are some things that you will be taught that are not found anywhere else, and when you come across challenges, you will find that you already know how to deal with them.*

FGD Participant II: *The church provides the young people with rules on how to dress up.*

FGD Participant III: *You are taught on how to relate with your parents. They give you examples like that of Samuel, who respected his parents. There are also songs that we sing that are helpful. So if your parents ask you something and you are tempted not to obey, you remember what you were told at church.*

FGD Participant IV: *The church helps you to be imparted with proper Christian ethics. You can learn from the church that you are supposed to do a wedding so that your marriage can be sealed and it will not be broken.*

The religious institutions are, therefore, important in nurturing the young people to become well-grounded physically, spiritually and socially, so as to become meaningful members of the community. The findings of the study also confirm that the religious institutions complement the functions played by the other social institutions, so as to provide a solid foundation for the holistic growth of young people. The complementary nature of the social institutions is captured in the words of a local religious leader:

*The church contributes towards giving the young people the right education so that as we read in the bible that Jesus grew up emotionally, physically, spiritually so as to be able to fit in the society and as well as being fit to be the son of God. The role of education is to bring up young people to be educated not only academically because we can educate to become a giant of academic issues but after one is qualified, he does not become a blessing to the community. He becomes a useless guy who needs to be helped and once the church intervenes such people are brought on board and this*



*will help them to realize why they were born and the reason why they are getting the education. The church impresses upon them that the reason why they are being educated is to become a blessing to their parents, the community and to themselves by relating well with other people.*

From the foregoing, it is shown that religious institutions are important to young people because they work cooperatively with the educational institutions to socialize young people in the society. When the educational and religious institutions reinforce and complement one other, the young people are exposed to the ways in which humanity has evolved and this will help them to make accurate sense of the world. It will enhance the blending of the religious and the secular ways of understanding the world, thereby providing the individual with a strong perspective for understanding the true meaning of life.

There are two dominant denominations in the study locality, namely: The Seventh Day Adventist Church and the Roman Catholic Church. As already pointed out, the Seventh Day Adventist Church commands the majority of the followers (58.8 %), followed by Roman Catholic Church (24.9%). In addition, in the urban Sub- locations of Ichuni and Amabuko, a few Pentecostal protestant churches have been set up, mainly at the two shopping centres and Keroka Township. Some of these include: Jehovah's witnesses Church, The New Apostolic Church, The Baptist Church, The United Pentecostal church and The Gospel revival Church. However, the latter's presence is near negligible in the study area and together with Islam, these have thus been left out in the analysis and discussion in the study. In the sections below, the major influences of religious institutions among the young people in the study area are presented.

#### **6.5.2.1 Prescribed social and moral behaviour**

The young people's attendance in church functions, both for worship and youth activities provides them with important benefits that lead to their positive growth. Among the adherents of the Catholic Church, certain activities are forbidden. For instance, for both boys and girls, premarital sexuality is discouraged and bringing honour to parents and elders are emphasized. The church also encourages the young people to enlist for training in celibacy. One of the most important prescriptions for the young people is how to dress decently. According to Focus Group Discussion Participants, other aspects of grooming such as the nature of hair

style that one adorns are also important to the young adherents of the local churches. This is brought out in the conversation with young people:

Researcher: *There are church rules that help the youth do things in correct ways, what are some of these rules in your church?*

FGD Participant I: *In my church, wearing of miniskirts is not allowed. You can't wear a mini skirt and say that you are going to church because you see the church is not a building but your body.*

FGD Participant II: *Girls are not allowed to put on trousers or tight skirts.*

Researcher: *What about the boys and the young men. Or do these regulations only apply to girls and young women?.*

FGD Participant II: *No. The rules apply equally to everyone but there are those that are specific to the girls and also those that deal with the boys.*

Researcher: *Which ones are targeted at boys, you have mentioned those for girls only?*

FGD Participant II: *The boys cannot be allowed to wear "sagging trousers".*

Researcher: *What is wrong with a young person being fashionable because I hear that this kind of dressing is the one that is on fashion in our country?.*

FGD Participant II: *The church leaders and grown-ups think that the sagging of the trousers is an indication of rejecting the good morals and respect in our community. It is the most ridiculed fashion in our church since when a young person decides to dress this way, much of the trouser hangs below the waist and this reveals most of his underwear. In our rural village, the mothers and even men will close their eyes or look men and women who don't know that this is a fashion for young people will start talking in the village that the son of so and so is a mad person.*

Researcher: *Are there any other ways that are not allowed for boys?*

FGD Participant III: *The boys are also not allowed to put on “rasta” hair on their heads. They are also not allowed to put on “kofia” which is considered a sign of chickyness and mischievous behavior.*

From the findings, it has clearly emerged that the religious institutions consider the mode of dressing and physical appearance as an important yardstick for measuring the uprightness of its youth component of the church participants. Specifically, good grooming and modest dressing is regarded as being of good influence to other members of the community. On the other hand, when a young person dresses immodestly, he sends a message that he is using his body to get attention and approval, which is considered by the religious practitioners and the older members of the society as a transgression to the religious order. Similarly, modest dressing is seen to accord the young people a positive identity and an indication that they are well behaved. They are also considered respectable members of society, who can be relied upon to become responsible adults in future.

The study informants pointed out that the transgression by young people is met with outright condemnation by the church elders and other members of the community leading to dire psychological consequences on the part of the individual. Various methods are used to enhance compliance. The sanctions were meant to help the youth to desist from presenting themselves indecently. This is demonstrated in the response from the young people:

Researcher: *What will happen if you break any of the dressing code rules?*

FGD Participant: *When you attend church wearing a mini skirt, at main door of entering the church, you will be provided with sheets of clothe to clothe yourself properly before entering into the church.*

Researcher: *Of what use will the piece of cloth be to the person that is provided with it?*

FGD Participant: *One will be ashamed since every time that she comes in will be given the sheets. In this way he or she will see it to be much better if he comes to church decent clothes.*

The restriction on the manner of dressing for the young people is, therefore, meant to ensure that they dress moderately and in a decent way. The other methods used in the study area included: Gossip among the church members, Open rebuke and in extreme cases, excommunication from the church for a specified period of time. The findings of the study, however, show that the various denominations vary in their manner of enforcing moral values, as presented in the following sections.

#### **6.5.2.1.1 The “Conservative Catholics” and “reluctant Adventists”**

The study shows that the Catholic churches’ position on “moral implantation” presents a huge obstacle towards the fulfillment of its mandate of equipping the young boys and girls with the necessary knowledge and skills for living. In the course of carrying out this study, I came face to face with this form of “religious conservatism and theology that is far removed from reality”. On the first day of organizing data collection schedules with the local head of the parish, strict instructions were given (to me) that in all my encounters with the young Christians, I should avoid touching on themes concerning sexuality and personal lives of the minors. I sought for clarification on this matter, and the conversation with the parish priest ensued as presented below:

*Researcher: Why is it necessary to avoid this aspect of the young people’s lives? I think it is appropriate to find out their views regarding their experiences as this they encounter in their daily lives.*

*Priest: If we accept to freely deliberate on issues touching on sexual matters, this will lead to bad effects as this will surely expose the children and encourage irresponsible sexual behavior.*

*Researcher: What should be the option for this, as they cannot be left without being talked to on these matters?*

*Priest: Our church does not support any initiatives of talking to young people and even the older members of our church. According to the churches’ catechism, People are guided by their conscience to judge how to act towards all matters especially on social matters such as the ones that you are studying. Our young people have the right to act in conscience and in freedom so as to personally make moral decisions. So when you say that you want to make them to sit and talk to them about their private sexuality, this is likely to mislead them into practicing the vices.*

The church is expected to provide knowledge and skills on social living. There is also the need to encourage open dialogue and the exchange among the older and the younger

members of the society as this will go a long way in shedding off the religious taboos that forbid open discussions on sexuality matters. However, as observed by Kangala (2004: 15), despite being one of the most powerful socialization and correcting institutions in Kenya, the church has continued to blindfold its Christians to the new challenges that occur in the sexuality of the contemporary Kenyan society.

A further requirement was that in my focus group discussions with the young people, I was to make sure that the male and female participants were not to be mixed. For the girls and young women, the priest assigned me a sister from the convent and for the young men, a trainee priest was to be in my company during all the six sessions. During our initial meeting of introduction with the research participants, the FGDs failed to pick off as the youth participants became uncooperative. Although the two representatives of the parish priest suggested that we sing a chorus for ice breaking, things did not improve either. On their exit, the planned events picked and ran off smoothly for the rest of the sessions. Just to be sure that the process adhered to his earlier instructions, on the second day of interviews and FGDs, the priest send in a young girl who had recently been recruited to sisterhood and was on short vacation to join us in the sessions. The young people noted that they were uncomfortable with the presence of the church officials and as such they were not ready to freely deliberate on their personal matters as it went against the church officials' teachings. This is brought out in the conversation below:

*Researcher: Why are you reluctant to participate in this forum? Can we proceed with the discussion for this group?*

*FGD Participant I: In the views of the head of our church, these discussions are not allowed. It can be a mistake to talk about them when the assistant to the priest also listens to the deliberations.*

*Researcher: As young people in this parish, do you support the idea of your church that you should not talk openly about these important issues that touch your wellbeing?*

*FGD Participant II: As for me I see that these are useful issues that affect how we will grow to be upright people in our families. If we talk here, we will know what is good and what is bad. Keeping mum about our problems will make our lives more difficult.*

*Researcher: Why didn't you explain that to me when I enquired from you earlier on?*

FGD Participant II: *The church does not allow this, so it is not possible to give the explanation to you when we are in the company of the church leaders.*

Researcher: *So it means you accept the rules that are given to you?*

FGD Participant: *No. This is not what we mean.*

Researcher: *But the parish priest told me that these are the laws that you all follow.*

FGD Participant III: *I can say that the information you got from him is the position of the father. I know that it is not the belief of the members of this church.*

It can be argued, therefore, that although the young people can benefit greatly from the richness and bounty of religious information and teachings on social life, the custodians of the religious spaces remain a stumbling block to their utilization. According to the above conversation, the church has not adequately acknowledged the opinions and desires of its members. As pointed out by the study respondents, what the church leadership puts forward as the position of the Catholic Church on important issues like those that touch on the young people, is the personal position of the catholic priest. This does not reflect the true perspective of the church members. The reasons that are often provided for the non – involvement of young people is the unfounded fear among the clergy and adults alike that encouraging open conversations will lead to increased immorality among the young people ( Kangala, 2004; Wangoi, 1994). On the contrary, if the churches in the rural areas supply correct information, its youth will be better placed to make correct decisions regarding their sexuality and overcome the moral challenges (Mayada et.al, 1995).

The other dominant religious denomination in the study area is the Seventh Day Adventist Church. As its name implies, its followers observes the Seventh day of the week (Saturdays) as a day for worship and abstaining from laborious activities. They take exceptional concerns on health matters and are required to abstain from alcohol and tobacco. The study respondents indicated that it is recommended that red meat be avoided, but nowadays, the majority of the previously vegetarian members have taken to meat consumption. Although some of the elderly respondents observed that the church requires its adherents to dress simply, the young people pointed out that this requirement is presently relaxed and they are provided with the lee way to use their own discretion for judging modest dressing. The main reason for relaxing the rules on the dress code is informed by the contemporary changes in the society. This is observed by a Key informant as follows:

*We are faced with the challenge; you see the young people are very interesting there are fashions and they always want to change like their peers. We are trying to avoid being too rigid. We are also moving as the society is moving in the sense that we don't want to be left behind and at the same time we don't want to be too much a head. We want to be moderate in these matters.*

The relaxation of the rules are therefore, meant to accord the youth the opportunity to dress modestly in line with church guidance as espoused in the *Seventh day Adventist Church Manual (2010 : 140)*. The manual asserts that “customs and fashions may change, but principles of right conduct remain the same”. Modest and simple dressing is recommended. It should also be neat, gracious and characterized by appropriateness of simplicity, whose true beauty is not made up of jewelry and ornaments which go contrary to the will of God. According to the study respondents, the role of the parents is required in guiding the young people on how to comply with the expectations of the church on personal grooming. This is illustrated by a Key informant, Pastor Joseph mamwacha at Gesusu market:

*Like now last time my boy came home and I bought for him this model trouser that come with some patches in the behind and when I took it to him he told me that “Daddy, I like it but if you could have bought me jeans I could have preferred it more. Then I told him that there is no problem I could buy him one. After a few days, I went with him to the shop and I bought for him. I realized that most of his close friends around our home were wearing jeans. But in the type of jeans, I had to guide him. I told him that there are several types of jeans, there are those that are joined in the front, with some tattered pieces. I told him that kind does not make him presentable. I informed him that he needed a jean trouser which when he wears, “You look like the son of a pastor. You will look decent and smart, clean and presentable”. Then he said. “I don't like that daddy, it is bad”. I guided him accordingly and he is very comfortable. I also have my daughter in Segero high School in Uasin Gishu. When they went for a trip in Uganda; she came back and told the mother that she needs a trouser. I called her to the table and asked her why she needs a trouser. She*

*said that when she went to Uganda she saw girls like her dressed in trousers and they looked good in them. I told her No and that there are good clothes when a person wears, he will look decent and even more expensive than the ones she had seen. You will go round with your mother for window shopping and you will see them. When she went to the shop with the mother, she realized there were better clothes than those she was requesting for. She said they were ok. And she does not need a long trouser any more.*

The adoption of a “guiding approach” by the parents and other older members of society will assist the young people to learn from their experiences. This will also help them to appreciate and see how their decisions affect other people that are close to them. This will in turn lead them to make informed decision in compliance with the rules and expectations of the church and the community at large.

The other actions which are not condoned by the church include: adultery, abortion, homo sexuality and other forms of hetero - sexual relationships and inter - faith marriages. The pursuit of education is encouraged and the adult members are encouraged to participate in the faith sponsored Education for family life and faith skills development. Like in those among the Catholics, the SDAs have in place programs for the young people. These include the Sabbath School and the youth summits in which young people receive tailor made teachings on young people’s and Christian ways of living. The importance of these activities is emphasized by a study respondent in the following conversation:

*Researcher: From your own experience, are the activities for the youth of any impact to their lives? You see it is one thing to put up a program, and the other to be of benefit to the recipient.*

*Religious leader: The activities mold the young people because we realized that when the youth close schools and come home, the parents are not able to control them. Some can cheat that they are studying but in actual sense, they are not since our parents didn’t go to school. The activities also keep them busy according to their ages. They also help them on how to choose their careers, how to get married, while others talk about their education and information on professionalism and how to do business and to reach to the rest of the world.*

The activities, therefore, provide the young people with important benefits and skills in terms of instilling values such as hard work. They are also equipped with important knowledge on



career choices, mate selection and business skills. Unlike among the Catholics, the study found out that the main teachings which are directed towards the youth in the SDA churches, especially with regard to sexuality and the individual's moral obligations are openly discussed. This is captured in the conversation with a key informant in the following conversation:

*Researcher: The main problem for today's young people is in reproductive health, which usually they have no information about and they end up with things like teen pregnancies. What does your church do about this?*

*Pastor: That is why we go to camps every month of August each year. We invite professionals to talk about drugs, marriage and so on. depending on the age of the young people. If you look at the handouts we have given all the years, you will realize that we have material talking about sex education, pregnancy, premarital sex. Initially people used to think that they should talk of sex to the young people when they are about 18 years, but we have seen young children getting pregnant at 10 years. So we don't want to hide our heads in the sand as if the problem is not there.*

From the foregoing, it is clear that the position of the church advocates for open discussions on sexual matters with the young people. Sexuality is a normal part of every person's life, no matter the age at which they are in. Talking about sex and sexuality provides individuals and communities with a chance to share their values and beliefs with the younger members of the society.

#### **6.5.2.1.2 Fighting the battle to loose the war: The precarious young people and the role of the church in provision of life skills.**

The study has shown that the church in Kenya is torn between clinging onto the "institutional dogma" and the need to respond to the reality occasioned by changing circumstances in the contemporary society. In choosing to stick to the old doctrines of the respective faiths; it in essence relents in its obligation of service to humanity and ultimately "fights the battle but loses the war". Therefore, position of the two religious denominations present more challenges than opportunities for the young people's wellbeing. Firstly, by opting to either deny or fail to maintain a clear stand on the provision of life skills and sexuality information to young people as is the case with the Catholic Church, this segment of the population is made vulnerable to making wrong decisions that could have been ameliorated had the church

taken the responsibility to offer direction. Consequently, the young girls and women are bound to engage in unsuitable sexual practices which may result in early child bearing. According to Ikamari (2008), younger rural women are more likely to initiate child bearing earlier than their urban counterparts. Indeed, recent statistics<sup>83</sup> show that, in Kisii County, Sexual activity and early child bearing, which normally carries significant risks for young people all over the world, begins early. For instance, 3 % have had a child by age 15, nearly a quarter of women aged 15-19 had already given birth, while 5% were pregnant at the time of the survey. The proportion of women aged 20 - 49 years who have had a live birth before age 18 is 21% and 37 % in the urban and rural areas respectively in the County. Ikamari (2008) study recommends the targeting of young rural women who are sexually active in the rural poor regions of Nyanza and the Kenyan Coastal regions with the provision of accurate reproductive health information so as to disseminate life skills to enable them avoid early sexual activity and ultimately early child bearing.

The other impacts associated with the effects of conservative religious groups have been manifested in studies on protective sexual practices among young people in Africa. For instance, Agha et.al (2008: 555)'s Zambian investigation on the effects of religious affiliation on Sexual initiation and condom use showed that affiliation with the Seventh Day Adventist and Jehovah's Witnesses lowers the likelihood of condom use during first sex and that such religious groups may not be able to make a difference in enabling their younger members to avoid HIV infection. Further, the Zambian Youth reported the lack of awareness, access to and skills in using condoms as the reasons for not using the protective devices during first sex. In Masaba region, although the Seventh Day Adventist church officials have shown that they assist the young people with information on reproductive health, its position on condom use is similar to that held by the local Catholic Church. This is captured in the conversation with a key informant:

*Researcher: So the seventh day Adventist Church is against the use of contraceptives?*

*Religious leader: For the young people we are against because it leads to moral decay. It is as if we will give them to do whatever they want rather than preventing them.*

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<sup>83</sup> Kenya National Bureau of Statistics (2013) Kisii County Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey 2011: Final Report. Kenya Bureau of Statistics. Nairobi.

Researcher: *But you know, experience has shown that the young people will always engage in sexual intercourse whether the condoms are available or not. Isn't it better to allow them to use?*

Religious leader: *We are not against sex because of sex and pregnancy only. We teach them not to engage in it because we believe it is God who said it and it is one of the commandments that you shall not commit adultery and also it is the temple of the lord and so you must keep it pure.*

Researcher: *But the government has a big problem on advocating for condom use for the young people. What do you think?*

Religious leader: *That is very true, the church is facing a challenge and on their side They want to prevent pregnancy by giving condoms to primary schools and we said no since they will be intoxicated with the idea that so long as you do it having condoms and contraceptives, it is bad then it will make the society to get lost. So we have to stand firm and by standing firm, we could have helped so many than allowing it.*

Researcher: *Do you think you are managing by adopting the stance that you have taken?*

Religious leader: *We are winning a higher percentage than we could have allowed. We have to stand firm because in every generation there are people of God. Even in Sodom and Gomorrah there were people of God so we don't want to behave as if it is Sodom and Gomorrah assuming people of God are not there. I know out of hundred, we may get forty instead of if we could have allowed it, we could have lost all the one hundred. So better we keep these forty, they will help others and we will get eighty percent at the end of the day.*

Researcher: *Does the church have a way to push the government to follow your way?*

Religious leader: *There is a tussle and the government has given these things (Condoms) free and they are everywhere. I am in charge of the local SDA dispensary, where I am one of the committee members. In the Sub county Hospital, I am the financial controller. The Government supplies condoms in larger quantities than the Medical drugs.*

From the conversation, it is evident that the stand of the church hinders the provision of contraceptive devices for use by the young people. Contrary to the belief by the religious leaders in the study area that the failure to freely dispense condoms to the young people will lead to a reduction in sexual activities among the members of the age category, the survey data showed that majority (82.2 %) of the young people aged 10 – 24 years reported to have had sexual intercourse. Furthermore, while the mean age at first sexual intercourse was 16.8 years, the respondent who is reported to have had sexual intercourse did this at age of 7 years. This clearly calls for urgent intervention in the study area with regard to the provision of reproductive health services. The provision of contraceptives such as condoms is one of the key interventions in reproductive health service provision which is recommended by the World Health organization. There is, therefore, need to enhance improved access to family planning services for young people in the study area.

#### **6.5.2.2 Instilling learned competencies and individual skills for young people by the church among the Gusii**

Putting aside the direct influences through which religion influences youth behavior through religious norms and sanctions, Smith (2003) has pointed out that religion can indirectly work towards enhancing valuable skills and the knowledge base of young people. These will in turn help improve their life chances by enabling them to acquire community leadership, coping skills and cultural capital. The competencies and skills will be attained through observing, learning and practicing in the contexts of the initiatives and various activities provided for the youth in the respective church settings.

Among the Abagusii, the Catholic youth observed that churches often entrust the youth to form own faith - based youth groups attached to the parish and even individual church centres for income generating activities, cells or small worship groups, organization of capacity building seminars and workshops, Church choirs and theatre groups. The Catholic Church has a parish-wide programme for peer education training, sports and recreation events

organization and community volunteer initiatives. They have also established a resource centre at Ichuni Parish headquarters Centre. The Deanery youth work headed by a local religious brother trains local volunteers and has been assisting them to coordinate events among the local catholic schools and the participation at the World Youth Day fete in Nairobi. The Seventh Day Adventist Church carries out their activities through the Youth Ministries department which caters for the various categories of young people. The Pathfinder club is open to those aged 10- 15 years. It conducts activities such as: Community service, Camping, Crafts, Matching, Bible Study and leadership. For those aged 16-21 years, they are eligible to join the ambassadors club, which is reserved for the senior youth. Generally, these provide leadership to and organizational services to the pathfinder club members as well as act out as the role models for the younger Christian youth. Lastly, the 21 – 31 age category is enlisted under the young adults club. The main aim of these activities is to enhance self – reliance norms among the youth. As pointed out by a key informant, several initiatives have been implemented in the study area to assist the young people obtain this important skill:

*Researcher: Can you tell me of any such activities that your church has put up to meet this aim?*

*Religious leader: Recently we introduced a course that is called self - employment.*

*Researcher: How has it been helpful to the youth in your church?*

*Religious leader: The course has created a big impact on them. The recipients of the teachings started on their own a very successful project called “ONE HEN Project”. I have also initiated a project covering several Churches in my territory dubbed TEN BRICKS. In this project, one is supposed to prepare ten bricks. Each brick is worth One hundred and twenty shillings. So with a total of 1200 shillings, that is good for one to get started. You see the main purpose is to assist our young people to generate some money that they can get to pay the church tithe and also have some for their own use. We are trying to bring them on board for them to be self-reliant since nowadays we are losing a number of parents (death) and tomorrow their parents may not be there. So we challenge them “how will*

*you survive? We are also trying to tell the girls to have their small gardens and for boys to keep hens, burn charcoal or at least have something to keep them busy.*

The extract shows that the religious institutions target at providing the young people with the requisite skills for self-sufficiency. Engaging the young people in self – generated ventures shifts them from social dependency to self-sufficiency. This will lead them to contribute to the upkeep of their families and sometimes playing a leading role in the absence of parents.

Studies have shown that religious institutions can harness the youth for providing peace – building among ethnic communities (Shapiro, 2010). A key informant at Riamichoki area observed that for a long time, the area had been experiencing inter – ethnic scuffles between the Gusii and the Maasai communities as a result of cattle theft in which the young Gusii men were the main conduits. This revelation presents a contradiction because among the Gusii, traditionally the youth were entrusted with the responsibility of protecting the communities' borders so as to ward off any attempts by neighboring communities from engaging in cattle rustling. The young people resided in cattle camps (*ebisarate*) in which they looked after the cattle of their own families (Levine and Levine, 1966). However, as argued by a Key informant, the present conditions have changed and it is paradoxical that the young people are the ones responsible for the loss of livestock and other property in their families and neighborhood:

*Researcher: Do young people participate in promoting the security and wellbeing in this locality?*

*Religious leader: The youth are the ones that we often look forward to for harmony and the security of everybody in the locality. However, our young people do not live up to this expectation. They have been accused of being responsible for most of the cattle thefts in our village.*

*Researcher: What do you think can be done to rectify the situation, so that the problem can be contained?*

Religious leader: *There have been many attempts by families and the local leadership to seek a lasting solution to this problem, but no progress has been attained. We came in as the local church to try our hand in providing a lasting solution to the problem. We have identified those who have been mentioned to be collaborators and we want to help them to reform. These individuals have been given responsibilities of being group leaders in the church to help train the others on “community safety”. This initiative is similar to the one by the chief for community policing. We have also given them free counseling sessions and upon confession, we forgive them for past misdeeds. We have also helped those that are fond of consuming illicit brew to moderate their actions. Some have reformed and are no longer taking part in drinking.*

From the extract, the study shows that religious institutions are instrumental in assisting the young people to fulfill their societal responsibilities and meet their obligations of being the custodians of combating local criminal tendencies in their families and communities.

### **6.5.2.3 Negative influence of religion on young people among the Abagusii**

Not in all cases, however, do young people experience positive outcomes as a result of their affiliation to religious institutions or in leading a religious life. As Smith (2013) cautions, religion may in fact negatively influence adolescent outcomes. In the study area, cases of young people who were known to be actively involved in the church programmes and activities but fell short of benefitting from the positive effects of their involvement were encountered. For some of the young people, their involvement in unacceptable actions led to negative outcomes. This state of affairs is captured in the words of a key informant:

Researcher: *Have there been instances in your church where young people who are committed to the principles of the church contravened church regulations?*

Religious leader: *I have encountered many. There have been young women playing many sexual games with older men in the church.*

It was also observed that more often than not, some of the religious leaders, though expected to practice chastity, ended up involving themselves in extra marital affairs with both the young and older members of society. The key informant further adds:

Researcher: *What about religious leaders themselves?*

Religious leader: *From my personal experience, the religious leaders we have these days do not observe good morals. It was only last year that the catholic priest at Gekano Parish lured a poor 16 year old girl into the church's official residence and raped her repeatedly.*

Therefore, if the local religious leadership fails to serve as a good example, the rest of the flock will follow suit. Similarly, when the youth are not well advised and provided with adequate counsel, they will indulge in immoral activities. The youth informants pointed out numerous instances when young girls feigned of going to attend the youth activities in the local churches, but mid-way ended up in the homes of the young boys. Referring to the case of the American youth, Smith (2003) cites the reasons for the negative influence as: the provision of inadequate influence by some religious communities and the failure by the youth to appropriate the benefits of positive religious influences by opting to remain uninvolved and detached. In other instances, some young people may be overwhelmed by the competing moral orders and practices resulting largely from counterinfluences in other social contexts such as family, school and even the media. Furthermore, disruptive events such as the divorce of parents, abuse by a religious authority or un-reconciled falling out with people in religious community may interrupt or altogether, severe the constructive influence of religion on a variety of healthy and socially desirable outcomes of young people.

#### **6.6 The mass media and adolescent and youth socialization among the Abagusii**

Two decades ago, a clear digital divide was discernible between the urban and rural regions of Africa. However, with the proliferation of digital media the scenario is much more different than it then did (Njogu and Middleton, 2009). Within this little span of time, in both the rural and urban areas, the digital media have become embedded in the lives of young people and play an important role in their socialization (Cortesi and Gasser, 2015). The study respondents argued that the use of the mass media is an indispensable part of the rural youth and older people in the society. This is captured in the conversation with a key informant:

Researcher: *How useful are the components of the various mass media to the youth in this locality?*



Respondent: *Let the media be used by our young being responsibly. In my own home, I have a Television. You will expect my children to go to seek this service in the neighbor's house and this will give me a hard time to confine them in my home. I have also bought some CDs for their use. The media is opening us to know current affairs and to know the kind of young people that we are having.*

Therefore, among the Abagusii, like in other regions in the rural areas of Kenya, access to and the use of the media is pervasive, despite the obstacles placed upon the users by the less developed infrastructure (Wyche et.al, 2013).

### **6.6.1 Role of technology in the life of contemporary Gusii rural youth**

When I began my interaction with the youth at the beginning of the study, it became increasingly clear to me in a relatively short period of time that their lives were not only technology rich but quite frankly a way of life. The young people I interviewed indicated that it was every young man and girl's motivation to be on "*ase amangana agotara bwango*<sup>84</sup>" and thus, owning a small phone for personal use was common place in the locality. In many instances, the young respondents observed that they experienced a certain degree of peer pressure to use the social network sites such as *Face book*, *Whats up* and *Myspace* among others. As a 21 year old Key informant at Nyanturago village put it:

*When one does not have a phone, he is totally cut off from the rest of the world and even the people around him. We as young people want to be like our other peers in the different parts of the country. and be informed of what goes on there. This phone provides me with constant opportunity to gather goings on and share daily happenings with my close friends.*

Thus, the struggle to void instances of becoming socially alienated becomes the driving force for the young people to be "socially connected". On surmounting the challenge of acquiring the required gadget for on line communication, it became apparent that the young people could go at lengths to acquire one's own mobile phone. A respondent noted that:

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<sup>84</sup> The local name for "social Media" literally meaning 'where information moves faster'

even “mulika mwizi<sup>85</sup>” phone like this one of mine is well enhanced to access internet. “When I am in dire need of communicating to a friend or during an emergence, I can “Kopa credo or Okoa jahazi”<sup>86</sup> to help me meet the urgency, which I then repay much later at my convenience”.

### **6.6.2 Uses of Social Media by Young people among the abagusii**

As observed in Chapter one (see sec 1.5.6), the increasing availability of the media is presently of utmost importance to the young people. The regular use of the internet by the young people in Kenya’s rural spaces is the norm rather than the exception. The respondents pointed out the various ways in which they are involved in the use of the social media. This is captured in the focus group discussion with the young people:

Researcher: *Of what purpose is the mass media important to your life?*

FGD Participant I: *I use the mobile phone to write text messages to friends and relatives.*

FGD Participant II: *My phone assists me to explore social network on places like Facebook and twitter.*

FGD Participant III: *The telephone is important to me because i use it to do online games.*

FGD Participant IV: *I entertain myself with music on the you tube videos and chat with my friends online on the whatsapp.*

The responses from the study area indicate that the young people mainly use the mass media for purposes of recreation. None of the respondents indicated that they use the media for educational purposes outside the classroom environment.

### **6.6.2 Society’s Perceptions of the use of the media by young people among the Abagusii**

According to the finding of the study, the various sectors of society have voiced mixed reactions over their perception on the impact of social media on the lives of young people. In the following sections, the views of the various stakeholders are presented:

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<sup>85</sup> This is a derogatory term for a small phone in the study area.

<sup>86</sup> Service offered by the mobile service provider in which an individual is loaned a specified amount of air time, which he then repays later on.

### **6.6.2.1 Educational Institutions and the students use of cellphones**

According to the local county director of education, “although nowadays everybody cries foul about the bad impacts of media, it should not be wholly blamed for the society’s problems. On the contrary, Information and communication technology can be a powerful tool for facilitating innovation”. He observes:

*The use of the media is very important because it simplifies knowledge acquisition. The performance of tasks is now much easier and faster unlike when we were to do them manually. This has been proved because I see young people do marvelously activities at relatively young ages. They have proved to be very innovative and all this is thanks to their knowledge of information technology skills.*

Therefore, the learning experiences by the youth are enhanced by the adoption of media technology. In Kenya, Information technology has been mainstreamed into the school curriculum. However, if used badly, the same can be injurious to the growing child. Hence, to avoid excessive use of the mass media, which may lead to destructive impact, the government has banned the use of communication gadgets such as mobile phones in the institutions of learning in the country. The youth respondents indicated that although the school regulations prohibit handling of cell phones in the school compound, the regulation has been difficult to enforce. This is captured in the words of the study participants:

Researcher: *Do students keep mobile phones in school?*

FGD Participant I: *Almost 90% of us have phones*

Researcher: *But the school rules prohibit possession of phones in school. What happens when one is found with it?*

FGD Participant II: *The phone is confiscated by the teachers, crushed and you are suspended from school. But it is difficult to nab anyone with a telephone.*

Researcher: *Where are these phones kept?*

FGD Participant III: *If it is girls, they walk around with it. They hide in places you can't access. The boys stuff them deep into the middle of their mattresses.*

Researcher: *There are no prefects to check the handling of these phones?*

FGD Participant III: *Even the prefects have the phones. Most of them are also corrupt; If he gets you with a phone, you can just give him fifty shillings so that the matter will not be reported to school authorities.*

It is evident that although the authorities have banned the use of the mobile phones in schools, its possession and use by students is rampant. Its use by the students in secrecy is therefore, likely to cause more harm, since it is not regulated by the teachers and other adults in the society. The older members of society have voiced various concerns with regard to the use of the use of the new media: In the following section, the view of the important stakeholders especially the parents is presented.

#### **6.6.2.2 The concerns of parents and other community members**

The common concern among parents was that the modern child has become difficult to rear. According to them, the main culprit is the media. This is observed by a study respondent:

*It is the phone that has completely spoiled our children and they no longer listen to our advice. They think they are clever, our girls hide telephones in their pockets and a child will be with you this minute, the next they are telephoned and disappear all of a sudden.*

The modern media has, thus made parenting more difficult and created loopholes for the young people to escape the watchful eye of the parents who strive to shield them from acquiring undesirable habits.

##### **6.6.2.2.1 Unconventional mate selection and exposure to cyber - bullying**

The older members of the community regard the internet and other social media outlets as contributing to immorality among the younger generation users. They contend that the practice has eroded the accepted conventions of mate selection and most encounters are initiated online. As observed by a respondent:

*before the coming of the mobile phone important matters such as the starting of a family was carefully planned and the laid down procedures of our tribe systematical used in the planning process. today's youth prefer to date online and even go ahead to cohabit thinking that the elusive family making will stand. In the end these "Chinywomo chia face book"<sup>87</sup> which normally lasts two weeks end up being dissolving after a fortnight.*

However, according to a recent study among the youth in the rural areas of Kenya , the modern youth prefer "fake identities" and the seeking of new friends and romantic partners online is an exciting adventure to them (UNICEF, 2013). Lindsay et.al (2011) argues that the practice of online dating by young people should not only be regarded as unconventional but a potential risk to the participating individuals. This may happen if young people casually accept to meet offline in public space such as malls and cafeterias with the previously unknown online friends or romantic partners on a social site, exposing themselves to immense risks.

#### **6.6.2.2 Modern young people as anti-social beings**

Watkins (2009) observes that another core concern among parents is that technology is turning young people into preferring to interact with inanimate objects such as the computer and mobile phones rather than face to face interaction. In this way, most parents worry that in a community that greatly values communal interactions, their children will become socially maladjusted and even indifferent in being in the company of other people.

Therefore, owing to the aforementioned negative impacts of the media on the lives of young people, the study sought to find out the perceptions of the older members of society on what can be done to safeguard the young people in the community. The respondents' views are presented in the following section.

#### **6.6.3 The regulation of adolescent media for effective socialization**

The global media landscape for the young people presents two contradictory themes: That of opportunities and challenges and risks (Gigli, 2004). In consonance, the reaction towards the role of the mass media in the socialization of young people in Masaba portrays dilemmas,

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<sup>87</sup> Local area residents' way of referring to the "short term marriages" among the young people which last a few days.

contradictions and paradoxes. The parents' protestations and the educationists' embrace of the role of modern information technology are a case in point. On the other hand, the religious institutions stand out as silent collaborators just as the larger community is a kin to a discordant bulwark. Nevertheless, what comes out in this study is that the parents lack the requisite skills and knowledge to help their children reap the benefits of the new media and the local educational institutions and officials stance on media use by the youth is counterproductive.

#### **6.6.3.1 Bridging the parental digital media knowledge gap for healthy youth socialization**

The open rebuke and denying of the young people and teenagers, use of social media drives them underground. In all their online interaction networks, though public, most of their activities, communication and identities are largely hidden from the adult world. In other instances, they create false identities so as to be invisible to their parents and other older people that may have their true social profiles and thus monitor their internet use. It is thus imperative for parents to negotiate the use of media by employing informative conversations with their off springs to avoid their rebelling. More emphasis should be placed on digital safety and amiable explanations for restrictions provided.

#### **6.6.3.2 Open policy towards personal media use by young learners in educational institutions.**

The major reasons often cited for restricting the utilization of personal media use by the young people within the learning institutions is that it disrupts learning and leads to irregularities in school examinations. In Kenya, the Minister of Basic Education prohibited the handling and use of mobile phones and other related gadgets within the precincts of educational institutions<sup>88</sup>. Yet, also, the government has put in place measures to introduce laptops to children entering the primary cycle of education in the country, an initiative that will see learners exposed to unlimited use of Information technology in the schools. This, therefore, implies that media use is destined to be part and parcel of the young peoples' schooling paraphernalia, and calls for educating the young people on the responsible use of the media.

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<sup>88</sup> The Kenya National Assembly official record (Hansard) 22<sup>nd</sup> July, 2008: 1965.

## **6.7 Conclusion**

This chapter has presented the views of the youth and other key informants on the role of parents within the context of the family in socializing the young people in the study area. It has been shown that while the modern settings present the young people with better opportunities for growing up, at least compared with those that prevailed in the past, these also present challenges which are posed by the adoption of new norms which are often incompatible with the local cultural orientation. Furthermore, the adoption of inappropriate parenting methods which fail to recognize the input of the young people into their socialization goals leads to negative socialization outcomes. In the next chapter, the findings on the national policy initiatives on young people are presented.

**CHAPTER SEVEN**  
**NATIONAL YOUTH POLICY INITIATIVES IN KENYA: HISTORICAL**  
**PERSPECTIVE**

**7.0 Introduction**

This chapter presents the country's interminable efforts towards the achievement of sustainable youth development. Using review literature and empirical data, the chapter first discusses the major policy proposals over the years as outlined in the country's nine development plans since independence. The second part of the discussion dwells on Kenya's current youth policy initiatives and concludes with an overview of the inherent gaps and the attendant challenges faced in the realization of positive youth development in the country.

Since independence the Kenyan government has recognized that the management of its young people is key in the realization of sustained socio-economic development. True to its believe, the government has over the decades infused youth issues in its policies, strategies and programmes and allocated substantial financial resources to address young peoples' challenges. In Kenya, the youth concerns mainly revolved around the amelioration of young people's unemployment and the inherent skills acquisition deficits. As such it was assumed that this could automatically translate into good citizenship and thus equipped to participate more meaningfully in national development.

A survey of the country's policy concerns from 1963 to date shows that the ideology underlying the country's quest for positive youth development has continually centred on imparting vocational skills and access to financial services. The question, therefore, is whether this paradigm adequately serves the challenges of effective preparation of the country's young people for role taking as future adults.

**7.1 Youth policy initiatives in Kenya: missing the “focal target” or “token indulgence”**

Although the Kenyan government did not develop an explicit youth policy before the year 2008, her young peoples' developmental challenges were implicitly embedded, albeit, in a fragmentary manner in the country's successive five year development plans. Like in other developing countries, the country's young people were regarded as a political instrument and a survey of the national policy initiatives demonstrate that they merely sought to make a “token reference” to their potential, deficits and even risk posed to the country's political



stability. As such the plight of the young people in the country was for a long time not a policy priority. According to a retired District Development Officer:

*Although some resources in form of funding were availed, they were not enough to support the massive proposals, which required huge amounts of money. At times, the financial allocation earmarked for the programmes of the youth could be withdrawn half way during the financial year and be used for other votes in government programmes.*

Hence, the implementation of the young people's programmes was considered not to be of primary importance. Without the government's commitment, little if any could thus be achieved.

When Kenya attained her independence in 1963, the government formulated its premier Five year National Development plan, which was brought to parliament on 10<sup>th</sup> June, 1965. It set forth important guidelines for her development agenda during its first six years of independence and provided the framework for the numerous programmes and development projects in all fields of the nation's economic and social life. To enhance Youth welfare, The National Youth Service (NYS) was born, and entrusted with the mandate of alleviating hardships among young people. According to the First National Development Plan 1965 / 66 – 1969 / 70 (Republic of Kenya, 1965: 328), it could do this by:

*Putting the unemployed young people into an environment that will inculcate good citizenship and provide opportunities to bring together young persons from all areas of Kenya to work in projects of national importance and help alleviate hardships among young persons.*

Thus, from the onset, the government seems to have subscribed to the conceptualization that young people were in crisis, an assumption that denotes the youth as a vulnerable section of the population. Furthermore, the universally accepted thinking that the precursor to attaining responsible young adulthood depends on sustained investment in requisite material for transiting the fragile period of childhood in their movement towards the youthful stage was not borne into mind. Similarly, the government's early initiatives set out in pursuit towards

accommodating the young people that have “fallen off the cracks”. As observed by Kidd and Marshall (2005 : 35), this strategy, which was largely guided by the “Problem oriented approach”, does not offer solutions to the general population of youth but simply set out to modify anti-social behavior by focusing on young people’s deficits. The deficit approach calls for intervention when young people exhibit problems in their behaviors and narrowly targets to fix specific problem behaviours (Kretzmann and McKnight, 1993). In contrast, a more viable approach could be to adopt policies that are anchored on efforts geared towards the strong support of systems and opportunities. These should mainly be geared towards targeting the family niche and other contexts inhabited by the young people. This is based on the understanding that policies comprise long standing local arrangements in the form of problem solving repertoires, which are not based on fixing final ends (Arce, 2010).

## **7.2 Past youth policy initiatives (1970– 2007): A brief historical overview**

Kenya’s post–independence development policies targeted as one of their broad objective to enhance social justice and improved standard of living for all her citizens. A key segment of the target population comprised the youth. At the initial stages, social services targeting the family and child welfare were mooted as the panacea to tackling youth problems. The second National development plan 1970 – 74, rightly observed that by emphasizing on safeguarding the unity, stability and health of the family, the breakdown of the family, a core socializing institution could be safeguarded ( ibid .PP. 529). However, this noble cause was discarded in the subsequent development period, and priority shifted gear to the immediate pre-independence focus on provision of vocational skills to the out of school youth.

In the third National Development Plan (1974 - 1978), the government created the youth development division in its department of social services, whose role included the formulation of a comprehensive national policy on youth development. It was also envisaged that the newly created body could establish a research unit, Kenya National Council of Social Services, whose sole mandate will be to conduct studies on social problems. In terms of training activities, over 17,481 graduands were trained in over 53 youth centres that were in operation throughout the country (ibid PP.487). The newly trained youth were expected to participate in national development mainly through self-employment activities.

The fourth Post–independence National Development Plan, in which period the declaration of the International year of the child by the United Nations in 1979 was done, the Government

of Kenya set out to review the existing legislation and this resulted in the formulation of a sessional paper on youth development. The sessional paper provided the basis for extending youth programmes in the country. Consequently, the setting up of small scale industries in rural areas was encouraged, while the number of village polytechnics was increased to 370, with a population of 40,000 enrolled. In addition, a village polytechnic unit (Centre for research and Training) was established at Karen – Nairobi. It developed and conducted testing for appropriate technological devices for rural utilization.

In the 1989 – 1993 development plan period, the policy paper, dubbed *Sessional Paper No.1 of 1986 on economic Management for renewed growth emphasized* effective guidance and counseling for crime prevention and rehabilitation through the country's education and training institutions. It was proposed that this could be achieved through the training and appointment of qualified staff. In addition, Youth information services were established in all district centres to expose the youth to employment and self-advancement opportunities. The alcohol and drug control institutions were also proposed so as to curb the escalating alcoholism and drug abuse among the youth (ibid PP.250).

A much deeper focus on Youth development was asserted in the 1994/ 97 five year development plan policy, in which it was observed that the increasing crime rates among the youth at the time were attributable to the rapid social, political and economic changes which resulted from the inadequate and decreasing role of the family in the socialization process and increased exposure to the negative impacts of cinema, print media, radio and Television (ibid PP.243). The development plan further reiterated the importance of the vocational training for the purpose of increasing opportunities for young school to become self-supporting. In the last decade prior to the formulation of the national Youth Policy, emphasis was laid on mainstreaming youth in the country's development programmes. For instance, the National youth development fund was conceived in the 1997/2001 plan period, while the pro- poor growth strategies aimed at strengthening the capacities of young people was operationalized during the 9<sup>th</sup> Development Plan (2002- 2008) period.

### **7.3 National youth policy initiatives: current programmes and projects**

The Kenyan government has identified lack of employment opportunities, under-employment, health, school and college drop - outs as the major problems faced by her young people (CMD, 2013). Others such as crime and deviant behavior, deficient sport and

recreation, abuse and exploitation, limited opportunities and participation, poor housing and limited access to ICT have also been seen as the main challenges impinging on the wellbeing of young people in the country.

The country's youth policy presupposes the promotion of youth wellbeing as being dependent on the increased access of welfare services (in above stated sectors) to the young people.

In this section, some of the Key programmes and Projects around which Kenya's youth policy is currently centred are discussed. It is shown that despite the clamour for enhancing highest levels of the quality of life for the youth, through the creation of supportive social, cultural and economic environment, the tangible impacts are still minimal.

### **7.3.1 Employment creation and skills provision as a component of the youth policy in Kenya**

A recent study by UNESCO, aimed at monitoring advances towards the attainment of education for all, observed that most governments neglect skills development in National Policies. Despite the economic benefits that can be attained, even where its importance is recognized, skills development is frequently given low priority (ibid PP.30). In order to tackle youth unemployment in Kenya, the target was placed at reducing the unemployment rates from 75 % to 35 % by the year 2012 (Kenya Republic of, 2012: 19). However, in spite of this position, about 61 % of Kenya's unemployed are youth aged 15-34 years, with those aged around 20 years comprising 35 % of the young people's population. The minimal achievement of the targets has been blamed on higher dependence rates of young people attributed majorly to limited skills and opportunities which increase their vulnerability. The major reason for this is captured in the conversation with the local sub - county youth development officer:

*Researcher: Why do the young people face high unemployment in this area?*

*SCYDO: If the youth are to be helped get out of the current unemployment challenge, they must be offered training in skills so as to make them more enterprising.*

*Researcher: Will it not require to create jobs for those trained in the skills?*

*SCYDO: Yes, but it is important to ensure that those skills are appropriate. It is not just enough to offer the training. One of the leading causes of today's unemployment among youth is skills mismatch. This countries' backbone is in agriculture. The greatest job opportunities lie within the agri- food sector. It is therefore, important emphasize on the change of our young people's mindset.*

The findings of the study show that the current thinking among the youth in the study area is that agriculture is for the older and poor people. As brought out by the research participants:

*Researcher: How do the youth in this area perceive agricultural opportunities?*

*FGD Participant I: The young people here regard agriculture based work opportunities to be for people of rural areas. They think that it is only for those that are poor and with no other option other than farming.*

*FGD Participant II: The youth think that agriculturally oriented jobs are laborious and they have little or no pay – off.*

This implies that agricultural based opportunities are unattractive to the youth, yet as argued by a key informant:

*Agriculture means much more than subsistence farming. Farming and its related activities can provide a viable career path for young people. In this region where unemployment is a big problem, the agricultural sector provides a huge potential for job creation. They can employ their technological know-how to even in agricultural improvements.*

The major policy challenge that contributes to the shunning of agriculturally - oriented opportunities by the youth is the failure by the government to come up with agricultural policies that are responsive to the youth. The agricultural policies have not taken into consideration the situation and conditions of young people.

In the educational sector, there is a low transition and completion rate in secondary education as well as limited opportunities in technical and vocational skills training for the young people (Republic of Kenya, 2013). The government has responded to these constraints by the revitalizing and equipping vocational institutions. This has led to the expansion of youth polytechnics and implementation of the subsidized youth polytechnic tuition schemes

(SYPY). The National Youth Service (NYS) has recruited 25,000 youth for Para- military training after which they are deployed to participate in national development projects such as dams, roads, environmental conservation and disaster response.

The question is, however, whether the much emphasis on vocational skills provision adequately addresses the skills gap and positions the young people at advantaged position to overcome the unemployment menace. Maclean *et al.* (2013: 8) have argued that unless there is effective reinforcement of the links with the labour market, raising of attractiveness of TVET and crafting of well-structured and targeted skills development, maximization of the returns from skills and tertiary qualifications will be a mirage. In Chile, the Skills – industry mismatch has been over come through the establishment of Industry Skills Councils, who inform the government, schools and trainees about occupations and skills in demand (World Bank, 2015). In Kenya, this is still a big challenge that needs to be sorted out. According to Masaba sub – county education officer:

*In Kenya, the current practice does not put into consideration the need to design educational curriculum that is relevant to economic realities. Policy practitioners in the educational sector have always failed to embrace the training of opportunities for young people in the strategic areas. Educational opportunities must always be in Zinc with the regional and national realities if they were to be of any meaning.*

As observed by the education official, the country's education will be of little utility to its youth if it is not derived from a progressive curriculum. At present, the Kenyan state is experiencing lots of opportunities for its curriculum reform. For instance, the country has attained tremendous progress in the discovery of mineral resources such as coal, oil and natural oil in various parts of the country and this are the new frontiers for career prospects. The phenomenon of climate change has triggered innovations in agricultural practices and the field of agribusiness has shown prospects for future growth. Other areas for current and future economic expansion are in applied information technology in such areas as telecommunication and medical care. The skills provision in these areas should be started early in the life of the learners and developed progressively to the highest levels in the academic ladder.

### **7.3.2 Health and well-being services provision as a component of youth policy in Kenya**

The health and well-being of young people is mainly affected by the high prevalence rates manifested in the HIV/AIDS rates among the youth. In addition, teenage pregnancies, tobacco and drug and substance abuse in the age category are some of the challenges confronting the youth. Other vices include; engaging in crime, prostitution and entry into early marriages. The national policy proposes to institute measures for controlling deviance and crime and recreation opportunities and character moulding for the country's youth. The Government, also, recognizes in its National AIDS policy that the youth comprise the majority of AIDS cases in the country (NAS COP, 2012). The government has constructed 130 Youth Empowerment Centres, out of the planned 210. Of those put up, 74 were equipped to make them operational and facilitated the roll out of Youth friendly family planning services in major health centres country wide.

The above notwithstanding, the increases in drug and substance use and abuse among young people and high levels of vulnerability of youth to HIV/AIDS continue to be visible (NACADA, 2012; Republic of Kenya, 2014). Similarly, the number of convicted prisoners has been increasing steadily. For instance, the convicted prisoners rose from 63691 in 2012 to 77405 in the year 2013, an increase of a staggering 21.5 %. Moreover, 52.3 % of the prison population in 2013 comprised of the youth aged 25 years and below (KNBS, 2014). Majorly, the situational crime prevention efforts have been utilized to tackle crime in the Kenyan society. The lack of parenting interventions and prevention strategies that are embedded in the work of the community safety programmes at the grassroots level does not guarantee effectiveness and as such, early intervention programmes and initiatives directed at children and young people who are the most likely to be 'at risk' of becoming prolific criminals of the future will suffice (Blyth and Enver, 2009). For effective HIV /AIDS prevention for young people, long term maintenance of health protective behaviors, which emanate from strengthening individual level antecedents of risk and protective behaviours with ecological influences ( Diclemente and Crosby, 2006 ) will strengthen youth intervention strategies.

### **7.3.3 The elusive search for increased educational opportunities: quantity at the altar of value**

Issues of access, equity, quality and relevance are acknowledged in Kenya's education policy as a challenge that has persisted despite relentless efforts towards its redress. This is attributed to insufficient trained manpower (teaching force), limited availability of teaching

and learning resources and low morale and poor remuneration among teachers (Republic of Kenya, 2013: 73).The government aims to continue to improve on this by enhancing quality and relevance of education and training, Integrating ICT in Education, Improving governance in education and enhancing education in ASALS.

Some of the programmes earmarked for roll out in the 2013 – 2017 plan period include: Curriculum review and reform, including digitization at all levels and mainstreaming national values (mentoring and moulding) and talent nurturing, integrating ICT and the laptop programme for primary school learners, TVET and Artisan training and enhancement of education in ASALs. The number of educational institutions rose steadily during the 2009 – 2013 period. Primary and secondary schools rose from 26,667 to 30,122 and 6,971 to 8,848 in 2009 and 2013 respectively. Also, TVET institutions increased from 619 in 2009 to 748 in 2013.

Despite the massive input of resources though, the mean subject percentage score (in KCPE) at the Primary school level shows that the national mean score declined from 55.95 in 2012 to 54.13 in 2013, with all subjects except English registering a decline in 2013. At secondary school level (KCSE), the number of candidates who scored a minimum university entry grade of C+ declined marginally from 123,704 in 2012 to 123, 374 in 2013 (Kenya, Republic of, 2013:44- 48). Therefore, the programmes and resource input have not contributed towards ameliorating the educational standards and the attendant benefits to the country's youth.

#### **7.3.4 Participation in decision making and access to information technology, financial and market linkages**

Youth involvement in the planning and forging partnerships with other members of society is regarded as one way of instilling ownership in efforts to improve their wellbeing. Hence, they feel empowered to participate in national life (Kenya, Republic of, 2007). The current medium - term plan has outlined the following strategies to promote youth participation in national development and decision making: Firstly, the implementation of the 30% public procurement preference for young people and the promotion of the Youth led enterprises through financing by the Uwezo fund. Secondly, the constituency based Youth enterprise development fund and the launch of the integrated e-youth ICT platform, for establishing a youth portal for enhancing information access to the young people. In 2012, a total of 6.5 Billion shillings from the Youth development Fund has been allocated to 141,316 young



entrepreneurs and 62,239 of them were trained before receiving the funds. However, as already observed in section 2.5 the provision of financial solutions to youth problems only offers superficial intervention. Many of the proposed interventions in the name of flagship projects have also not been implemented.

#### **7.4 Pitfalls in the national youth policy formulation and implementation in Kenya**

From the foregoing discussion, it has emerged that two weaknesses afflict the national youth policy initiatives. Firstly, a consistent narrative in the historical evolution of youth policy is that the proposals do not take into consideration the role of the major societal institutions such as the family and as such the targeted interventions have failed to produce lasting impacts on the targeted beneficiaries. Secondly, there are instances of problems with the actual policy implementation as indicated by the numerous programmes whose success was marred by corruption and instances of lack of continuity. In the subsequent sections, i discuss these limitations.

##### **7.4.1 State generated solutions: latent concerns or political vested interests**

Public policy making is not merely a technical function of the state but, one which is influenced by a complex variety of forces, which influence its output and impact (Osman, 2014). However, the implementation of policies in developing countries are characterized by populist and politically motivated agenda. According to Veenhoven ( 2002) when such a situation prevails, the policy implementers fail to pick up latent concerns and instead, vested interests often keep appealing to issues from the political agenda ( ibid. PP.40) .In Kenya, this has been a key feature , especially with regard to the marginalized groups such as women, children and the youth. As such the programmes targeted at addressing youth problems have been carried out under the poverty reduction strategies, and are often palliative. Another major characteristic of the programmes targeting young people in Kenya is that they have often been marred by historical discontinuities in governmental programmes, especially resulting from political regime changes. Makinde (2005 : 65) points out that when political governments change hands, the ego of the politicians drives them into either discarding all together a previously running problem or altering it for the sake of earning credit, and this breeds serious discontinuity problems and often results in programme failure .Similarly, when policy formulation is conducted within the traditional closed bureaucratic government, the problem of continuity arises as the collaborative effort of the community and thus sustainability lacks( Charalabidis and Koussouris, 2012).

#### **7.4.2 State – family interface: bridging the great divide**

A continuing challenge confronting policy structures in developing countries is how programmes can better respond to the early developmental needs of the young people whose processes depend on their unique circumstances, cultures and identities that often shape the meaning and quality of interventions. In Kenya, although all young people are likely to share certain developmental processes, they vary in many ways due to sensitivities that emerge within sub-groups of adolescents and youth around issues of gender, ethnicity and class. The Country's Youth policy, while acknowledging the role of key stakeholders in mentoring of young people, has the inherent weakness – that is, the tendency to overlook the larger social context in which its priority strategic programmes are implemented. When the role of such indispensable ecological support systems is disregarded, their mediating role is impeded, leading to minimal empowerment outcomes (Christiens and Peterson, 2012). For instance, it has been argued that for any successful policy programme formulation and implementation targeting any category of individuals such as children, youth, women or the elderly; the power of the family as the constraining context must be recognized as the most long lasting support system available to its members (Mercier et.al, 2000). Thus, the modern family has not given up its functions to government agencies but rather co-exist in supporting and aiding individuals in their attempt to cope and prosper in the larger environment (Mokomane, 2012). In particular, more explicit incorporation of close family members such as parents and care givers into programmes intended to augment adherence by providing adequate information, training and resources will facilitate their effectiveness (Knodel et.al, 2009).

Actual practice in Kenya, however, reveals that although the Youth policy proposes: the promotion and mainstreaming of responsible parenting, providing for physical and psychological needs (Kenya Republic of, 2003: 6), the implementation of policies, programmes and projects matrix for the first and second medium term plans fall short of identifying and deploying any financial allocation for these elements within the “social pillar flagship projects” (Kenya Republic of, 2007; Kenya Republic of, 2013). This can be attributed largely to the non – existence of an explicit family policy in Kenya, which could provide an effective framework for distribution and implementation of family – related services such as: child care, counseling and social services between government departments and agencies. Despite clear evidence of policy interest in the welfare of the families, Kenya like many other African countries does not have an explicit family policy; rather the welfare of families in the country is safeguarded by a number of implicit commitments and policies

embedded in legislative acts such as the newly promulgated constitution of Kenya (2010). In the absence of a single overarching family policy, countries such as Kenya are made to rely on a multitude of features of family life as espoused in the various legislative documents, and this has been pointed out as a complex challenge to government bureaucrats and social scientists alike (Smit, 2012). When families inadvertently derive benefits from outcomes of other social policy and programmes and not from mechanisms that directly target them, in most instances, such policies and programmes turn out to be incomprehensive or not well-thought out (Ndangwa, 2014). Furthermore, studies have shown that such programmes may not be acquiescent to the family impact lenses approach, which incorporates: family responsibility, stability, diversity and engagement (Bogenschneider et.al, 2012). There may also, arise contradictions and inconsistencies as exemplified in the case where there are many policies for protecting children compared to a handful for women, a situation Rombo (2012) argues, does not serve any good, for when mothers are unprotected, so too are children. This calls for the enactment of a national family policy framework, necessary for systematic evaluation of sectoral policy effectiveness.

#### **7.4.3 Over - emphasis on economic solutions to young people's problems**

As already pointed out, the greatest fallacy in the country's policy postulation is the assumption that the youth's problem is an economic one. On the contrast, the solution to young people's challenges lies in the targeting of the strengthening of the institutions such as the family and schools, whose actors in turn respond effectively to the needs of its youth in society. In Kenya, all efforts to address the youth question emphasize direct financial provision to the target group. This has been mainly in the form of financial support provision for small business startups. Whereas the study recognizes the important role that entrepreneurial dynamisms has in harnessing the young people's potential, greater emphasis should be on policies that seek to improve child upbringing and access to high quality education. This is because, even when jobs are available, the young people must have requisite skills so as to take advantage of decent jobs.

#### **7.4.4 Inconsistencies in the youth policy formulation and implementation**

A review of the young peoples' project implementation programmes in the country shows that majority of the policy programme implementation activities run counter to the policy positions. For instance, although the Kenyan constitution provides for strong public engagement of the youth, there is presently low level of public youth engagement. This is attributed to the lack of specific affirmative guidelines on the representation of youth in governance bodies at local, regional and national bodies. According to the Vision 2030 economic blue print, the

social pillar classifies the youth as one of the components of the population that make up the vulnerable populations in the country. However, the document falls short of outlining how the youth and families' aspirations are incorporated into the document. This creates ownership and sustainability concerns.

Secondly, although the youth are considered a key constituency in the nation's life, in practice, they are merely given a peripheral treatment. The youth comprise the greatest component of country's population, whose critical role in spearheading the country to a newly industrialized status must be tapped. However, as argued by Shako and Odote (2009: 25), many of the country's projects target to engage the young people in manual labour but fails to outline the employment strategies for the educated and the skilled unemployed youth in the country. This contradicts the contemporary paradigm in which ICT is the fastest growing sector in the country, whose capacities can be tapped by the youth. Access to technology has proven to be an effective tool for development as demonstrated by the Asian tiger economies such as Malaysia.

Thirdly, the National youth policy lacks a well thought out implementation plan for its activities and programmes. To begin with, although the policy outlines a comprehensive and multi – sectoral implementation strategy and establishes two bodies for this purpose, its failure to involve non-governmental actors renders its implementation mechanisms ineffective. The National youth policy identifies the national youth council and the inter – ministerial committee as the key implementing agencies but fails to specify the non – governmental actors in the sector. The participation of non – state actors in the provision of youth services has been identified as an important vehicle for enhancing effectiveness and networking (IEA, 2010). The non – involvement of the sector, therefore, cuts out the much needed collaborations and funding sources for the implementation of the policy.

Lastly, a critical examination of the youth policy shows glaring omissions with regard to the policy's strategic areas. The priority strategic areas and groups leave out the important institutions of the society such as the family and the educational institutions. As already pointed out, this narrowly defines the young people's challenges, which should otherwise be considered from a broad perspective, including the community and the socio- cultural environmental conditions. Some of the omitted strategic areas include family and social education to include such tasks as community norms, Parent – child interaction and parenting

techniques. Moreover, whereas the youth policy acknowledges the obligation of adults, parents and the nation state, it fails to recognize parents and other actors in the socialization of young people. Additionally, the family and other social institutions as key priority target groups are not made reference to in the policy document.

## **7.5 Conclusion**

This chapter has presented the policy environment against which the country's programmes for the youth have been implemented since independence. It has been shown that although the successive government regimes have been involved in initiating youth policy programmes and projects, these were mainly meant to serve political purposes, with the young people regarded as political instruments whose problems were targeted for fixing so as to pre – empty civil unrest. At a more general level, the policies targeting the young people were rolled out at the level of intervention over the already problematic youth, instead of aiming at the improvement of the socio – cultural environment and social institutions in society which impacts on positive youth development. Lastly, the policy formulation process did not enhance inclusivity especially by involving the youth and this resulted in awry programmes and projects for the country's adolescents and young people.

**PART THREE**  
**PREPARATION OF YOUNG PEOPLE FOR THE FUTURE: POLICY AND**  
**PRACTICE**

## CHAPTER EIGHT

### DETERMINANTS OF SOCIALIZATION OF YOUNG PEOPLE AMONG THE ABAGUSII

#### **8.0 Introduction**

This chapter outlines the key factors that determine the socialization outcomes among the young people in Gusii. It mainly aims at synthesizing the key empirical results discussed in chapters five and six of the thesis. The influence of the community, including those of parents and peers as socialization agents, religion and the educational institutions are presented.

#### **8.1 The outcomes of Socialization of young people among the Abagusii**

Socialization of young people results either in anti or pro- social behavior. As shown in **chapters five and six**, the outcomes whether positive or negative have been attributed to the influence of the key social institutions and the socialization agents such as the family, religious, educational and the political institutions (Ebaugh, 2006). At the family level, the individual life experiences including parenting behavior and availability of resources and sibling influences whose relationship influences the personality and wellbeing of the young person (Landesman et.al, 1991; Dun, 1991). Similarly, educational institutions and schooling have a key role to play in preparing the young adults for life and work in the twenty first century (Zajda, 2010). In addition, education plays an important role in promoting tolerance and peace as well as humanizing globalization (Binde, 2002; Delors, 1996).

The findings of this study show that putting aside the effectiveness of the above stated mainstream social institutions in enhancing the socialization outcomes, certain conditions are necessary and the outcome largely depends on the presence or absence of this. According to a respondent, Nyagaka Ombaki, (42 years):

*Bringing up young people entails a process of relationships, whether you are considering this at homes, in schools or in the church. The relationships are teaching process involving superior people and juniors. For anything meaningful to be realized out of this process, the younger ones must show some form of recognition and obedience to the elders who are teachers in the home, school and church and even the entire community.*

Hence, the presence or the lack of structuring of relationships based on life experience and age hierarchies is an important determinant of socialization outcomes. This is in tandem with Levines' study among the Gusii in the 1960s which found out that the relationship among the young and older members of society was explicitly patterned with the younger ones required to show utmost respect and regard to individuals older than themselves (ibid. 162). Similarly, obedience was regarded as the yardstick for measuring successful socialization in a young person. As pointed out by the Levines (1966), *When asked which of their children they could choose to send to school, the parent's answer was "the most obedient child"*. He notes while one could expect the criteria to revolve around the possession of intellectual qualities such as the ability to learn, far from it, they *"view schooling as a series of commands by the teacher which if they are obeyed by the child result in success. Failure is attributed to disobedience rather than stupidity (ibid 107)*. Even within the school, teachers wield the dominant position relative to that of the pupils *"as the dispenser of the scarce and valued commodity (education) and a classroom disciplinary agent" (ibid 109)*.

Cattell (1994) argues that in Sub Saharan Africa, where the age set system is unique to the continent, the norm is that powerful seniors instruct and direct obedient and respectful juniors. However, mainly due to the prevailing struggle for generational power resulting from the breakdown of the age-structured hierarchies due to delocalization, it has become difficult for the elders (Socializers) to advice the young (Socializees) (ibid.157). The reason for this state of affairs is echoed in the conversation of Benard Makwae (52 years)

*Today, there is no defined system of maintaining the power hierarchy that used to moderate the training of an individual to serve and be served depending on his age, which accorded him the exact status in the "esaiga"<sup>89</sup> or "egesarate"<sup>90</sup>. And for young girls who slept in the grandmothers' hut which provided a context for being taught about sexual and marital behavior, in addition to practical engagement in feminine and masculine responsibilities. In most homes the parents and the young girls are housed under a single roof and the boys live*

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<sup>89</sup>, A cottage traditionally inhabited by boys aged between seven and twelve years and their father among the Abagusii.



*on their own in separate house leading to a blurring in distinction in roles and complete mix up..... And in other cases the older people's inexperience over issues beyond their immediate home environment renders them inadequate in providing relevant information to their off springs.*

Yubinarisi Miruka (54 years) adds that the need for collective community responsibility in matters of maintaining the discipline of young people is important for effective socialization. She observes:

*It is not possible for parents of a child alone to monitor his or her children's progress in the community. If every adult person becomes his neighbour's or relative's child keeper, then things will go well and children behavior will be properly nurtured. But if every family lives on its own as an island, then all our young people will grow up infected with bad mannerisms and it will not be in any way possible to save the present generation of young people from totally collapsing.*

Baranaba Aosa (64 Years), further asserts that parents or older individuals in the community are unwilling to advice other people's children and young people for fear of backlash from their fellow community members. In his own words:

*I have witnessed many instances of quarrels that often degenerate into fights and cases for the chief's baraza among closely related relatives. Most are among brothers' wives in this village over issues of correcting stray children. When one reprimands the child's misdeeds or even reports him to his parents or other authorities, the child's parents tells you that you are jealousy and that you are motivated by the desire to do malice to his child and family. If your brother or neighbour tells you that you have been unable to look after your own children and asks you what interest you have in his personal affairs, what do you do? Next time you find his child doing wrong things you cannot sound alarm but look aside for your own safety and comfortable stay in the village.*

Hence, when the adult world fails to put in place a situation of harmony and collective parental control and responsibility over the community's younger members, the latter find themselves in a precarious situation. In their field studies on child rearing and socialization of young people among the Gusii, Levine and Levine (1966) found out that "any adult stops the child from doing anything that went against acceptable behavior and that was at liberty to mete appropriate punishment on such a young person ( ibid 156). Pointing out that youth development is a community responsibility, Carney (1999) calls for the establishment of a shared commitment by all adults and the entire community at large as a way of restoring the loss of community capacity for the informal control.

## **8.2 Cultural value of children and the ability of care: The paradox**

Like in other Kenyan communities, the Gusii believe that their culture behoves every individual to beget own offsprings who will perpetuate their lineage. As expressed by Moranga Manduku: (48):

*Your own born child remains the main reason for living. You see if one is sterile or is unfortunate by bad luck, so he lacks children, this person remains miserable knowing that he has nobody else to take his name once he leaves the earth.*

Thus, children are viewed as a means to social recognition and a valuable asset since they provide adults with the status befitting a member of society. This explains why anybody who suffers the misfortune of barrenness or infertility is regarded as an unsuccessful person in the society. Conversely, field data demonstrates overwhelming assertion to the affirmative that children have become a great burden to bear in contemporary period. This sentiment is expressed by Samwel Omariba (68):

*a child means more thoughts on my part over space that he will occupy for himself and his children when he acquires his people. You know very well that as land becomes more and more segmented, we are telling them that their shamba is the education they are obtaining in school so they should work very hard to succeed in their studies, but the school fees and the food they require is hard to come by.*

Therefore, the general trend points of a local discourse replete with both contradiction and paradoxes. Although the children are regarded as important in the community, the capacity to care for them is lacking, as demonstrated by the admission by parents that their children will grow up to perpetuate their names, but the reality in Masaba is that ancestral land, which forms the main resource depended upon for livelihood is diminished and the costs associated with providing for children needs have been soaring by the day. But in reality as shown in **Figure six** (See Section 4.2.1) the continued steady rise of the youth cohort remains intact, calling for allocation of massive resources towards meeting their basic social welfare such as education and healthcare.

### **8.3 Social institutions and their role in the socialization process: Ideal and actual practice**

Troman et.al, ( 2004) argues that as “salient arenas” in which behaviours and lives of growing individuals are regulated, all the social institutions are interrelated and implicated in the generation, management and the development of social identities and the social and cultural reproduction of structures and relations. Their collective contribution towards the realization of positive socialization outcome is critical and the failure by any one or a group of these will result in diminished outcomes (Salazar, 2011). This is echoed in the words of Samwel Nyabwanga, aged 78 years at Nyagachi village:

*In life the process of bringing up a person and providing the necessary requirements must be met by all sectors of the community. Therefore none is of greater benefit than another. If one is pricked by a thorn in his leg, no matter how small the pain is, the entire body system experiences the pain. If you remove one of the cooking stones, it will not be possible to cook, as all the three work co –operatively in holding the cooking pot in its position.*

However, the empirical data showed that while the foregoing is true, at least theoretically, some of the respondents argued that in the modern world what is more important is that which contributes to the immediate upward mobility in a young person. This fact was captured in the words of Obonyo Omurwa, a former livestock trader, who narrated several cases of poor and broken families whose children have excelled in life and are presently the leading lights in the village. Omurwa attributes their excelling to education.

### **Case I: Yunia oyaro (Aged around 72 years)**

She was born disabled and hence did not have the ability to walk, but practiced mobility by crawling. Probably due to her state, Yunia never got to be married but bore five children (Three boys and two girls) and remained in her father's homestead. She earned her livelihoods by selling local brew (*Changaa*) through which she paid school fees for her children, who all excelled in their educational endeavours. All the male children obtained well-paying jobs in the civil service as graduate employees. One of the two girls qualified as a nurse and works at a local dispensary, while the other one obtained permanent residence permit popularly known as a "*Green card*" and presently resides in the United States of America with her husband and children.

### **Case II: Nyangaresi Gwako (Aged around 81)**

Gwako's was once one of those families that were considered lowly in Suguta Village. As a polygamous man with four wives, he never stayed home but spent all his time away in Maasai land at Ngararo as "*Omonyamwaka*"<sup>91</sup>. Unlike other people who went out in search of wealth for his family, Gwako only provided manual labour to families in exchange for meagre earnings which he wholly consumed. He made occasional visits to his home, often empty handed. His three wives were equally irresponsible and their houses were prominently known for brewing and selling local brew. Despite the above, his home is the most respected in the village, courtesy of the achievements of his children who worked hard in school and secured highly paid jobs in the government and the private sector.

From these two episodes of successful families, despite a poor socialization environment, their young people realized positive socialization outcomes. In both cases, the family environment was inconducive for positive growth, and was neither religious nor endowed with the requisite resources. The above notwithstanding, they excelled compared to the other local families. This, therefore, contradicts the view that educational excellence is dependent on quality of home environment, parental support and religiosity (Garasky, 1999; Lehrer, 1999). Barker (2011) notes that this is attributed to the rise and dominance of formal education in the mobility and status attainment process in contemporary society. The deprivation among the children in the above situations, therefore, provides the motivation for their excellence in educational endeavors particularly and life in general.

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<sup>91</sup> Person, often a married man, who disappears from his home for long periods of time.

Hence, the life situation of an individual should be regarded as playing a greater role in the socialization outcomes, while that of the mainstream social institutions such as the family, religious affiliation and economic status plays a peripheral albeit important role. The numerous cases of the children of prominent religious leaders like pastors and church elders in Masaba who had experienced negative socialization outcomes all attest to the above. In the following sections the contribution of the various agents and social institutions towards the socialization outcome among the young people in the study area is dealt with. Empirical evidence showing the factors limiting their roles is presented.

#### **8.4 The family in changing times: implications for socialization**

As explained in Chapter 1 (See Section 1.4.1) the family in whatever form is recognized as the first context in which the child is first socialized and is the institution whose influence leaves a lasting impact on an individual's life time. However, with the alterations to society brought about by social change and its resultant reorganization of the social structures, the family which plays an important role in the life of children and young people's transition to adulthood gets assaulted most compared to the other social institutions, thus affecting in a big way its capacity to continue performing the important function. Empirical findings of the study demonstrate that contrary to the expectation that the family provides a nurturing environment for all members of society, more so the children and the youth, the modern family is no longer an asset that it used to be. These sentiments are expressed in the conversation with Samwel Onyiego (58):

*A family was and still remains important for every human being as when one becomes homeless, he cannot make ends meet at all. Culturally, one becomes an outcast if he fails to establish a family of his own. But the problem today is that if you talk to everybody, they will inform you that the family is a necessary evil, just placed there for its own sake. In this village, most men will tell you that it demands so much from you as the man responsible for the family but nothing is given back to you as it used to be. Today, this thing has become a "prison of expectation".*

As a premier context for child and young people's upbringing, the family cannot, therefore, be expected to effectively fulfill its mandate if the ingredients necessary for its routine functioning are absent. Brodhead et.al, (2010 112) argues that such ingredients

such as emotional support provide enabling environments necessary for cultivating positive familial relationships which are in turn essential for positive relationships and learning. They too “support and challenge young people to transition from dependence to independence and acquire the traits of being secure and confident individuals able to take up roles in society”.

#### **8.4.1 Parental relations: implications for social role and responsibility sharing in household**

The findings of the study clearly show that in Masaba, new value systems have emerged with regard to child rearing and command over resources, thus affecting deeply the relations between mothers and fathers which often result in disagreements and open conflict within the household. Levine and Levine (1965: 21) have observed that among the Gusii, an ideal wife should: ..... *Obey her husband at all times and be differential to him. She should consult him before she takes any important action.*

According to a Key informant Nathan Mogire Nyagero (57 years):

*It is a common practice here these days to see women (mothers) and their men (husbands) struggling openly over who gives the final word in their houses to be obeyed by their children..... .*

When marital conflict manifests itself in the family, children and young people experience numerous maladjustment difficulties (Crockenberg and Langrock, 2001). The main source of the lack of the harmonious relationship within the household has been attributed to the failure by the male household heads in fulfilling their obligations in the upkeep of the household. This important role is brought out by Keremencia Kemunto (62):

*a man is responsible for providing the required necessities for his family. It is no longer important for them to only sire children and provide intangible security for the family as it used to be.....*

But the study findings show that most of the men do not in fact fulfill these roles and responsibilities. Silberschmidt (1999) attributes this failure to the changing socio-economic circumstances which have affected men more than they have for women. More

so, the men's inability to provide for their families have worked towards" undermining male identity and with many (fathers) not fulfilling their social roles and responsibilities, tensions between the sexes ( mothers and fathers) often reach levels that can no longer be controlled ( ibid.130)". For this problem to be addressed, it is thus imperative to deal with the modern contradictions that surround the men's role - based identity. As such while the "patriarchal ideology" dominates men's (fathers) thinking in the study area, a lot of effort need to be directed to ensuring their active participation in household upkeep.

For the young people, the frequent wrangling among parents leads to their being neglected by both parents. Thus, they not only miss out the amiable home environment but the material support. This is brought out in the case of Aroni Aminga aged 17:

*Whenever i approach my father to explain to him the required provisions for my use in school and at home, he tells me to go tell this to my mother because she thinks she is the owner the owner of this home. .... But my mother often tells me to return back to my father since he is the head of the family. I eventually end up going without these basic provisions.*

It follows, therefore, that "gender antagonism" breeds a lack of clear delineation of social roles and responsibility between fathers and mothers. This creates an ambiguity which the men (fathers) exploit by indulging in escapism leading to a lack of sharing of responsibilities within the household as dictated by contemporary norms.

Citing the case of an Andean community in Ecuador, Hamilton (1998) argues that the possibility of "two-headed" households, where men and women participate equally in home management, household decision making and the sharing in the reproductive tasks of child care, food preparations and other chores can be realized even in societies in which patriarchal power is pervasive. Hamilton observes further that the solution lies in transforming the community's gender ideology, so that it is provided with the opportunity to accord men and women equal measure of physical, mental and emotional fortitude so that the reigning slogan of strong women, strong families.

#### **8.4.2 Household headship: emerging trends and implications**

The findings of the study demonstrate that there have been far reaching consequences on the socialization of young people resulting from the changing trends in the nature of household headship in the study area. The emerging trends are presented in the following sections.

#### **8.4.2.1 Female headed households**

The young people from female-headed households in the study area reported that they experienced less disruption with regard to parental decision making and provision for their personal welfare. This contrasts sharply with the expectation that in the *de jure* female headed households, poverty rates are marginally higher than those from male-headed households. In such households the disruptions could be a usual occurrence (Fuwa, 2000). According to George Nyabwanga (38):

*It is difficult to find the children who hail from homes that are led by women being send home for school fees and other related issues. The children from these homes are also the ones showing good discipline in the community. In those homes where fathers are the leaders, children's needs often take a long time to be responded to. As such, women (mothers) in these localities have proved to be better home managers than the men themselves.*

The respondent's assertions points out that although the household - head has the social responsibility to fulfill the nutritional and other needs of the household members, in Masaba, the findings of the study demonstrate the contrast. This concurs with the fact that in the Gusii community, although the men's role in the family is considered to be that of a "supervisor of domestic economy" or *Omosacha*, Levine (1980: 102) observes that this does not necessarily imply his active support and involvement in the direct care of children. Combined with many unfavorable factors such as population pressure, decreasing rainfall and soil fertility which have reduced land productivity, this has led to a dysfunction of the household head's role. This, therefore, brings to the fore, how traditional or patriarchal norms and the prevailing community conditions conspire to hinder household decision making which is necessary for attaining the welfare of the household.

#### **8.4.2.2 Changing nature and role of households**

The contemporary Gusii family has been transformed in ways that make it difficult for its members to exercise their traditional socialization functions. For instance, with the case of the family which was previously large and extended, it is today getting smaller and smaller (nuclear) albeit within the rural setting landscape. Secondly, the family,



previously engaged in subsistence and small scale cash crop production (mainly tea in the study area), today relies more on wage employment by the adult members (Wallerstein and Smith 1992). The findings of the study show that for both men and women, the most important commodity on offer is the casual labour in exchange for daily and monthly wages. According to an informant, Sabina Mirwoba 48 years:

*the people in this area used to depend on earnings from cash crops such as tea and growing of pyrethrum which used to earn substantial income for the families to use in their household expenditure and the payment of school fees for our children. With the diminishing of land sizes and poor yields, the community has nothing of the sort to look forward to. Women move from the village to till in Maansae<sup>92</sup> while the men are labourers at “the scheme<sup>93</sup>” where they work and come home to see their families occasionally or at the end of the month.*

From the above, it is shown that the parents’ desire to provide for the needs of their families lead them into being absent from home for prolonged periods of time. This is more critical for the fathers who circulate repetitively between the origin and destination areas based on their respective seasonal conditions and labour demands. Although the temporary migration of the fathers in search of labour serves as a family survival strategy, their extended absence from home is a challenge to families. Seasonal and circular internal labour migration by poor men means that the father’s role in a nuclear family, which is considered central to its harmonious existence and survival as a socializing unit, is missed out. Studies have shown that families with absent fathers suffer identity and provisional crises, with the “women being left to bear the burden of added reproductive and productive roles” (Kimani and Kisilu 2010: 1). Moreover, reduced parental availability has been positively associated with increased sexual activity, higher risk of pregnancy and early marriage for young girls (Kabiru and Eze, 2007; Ngom et.al, 2001). The heightened increase of problems in families within the locality is aptly captured in the words of Oyagi Atuti (48 Years):

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<sup>92</sup> Local name for referring to the adjacent vast cultivable land owned by the Maasai neighbours in the study area.

<sup>93</sup> Land adjacent to the study area which was previously occupied by white settlers farmers but presently owned by wealth local inhabitants.

*In the past the village residents used to permanently move with their families to the places where the head of the family secured manual labour opportunities. The family could settle close by and this provided opportunity for us as parents to provide good care of the children. These days of uncertainties cannot allow us to do so because skirmishes tend to erupt every time when the crops are near harvest time. So nobody wants to risk. But you can see that the community is paying a high price as there are now many young mothers and unruly men in the community because their fathers are never here to contain them.*

The sentiments expressed by the above respondent show how the sporadic clashes pitting the Kisii and the Maasai in sections of the study area close to the region along the Kisii / Trans Mara border lead to unquantifiable social consequences for families( Collier and Sambians, 2005). Specifically, the fear of renewed occurrence of the skirmishes in the previously affected areas creates panic among the prospective migrants. The “Gusii have always been dependent on Maasai land, which they leased from periods ranging from one season to others permanently buying the land and establishing their homesteads on it” (Golaz, 2001: 24), however, since this is no longer possible, the men move alone to supply manual labour and lease out land for farming activities and leave their families behind and plan occasional visits back home, leading to the phenomena of “absent fathers”.

#### **8.4.2.3 Child headed and grand – parent headed households among the Abagusii**

Besides being the leading killer of the adolescent and youth category of the population, as explained in **chapter two** of the thesis (See 2.7.2), the HIV/AIDS pandemic has altered family headship phenomena in the country. In Kisii County, out of the total of 262,652 households, 19, 985 are grandparent - headed<sup>94</sup> (Republic of Kenya, 2013). On top of this, there is also a substantial number of child headed households in the locality<sup>95</sup>. The phenomenon of orphan hood has been attributed to the loss of family members of prime

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<sup>94</sup> According to the 2012/2013 Kenya National Housing Survey, these are those households headed by individuals, either male or female that are aged over 75 Years.

<sup>95</sup> No substantive survey had been undertaken to estimate the figures at the time of the study, but anecdotal evidence point to the prevalence of the phenomena in the study area.

age which impacts on the ability to care for the younger members of the society. According to a local government official, Mr.Gitonga:

*Many of the homes in this region (Sub County) are in the hands of children whose parents have died from HIV/AIDS. Whenever this happens, they end up as total orphans and since nowadays, the children cannot be taken up by their close relatives in the extended family system. The elder child always gets to keep watch and fend for the younger siblings. This always comes with the disadvantage to the one that takes up adults' place to the extent of many of them sometimes dropping out of school. In a few instances, the ageing parents attempt to nurture the young offspring's left behind when both of their children die. However, most often, they are themselves overwhelmed as many of the cases of teenage pregnancy and the young girls given out informally to relatives in urban areas to work as "ayahs" are from these homes.*

This, therefore, means that the siblings brought up in these types of households have minimal chances of attaining education. According to the study respondents, the children and young people from these households are prevented from excelling in schooling matters in different ways. This is brought out in the conversations of the Focus group participants:

*Researcher: What hinders young people from child headed households from performing well in school work?*

*FGD Participant I: The youth from these families rarely maintain regular school going but develop erratic school attendance habits as there is no one to watch over them and enforce their regular attendance.*

*FGD Participant II: Many of the children whose homes have no parents face problems of indiscipline. The children always get in to trouble with their teachers because they fail to do their homework. They fail to complete the assignments because they lack the assistance of an adult at home.*

A teacher at a local primary school observed that the young people from these families are subjected to the stigma associated with the deprivation that they endure. According to him:

*The children from poor child headed homes suffer from inadequate self-esteem as they are usually mocked by their peers for lack of enough study and writing materials and for being clad in untidy school uniform. Many of them lack concentration in class and portray symptoms of stress and trauma.*

For the female youth who head their respective households, being charged with the provision for the other siblings in the home often exposes them to the danger of involving themselves in transactional sex. The reason for this is captured by Florence Nyagaka (38 years):

*For the young girls, the demands of life lure them into seeking the favours of mature men in the village who in turn exploit them sexually. There have even some cases of these kind of acts involving very close relatives and teachers who are entrusted to help the young ones overcome their tribulations.*

Hence, the absence of adult care givers deprives the young people of the opportunity to acquire basic education, making them severely disadvantaged and vulnerable in society. Moreover, the socio-economic and psycho–social needs of the young people in the households present a major challenge to the rural families and communities.

### **8.5 Religious institutions and the wellbeing of young people**

Religion is considered as an important institution to society because it confers its members the natural tendency to cultivate virtues and exercise moral sound judgment. According to the study informants, religiosity is positively correlated with vibrant political, educational, familial and individual lives in society, as brought out in a focus group discussion in the study area:

Researcher: *What are the advantages of religiosity in your community?*

FGD Participant 1: *Religious practices such as the holding of regular prayer sessions both in the homes and at the churches is of benefit as it contributes to the strengthening of the family unit. In today's world where families easily fall apart, the belief in the basic religious ideals help individuals to acquire happiness and thus perpetuate the intensity and strength of the family unit, which is a necessary condition for good parenting.*

Researcher: *To whom is religion and religious belief most important in your community?*

FGD Participant II: *Religiosity is of great importance to all members of the society but the young people draw greater benefits if the older members of the society and themselves hold religious beliefs. For those youth that regularly attend to church services, their involvement in the many social problems such as consuming illicit drinks and drugs are minimized.*

FGD Participant III: *Within the village, the youth that are more committed religiously possess greater self-esteem and manage to exercise sound moral judgement which makes them to be more advantaged in pursuing life goals during their youthful period and in adult life. In adult life, many of those people that keep religious faith and practices live longer and are also less open to suffer from the many of the modern illnesses which affect people of their ages.*

This, therefore, implies that religious practices present a myriad of gains to the society's young people and is important for maintaining good behavior and improved social relations in the community. Richards and Bergin (2000) argue that when young people are consistently involved in religious activities, their communities experience dramatic reductions of the common problems affecting young people such as sexual permissiveness, teenage motherhood , teen suicide , alcoholism and the resultant deviant behavior.

However, despite the above expectations, the findings of the study demonstrate that mainly as a result of the emerging contradictions, the young people fail to benefit from the

anticipated impacts of religion (see section 6.3.2). The findings of the study attribute this to the various factors which have arisen from the recent transformations in social life and therefore, led to a significant reduction of the young peoples participation in religious life. An important point of concern is that modern religious institutions have resisted the need to carry out reforms on generational lines. In pointing out how this leads to the discontinuity in religious transmission, a Key Informant avers:

*Our local church and pastors have continued to persist in their insistence that the church doctrines, some of which are of no functional use be observed to the letter. The young followers find this to be intimidating and within a short period of time, Christianity, which is our religion, loses its appeal to many of them. They argue that there is no reason of sticking to mere beliefs which are of no practical use but are meant for the benefit of older members of the society.*

The respondent's views point to the fact that contemporary religious practices fail to capture the young people's motivation as they do not offer them the experience of personal identification with the values that are espoused by the religious leaders and the institutions. Smith and Denton (2005) observes that the regular religious practices in the lives of the young people should go beyond those in collective weekly congregations. Hence, the need to help the young people's commitment to religious ideals presupposes that the religious institutions should institute reforms so that the church routine encompasses other social activities that are attractive to young people.

### **8.6 Education and the wellbeing of young people among the Abagusii**

As already pointed out, education is regarded as the most important determinant of an individual's future success (see section 2.4). Majority of the study respondents indicated that the education of the young people in the community will translate to positive development for the youth, their parents and even communities. This is emphasized in an FGD conversation in the study area:

*Moderator: Is the education of young people of any importance to your community?*

*FGD Participant: Education is the only item that I or any other parent provides to his offsprings. However attains good grades in school will always find a good life*

*which is today not found here but in other places. It is only an educated person that can use his certificates to seek a livelihood. Those of our children that take counsel take their education seriously often become a big asset to the family and the region in providing material and other required support.*

**Moderator:** *What other benefits can education offer to the youth?*

**FGD Participant:** *Education will enable a child to know what is happening in the community and other places and even how to groom himself so as to appear presentable in the eyes of his peers and older people.*

Educational attainment is, therefore, regarded as the key facilitator to an individual's progress and wellbeing. For the youth, this is seen as important because, one's future wellbeing depends on the success achieved in schooling. Despite this, other study respondents pointed out that in present times, the young people's participation in their education does not necessarily guarantee them a successful life in their future endeavours. According to a local education official, Kefa Bangi (54 Years), the paradox can be explained by the nature of the curriculum that is offered, whose emphasis ignores the acquisition of practical skills, thus rendering the beneficiaries ill prepared to face the world of occupations. He asserts:

*The educational programmes that we are providing to the youth are not tailored to well to their learning needs. If they are to be suited to the occupational needs in this locality, then we have to infuse specialized skills into the general education that we offer to our children and youth.*

The failure to come up with effectively well designed programmes is a major impediment to the utilization of the educational services by the youth in the study locality. Appropriate educational programmes for rural areas should aim at providing a holistic curriculum encompassing the family and community improvement education in line with the local economic activities which are useful for making a living.

## **8.7 Conclusion**

This chapter has provided a synthesis the key determinants of adolescent and youth wellbeing as presented in **chapter five** and **chapter six** of the thesis. It has been shown that the socialization outcomes among the young people in the study area are dependent upon the influence of the key social institutions such as the family and the educational and religious institutions. The findings of the study show that for the effective functioning of the social institutions, quality relationships must be established among the various actors such as the elders, parents, teachers, religious leaders. For any meaningful impact to be realized, the role and position of the parents, teachers and the religious leaders must be identified by the young people as legitimately contributing towards the realization of their positive development. The study findings present several paradoxes with regard to child rearing and social service provision by the major social institutions in the study area. For instance, while the community's culture has high regard for children and young people who are considered a treasured asset to the community, the socio-economic transformation engulfing the community have weakened the capabilities of the families and community's capacity to effectively provide for the needs of its young people. Similarly, the community's key institutions' services to the youth are at great variance with their desires and needs, leading to negative outcomes.



## CHAPTER NINE

### RE – CONCEPTUALIZING CONTEMPORARY YOUTH DEVELOPMENT AND ADOLESCENT SOCIALIZATION IN RURAL KENYA: A SYNTHESIS

#### 9.0. Introduction

This chapter draws from the findings of the study to propose a way forward on how young people should be socialized in contemporary Gusii. It also reviews the theoretical paradigms that inform the prospective pathways for stable youth development for the current century and beyond. It begins by describing how the young people are shaped by society. It is shown that whereas the society is dependent on young people as their' future resources, their quality are dependent on the provision for their developmental needs. Hence, the nature of the community's contexts such as families and educational institutions is of paramount importance. Secondly, due to the changing nature of the demands for adulthood in the contemporary society, the latter is called upon to transform the micro-level social institutions so as to make them responsive to positive youth development in the contemporary society. Lastly, the prospect for promoting positive youth development is explored. The study proposes among others, the initiation of youth empowerment centres, community life education for the parents, young people and other members of society and IEC programmes to enlighten the community on the impact of retrogressive and harmful cultural practices.

#### 9.1 Exploring the interdependencies among the young people and the society

Studies have demonstrated that young people and the diverse societies that they inhabit are interdependent (Daiute, 2006). For instance, as observed earlier in the study (**see section 3.2.2**) the attributes of the society that an individual lives in is the most important determinant of his well-being throughout the life course. As such youth category of the population is regarded as a resource to be developed (Lerner et.al, 2006). Thus, youth development aims at meeting the needs of young people so as to enable them acquire key developmental assets (Clary and Rhodes, 2006). This, therefore, calls for a host of inputs such as relationships, programs and opportunities targeting a variety of contexts such as individuals, families and neighborhoods so as to address a range of developmental targets including competence, belonging and connectivity are an urgent requirement (Benson and Pittman, 2001). Additionally, for successful youth development to be realized, it should be borne in mind that the former are active participants in the micro-communities. According to the youth development institute, promoting emotional connectedness, providing valuable adult role

models and bolstering parental efficacy is an important target in enhancing positive youth development as it results in family strengthening.

## **9.2. Operational conceptualization of “positive youth development”**

Positive youth development is based on the idea that “every young person possesses unique talents, strengths and future potential” (Damon, 2004: 19). Hence, as argued in **chapter seven**, the predominant view that underestimates the real capacities of the youth by focusing on their deficits rather than their developmental potential should be re - examined. The problem with the aforementioned models is that youth is regarded as a period that is rife with hazards, when they, in fact should be envisioned as a resource rather than as problems for society. Similarly, the young person should be regarded as an important partner in the community – child relationship, bearing its own rights, obligations and responsibilities. Positive youth development can also be promoted in the school context and other institutions of learning. In schools, it aids adolescents in developing multiple areas of competence, personal confidence and social connectedness which are important in acquiring psycho–social well-being (Gomez and Meing Ang, 2007: 97). The institutions also put at their disposal, positive adults, who recognize and respond to the needs of the youth for continued support in their development. From an ecological perspective, the extent into which adolescents are connected to their families has implications for the effectiveness of youth development. Therefore, effective parent education programmes will contribute positively to supporting parent–adolescent relationships, parenting attitudes and even practices. On the other hand, parental warmth and responsiveness are linked to the young people’s accuracy in perceiving parental values. These result in the development of character strengths such as social intelligence, morality, social control and even spirituality.

## **9.3. Principal ingredients of youth development in contemporary rural Kenya**

It, therefore, follows that the wellbeing of Kenya’s young people relies heavily on the nature of the youth development programmes and policies adopted to guide the implementation of the “socialization agenda”. As demonstrated by the findings in the study (**part two**), a two–pronged approach is called for in ameliorating adolescent and youth challenges in the rural Kenyan societies. First, at the Macro level, the prevailing core social cultural norms and the country’s policy environment should be the key targets for reforms and re- alignment to render them effective in informing the country’s social development activities geared towards youth development. In this version, the aim will be to adopt a comprehensive approach to guide youth development. As already pointed out, the framework will need to adjudge the

category of the population as an asset rather than a problem. As shown in **chapter seven**, Kenya's policy prescriptions and programmes target the already "fallen off component of the country's young people" for programmes and projects. Furthermore, the necessity to view as complex the nature of the challenges faced by young people calls for the adoption of comprehensive rather than piecemeal and sporadic activities. Secondly, at the Micro-level, the main social institutions in society such as: family, Schools, churches, Health care institutions such as hospitals and dispensaries should be targeted for intervention. This will be geared towards cultivating supportive homes, communities and neighborhoods for effective youth development. According to Mnjama and Kaumbuthu (2011: 217) changes should be carried out to render the settings supportive of the personal growth and development of adolescent and young people. In the following section we discuss the various elements and the necessary changes required at the micro – level framework to enhance positive youth development.

#### **9.4. Transforming the micro – level settings for positive youth development**

The findings of the study (see **chapter five and six**) show that the family, school, and church and community environments in the study area are unfavorable for positive youth development. This, therefore, calls for transformation of the contexts so as to make them properly suited to perform the important roles. In the sections below, the discussion of the key institutions that require the changes is provided.

##### **9.4.1. The family institution and positive youth development**

According to the search institute's framework of developmental assets for the healthy development of children and youth, the family performs an important role in creating an enabling social environment for socializing children and young people (Nakulla et.al, 2010). It provides family support and enhances positive family communication. The family institution offers family life, which enhances high levels of love and general support. In addition, the young people and their parents are accorded an opportunity to communicate positively and the opportunity to seek advice and counsel from parents and non-parent adults. In the circumstances, a family system change is called for in the study area. This will entail efforts to bolster the family setting as a whole, but more specifically, reforming parenting practices. The mounting of programmes aimed at the basic understanding of human growth and normal developmental trajectories should form the core of the capacity building initiatives. The use of modern parenting techniques involving counseling, positive reinforcement and abandonment of corporal punishment should be the emphasis. Learning to

practice accountability by the parents in their socializing roles should also be emphasized. As such parents require being sensitive and trying their best to be sensitive to the needs of their off springs.

#### **9.4.2. Educational institutions and positive youth development**

Schools and other places of learning are regarded as the second most important societal institutions tasked with the socialization of the young people. According to the findings of the study, the primary and secondary schools in the study area emphasize on academic achievement measured simply by the grades scored in written examinations, especially at the end of the primary and secondary school cycle. The study advocates for school wide change so as to ensure that schooling in the local schools aspires beyond academic skills and competencies. The teachers and other stakeholders in the education domain should strive at moulding a whole person with regard to physical health, mental health and civic and social involvement. The study further, calls for reforms in classroom routine and management by teachers. The teachers should strive to solicit cooperation from their learners as a strategy for maintaining order, cooperation and productive learning in the classroom and beyond. The focus should also be on moulding a positive psychosocial environment, in which the teaching fraternity strives to create a cordial student to student and student to teacher relationships. This could help to forestall indiscipline among learners while in and out of school. However, when cases of indiscipline come up, they should be handled carefully. According to Tauber (2007: 11), when discipline problems among young people are effectively handled, they are not readily replaced with still other problems. The educational institutions should further, provide a caring climate, in form of being “child friendly schools” and the parents should be adequately involved in the schooling of their children.

#### **9.4.3. Religious systems for positive youth development**

Religion and the believe system offers members of society the tone and the concept of self and society. According to Swenson (2008: 3), religion supplies to the codes of behavior such as morality, norms, customs, folkways, sanctions, attitudes and values that inform the actions of the daily life of the people. Religious institutions contribute towards the realization of positive youth development by providing avenues for the young people to exercise constructive use of their time. This is enhanced by offering the religious community in which young people spend considerable amounts of time in performing activities in the religious institution (Nakkula et.al, 2010:3) and instilling positive values. Some of the values that are

acquired by young people within the religious setting include: caring, equality and justice, integrity, honesty, responsibility and restraint.

#### **9.4.4. Community and neighborhood oriented changes for positive youth development**

A community is a significant micro-system comprised of people inhabiting a common geographic area, guided by common laws and sharing similar interests, norms, values, customs, beliefs and obligations. If young people are to grow up to be contributing members of the community, the positive influence of the adult role models and mentorship are vital. For positive youth development to be realized, community oriented system changes are called for in the study area. First, the need for paradigm shifts so that the young people are viewed as an invaluable resource, as opposed to being seen as a problem. Pro-social adults can instill key competencies in the young people such as: planning and decision making, interpersonal competencies, and the acquisition of positive identity, so that the youth can acquire a sense of purpose and a positive view of personal future. Mentorship programmes for both in and out of school youth, led by adults will enhance positive skill building. Other activities can be organized through sport, so as to transmit important life skills to community's children and young people.

#### **9.4.5. Media and positive youth development**

The media occupies a central place in the lives of the contemporary young people as they provide them with interactive technologies and are a powerful tool for multi-tasking. A leading concern with regard to adolescent media use is that the youth risk exposure to violence, cyber-bullying and victimization at the hands of peers and adults. These concerns are however not new, as research shows that even earlier visual media like television and films lead to violent and aggressive behavior (Gunter et.al, 2003;). The above notwithstanding, the new media mainly the internet is an indispensable tool for communication and interaction among individuals. There is therefore need to design strategies on how to ensure that the young people have positive and safe experiences while utilizing the digital devices. This will help to safeguard them from inappropriate and harmful online content and adult predators alike.

#### **9.5. Transforming the macro – level environment for positive youth development**

A number of social determinants affect the health of adolescents and young people. According to Sawyer et.al, (2012: 1634), these are in form “of policies and environments that support access to (both formal and informal) education, provide relevant resources for health

and create opportunities to enhance their autonomy, decision making capacities and employment opportunities”. These can be achieved in several ways as presented here under:

#### **9.5.1. Initiating and strengthening local youth empowerment centres**

Empowerment is the assistance offered to individuals so as to enable them to generate creative choices necessary for solving problems and managing their lives (Hogan, 2000). This can be achieved through changing the nature of community social structures or targeting to influence how individuals and groups interact on an interpersonal level. The Kenya National youth policy prioritizes youth empowerment as a key strategic area for facilitating the youth in readiness for participation in national life (Republic of Kenya, 2006: 12). The empowerment of the young people leads to boosting of self- motivation. In Kenya, the youth empowerment centres should aim at coming up with region specific youth development initiatives. This will enhance improved livelihood prospects for young people and offer functional literacy, life skills and professional skills training for the out of school youth.

#### **9.5.2. Community and family life education for in and out of school youth and parents**

Education and learning impacts positively on peoples’ lives as it affects their health, family life and their general participation in in the civic life of their communities. However, in the contemporary Kenyan society, as elsewhere in the world, education is increasingly being considered narrowly as an instrument of economic growth. Far from this, the former is not only about economic performance, as there are far more myriads of social benefits of education. An important benefit is that the individual obtains social capital, which comprises networks and norms that enable people to contribute effectively to common goals (Schuller, 2004). With regard to young people’s welfare, family life education can help deal with social problems such as adolescent pregnancy and drug and substance abuse by young people (Hughes, 1997). Family life education is a set of proactive interventions that incorporates a preventive educational and collaborative approach to individuals and family issues with the sole aim of preventing problems and enhancing potentials. It also aims at gaining insights into self and others, learning about human development and behavior in the family setting over the life cycle and developing the individuals’ potential in their current and future roles (Arcus and Thomas, 1993). It also performs the important function of building strengths in families, so that the institution is better able to deal with problems (Carol and Cassidy, 2014).

Parents and other care givers can also benefit a great deal if the services of the community and family life education are offered within the community set up. According to Bennett and

Grimley, (2000) satisfaction of fundamental human needs by parents in developing countries such as food, shelter and health depends to a large extent on the life skills which encompass information and behavior necessary for survival and family development. The skills required for this purpose include among others, those for food production and home building. According to the finding of the study numerous cases of grandparents raising their grandchildren abound. Edwards, (2000: 200) argues that raising children for a second time may present great difficulties in the form of adverse emotional and physical reactions and “the grandchildren may also experience home and school problems as a result”. Community education and the actual practical intervention measures in the local setting will foster attachment and the building up of strong social support networks to help them cope. For parents and families with children and youth with disabilities, parents can be trained and provided with practical knowledge in new patterns of behavior. The skills obtained will enable them to participate and work effectively in the provision and care – giving to their children and young people.

Similarly, community education for parents and caregivers is important for providing the skills on how to be advocates for their children and young people. In Kenya, with low priority given to services provision for children and young people, it is essential for parents to take up an active role in advocating for their children, especially with regard to their education. As shown in **chapter Six**, although both parents and teachers are responsible for the education of and socialization of children, “in most cases, the relationship between the two is fraught with uncertainty, misunderstanding, distrust and often outright animosity” (Moriarty and Mervin, 2000: 317). The community educational programmes will enhance cordial parent – teacher relationships, so that instead of treating each other as adversaries, they will work together towards a collaborative relationship with their children’s teachers.

Lastly, community education is imperative as it provides intervention skills for parents for managing crises both within the family and the larger community. Whereas parents and teachers strive to provide a nurturing environment, children and young people are exposed to a myriad of destructive events that often leave them vulnerable and confused. In most instances, adolescents and youth often escape the tragedies in their lives by committing suicide. The provision of knowledge and skills to parents will help them identify crisis situations facing their children and the young people. They can in turn formulate options and intervene appropriately and monitor post – crisis recovery (Lazzara and Poland, 2000: 338).

### **9.5.3. Enhanced IEC in the community on the impact of harmful cultural practices.**

Information Communication Education materials are an important vehicle for providing accurate information on the impact of harmful cultural practices such as female genital cutting that are universally practiced in the study area. The adoption of a three-pronged approach is necessary for effective implementation and impact. First, the IEC materials targeting young people can be used to disseminate information on interpersonal communication, human anatomy, STI's / HIV/ AIDS, courtship, dating and marriage. Other relevant activities can be rolled out with the major target of enhancing the empowerment of men and women. Secondly, are those for the parents, both mothers and fathers as active agents of socialization receive messages that educate them on the type of messages that they should pass on to their children and youth. The IEC knowledge and messages will be those that do not serve to entrench the existing gender roles and stereo types. Lastly, are the IEC materials for influential adults in the community because they are opinion holders and can influence the abandonment of the retrogressive practices.

Donnison (2009) argues that parents and care-givers in the community should be targeted because they know better the people that they are looking after than anyone else and as such they are the experts who must be targeted by the IEC messages. The new media is useful for policy advocacy, as well as the use of traditional medium such as radio and television. It can have a “powerful influence over how and what individuals think. It can shape public perceptions about particular issues and therefore possesses the ^power to affect how communities think and act in relation to various issues. Hence, if used effectively, the media can be an important tool for advocacy work in retrogressive cultural practices” (Oxfam, 2006: 25).

### **9.6. Conclusion**

This chapter has demonstrated that there is a close relationship between the communities' social institutions and the quality of its youth. The performance of these future adults relies mainly on the older members of society and the various social institutions. The promotion of positive youth development can be realized by transforming the attitudes of individuals and the institutional capacities to make their role as the community's socializing agents supportive of the growth and personal development of young people



## **CHAPTER TEN**

### **SUMMARY, GENERAL CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **10.0 Introduction**

The objectives of the study were to:

- 1). Establish the effects of the family systems on adolescent and youth socialization in rural Kenya.
- 2). Determine the role of religion in adolescent and youth socialization in rural Kenya.
- 3). Examine the influence of the mass media on adolescent and youth socialization in rural Kenya.
- 4). Investigate the role of educational institutions in adolescent and youth socialization in rural Kenya.

This chapter aims to give a general overview, the general conclusions and recommendations of the study. It begins with the synopsis of the thesis and a discussion of the summary of the study. The findings of the study, which derive from the study objectives and aimed to answer the corresponding research questions as outlined in section five (general introduction part) of the thesis are also provided. The chapter then discusses the general conclusions in line with the study data. In the final analysis, recommendations for policy and further research are outlined.

#### **10.1 Synopsis of the thesis**

The thesis begins with the general introduction. The rest of the study is comprised of nine chapters, falling into three major parts. The first part covers four chapters which serve to provide the general theoretical and methodological frame, necessary to the understanding and studying adolescence and youth as a distinct stage of human development in society. Specifically, chapter one outlines the state of the art and theoretical framework. Chapter two provides brief background information on Kenya and the general demographic landscape of the youth phenomena as well as the youth crisis. In chapter three, the major theoretical perspectives (largely drawn from the social science disciplines) bearing on the themes and topics of the study are critically examined. Chapter four discusses the study design and methodology adopted for the study.

The second part deals with the impact of modernization on adolescent socialization within the backdrop of the Abagusii society's rich but vanishing traditions and cultural heritage. More specifically, Chapter five concerns itself with the indigenous cultural influences on

adolescent socialization in the study area. Chapter Six examines the views of young people on the role of parents in the provision for their wellbeing in the context of the changing nature of the key socializing agents and social institutions in the study area. In Chapter Seven, Kenya's policy environment in relation to youth development is critically examined. Specifically, the policy initiatives on young people are reviewed. The third part deals with the future challenges and policy recommendations on preparing young people to become functional members of society Chapter eight summarizes the key factors influencing adolescent and youth wellbeing in the study area, while chapter nine presents a way forward on how the young people should be socialized in the study area. Chapter ten presents the general conclusions of the study, followed by the implications, summary and recommendations of the study.

## **10.2 Summary of the study**

The study aimed to establish the effects of change on the key social institutions of the family, religion and education on the socialization of young people. The investigation was justified on account of contemporary concerns on the need to elucidate on how the societal shifts and behavioral patterns exacerbated by the unique developmental vulnerabilities create a confluence of factors which place today's adolescents and young people at a heightened risk of poor developmental outcomes. Moreover, the subject of preparing young people for adult roles in the present century is engrossed both in contradictions and paradoxes alike. On the one hand, the current levels of societal development are regarded a boon as today's growth in technology and the associated opportunities are perceived to play a promotional role in the young people's social, emotional and cognitive development , thus catapult them to attain high levels of wellbeing ( Blake and Taylor, 2010 ). On the other, the developmental demands placed on the young people are ever increasing, a situation which ends up placing this important section of the population at a rather precarious situation.

The study adopted Bronfenbrenner's Bio- ecological theory of human development, because of its explanatory power on how the "ecology" (social institutions) and socialization impact the development of a child and young people. By so doing, it enables the researcher to conduct socialization sketches by examining how socialization as a dynamic and reciprocal process occurs in contextual settings (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). In order to capture the changes on an individual's development over time, it became necessary to compliment the former

with the Life course approach paradigm, so as to come up with a robust conceptual model for studying adolescent and youth socialization in rural Kenya (see fig.1).

Overall, the findings of the study show that the young people in the contemporary Gusii community as elsewhere in the world are no longer growing up in the well-integrated societies described by the early anthropologists and historians two generations ago (Mead; Mayer; Levine; Ochieng; Bogonko). Today, only very little traces of social order and cultural integrity still exist. The situation is made worse by the near extinct of the extended family, avidly described in the literature as the “bastion of African society”, which has made it more challenging to provide care for children, adolescents and the young members of the society. The extended family espouses a sense of obligation to one another by all the individuals that comprise its membership and further fosters the commonality of values. This study takes into consideration the inescapable fact that societies all over the world have been undergoing drastic changes, much of which has bolstered the contemporary societies’ capacity that is necessary for modern living. The thesis equally acknowledges that transitions are characterized by complexity (confrontation and complementarity) and are diverse rather than linear (see **part II**). The findings of the study as described in **Chapter five** and **chapter six**, call for the necessity for societies to manage the continuity, as those that do so often also manage to minimize the myriad problems of adolescence that manifest during the cursory experiences. Moreover, the understanding of factors that have shaped and continue to shape community and family patterns and the resultant socializations modes ( **See chapter eight** ) are crucial for predicting the possible future family models (Mnjama and Kaumbuthu, 2011 : 197). They also aid in deducing the cultural contexts that best ensure a smooth transition from childhood to adulthood.

### **10.3 General conclusions**

Generally speaking, the study has demonstrated that the prevailing socio-cultural environment remains a central source of support for the community’s socialization of its young people. Further, whereas these have been changing in the local community, the provision of the pathways for the youth to become meaningful adults in the future depends on how the community deals with the ever changing and sometimes contradictory values and influences. For instance, the need to re-conceptualize and repackage the time honoured rites to make them relevant in providing for today’s developmental demands that are placed on young people cannot be gainsaid.

At the family level, it is shown that the institution continues to play a pivotal role, despite the fast changing circumstances under which different individuals grow up. The greatest impact that hinders the family from playing out effectively its socializing function is the instability experienced as a result of HIV/ AIDS. More so, the changing economic circumstances in the study area have led to an array of diversity of households, with the female headed, child headed and the grandparent headed households emerging. In a surprising contrast to theory the findings of the study show that the former display resilience in the up bring and the general provision for the needs of its members as demonstrated in chapter eight. Masaba region has experienced tremendous changes with regard to the community's socio - cultural and economic structures. These have consequently transformed the male and female economic and social roles. Bearing in mind that the Gusii community is traditionally highly patriarchal, the findings of the study show that, the aforementioned situation has led to the disruption of the patriarchal ideologies and practices in the study area, thus promoting women's ability to make decisions concerning child rearing and socialization. For instance, as already pointed out, in **chapter eight** (see section 8.4), whereas the changing relationship within households often lead to open conflicts among couples with regard to decision making on child and provision for their families, an emerging paradox is that female headed households are better off in terms of provision of basic welfare. Hence, this leads us to the conclusion that transforming the community's "gender ideology" is important because this will accord both the men and women an equal measure of physical, mental and emotional fortitude to partner in raising up young people in the community. The findings of the study point to the possibility of "two – headed households" in which men and women participate equally in home management, household decision making and the sharing in reproductive tasks of child care and other cores.

Further, while it is common practice in Kenya as elsewhere in the developing countries to target female headed households for poverty reduction programmes the findings of the study point to the necessity to interrogate the criteria. Whereas the study recognizes the thesis that "women who head households are most likely to be poorer and hence triply disadvantaged (Chant, 2003), this pre-supposition is derived from the feminization of poverty paradigm, and may not universally apply to all contexts. Therefore, as evidenced by the study results in **section 8.4.2.1**, there is no obvious need to target all types of female headed households with poverty and vulnerability reducing policies. Nevertheless, exempted from this caveat are the widows and those headed by unmarried women (especially adolescent mothers). It, therefore,

calls for the need to take into consideration the “cultural interpretation of phenomena by local actors.

Moreover, the extended family cultural tradition that were instrumental in supporting the nurturance of children and young people has been shown to be untenable in the contemporary setting. Largely as a result of the economic demands and emerging security challenges, children and young people can no longer be entrusted to their close kin and relatives. This calls for the strengthening of the nuclear family, in which the young people can experience close and functional relationships with their parents. Indeed, smaller family sizes will result in the parents and families devoting more attention and the requisite resources to all their children.

In the education sector, the major handicap remains the inability of the education system to prepare the youth to be responsive to the changing job market and its re-orientation. The trend towards job creation in the informal sector has seen the young people in the rural areas being disadvantaged due to their exposure to negative behavior models as explained in **section 2.6** of the thesis. Negative attitudes towards vocational skills and agricultural oriented occupations present a big challenge to the young people in the study area. This, therefore, calls for addressing this in order to tackle the skills gap. This will also enhance the development of talents and creativity among the rural youth.

More importantly, the failure by the contemporary curriculum to give equal emphasis to moral and character development has left the recipients devoid of positive values and moral integrity. While the parents expect the teachers to take up this important role, the findings of the study show that schools have not taken a lead in molding certain forms of social life within the classroom and vicinity of the school compound. As mentioned by many of the educational practitioners, this remains part of the schools’ “hidden curriculum” with the primary emphasis being that of attaining high scores by learners in the taught subjects.

The role of religious institutions in molding the young people remains to be of primary importance in the study area. However, a big percentage of the youth drop-off in terms of serious religious engagement, mainly due to the failure by the church to take cognizance of the need of the youth. In most cases, the young people cite the lack of mentoring relationships

and the cognitive dissonance that results when the religious leaders and other adult church members contravene the basic teachings and regulations.

The media and information technology has been shown to be an influential “virtual context” in the lives of the young people in the study area. As in other regions, the new media, especially the internet has become a useful tool for modern interactive communication and leisure activities for the rural youth. Contrary to expectation, the barriers previously created by age, social standing and geographic setting and culture have been overcome, and the rural youth utilize the new media for bonding and exercising their agency. The aforementioned notwithstanding, the digital divide, which renders the adult population with lack of knowledge in this domain, presents a serious handicap for the rural youth. With the media continuing to portray the youth negatively, its influence in shaping the adults’ views of the youth will be counterproductive in cultivating cordial relationships among the parents and young people.

At the policy level, general youth issues have received a prominent treatment. However, the suggested intervention efforts have been inadequate in tackling the young people’s challenges in the country. Firstly, the programmes and projects outlined for implementation only target the “youth in crisis”, whose sole target is to modify anti-social behavior. As such, the programmes lack focus on instituting strong support systems and the creation of opportunities for the healthy development of adolescents and youth. The blue print lacks proposals that target the key social institutions such as the family among others which could be the focus if the country had in place a family policy. An explicit family policy is instrumental in providing the guidelines for programme design and implementation for various categories of population segment. This, therefore, explains the country’s over- emphasis on economic solutions to the young people’s challenges.

## **10.4 Recommendations**

On the basis of the findings of the study and the related conclusions arrived at in the foregoing sections, it is apparent that there is need to focus on the planning and policy issues regarding adolescent and youth socialization in Kenya's rural areas. Consequently, the following recommendations are made:

### **10.4.1 Recommendations for policy**

The study recommends the implementation of various strategies and programmes with the aim of ameliorating the policy gaps brought out by the findings of the study:

#### **1. Strengthening the community's local social institutions**

The major findings of the study is that there is an apparent lack of the requisite knowledge and institutional capacity among the parents and other local social institutions like schools and churches in the contemporary Gusii, like in other rural Kenyan communities to facilitate effective socialization of young people. This calls for a clear need for policy makers and implementers alike to draw up programmes geared towards the strengthening of the adults' parenting skills and the social institutions' (family, education, political, religious) capacity to support young people. For educational institutions, there is a clear need to infuse character and moral education elements into the curriculum. The life Skills education and Social education and ethics subjects which are presently offered as optional subjects should be given more visibility and status just as the other mainstream academic subjects are in the school timetable. In order to equip teachers with pedagogical skills and attitudes, Social and Moral character education should also be introduced in the pre- service teacher education curriculum for all teacher trainees. The design and implementation of the curriculum will bolster the ethical self – consciousness and moral engagement of the teaching profession (Totterdel, 2003: 129).

Religious leaders and institutions should put more emphasis on young people's needs by committing to provide services to "youth at risk" of falling to negative influence in the community. The provision of a variety of legal, educational and youth friendly information and medical services will strengthen the young people's connection and shape their sense of the role of religious institutions such as the local churches within the larger community.

## **2. Transforming the gender ideology in the local Gusii community**

The findings of the study demonstrate the presence of “gender antagonism”, which is a deeply rooted phenomenon in the study area. This is mainly attributable to the changing socio – economic and cultural circumstances. Like in other rural regions of developing countries, the ideology of male breadwinner / female care giver has been the dominant feature among the Abagusii. The rapid socio–economic transformation has however, led to changes which have rendered the practice unrealistic. Consequently, the activities that were associated with parenting (fathering and mothering) are converging as demonstrated by the findings of the study. As argued by Coltrane ( 2009 : 385) “not only are human parenting behaviors and family practices learned, but undergo change and vary considerably across time and place and have always responded to the complex and shifting demands of the natural environment, economics, culture, and couple dynamics”. There is therefore, need to design and implement programmes on child-care and parenting skills for fathers. The programs could include child care skill building for adolescent boys and home economics for the younger pupils at the level of upper primary and secondary school cycle of education. In addition, special programmes can be designed and implemented as part of the “community and parent education” and support for fathers groups where fathers are encouraged to participate in routine child care. The aim of the above will be to neutralize the ambivalence that the local men and women feel about bringing men and women into the realm of what is culturally considered in Gusii to be the women’s domain. As a result, fathers and mothers will participate as equal parents and thus attain more egalitarian gender relations in the local community.

## **3. Adoption of responsive and communicative parenting styles**

The findings of the study demonstrate that Gusii parents experience challenges in dealing with children and the younger members of society. Specifically, the study results point to the widespread use of violent corporal punishment as a key strategy for correcting children and young people’s mistakes. As already pointed out, the study regards this as a clear indication of the management crisis at the household level among the Gusii parents. The study therefore, recommends the adoption of more responsive and communicative parenting styles in the study area among parents and their children and youth. This will facilitate the development of interpersonal skills and further enhance mental health among the parents and young people.



#### **4. Adoption of community education programmes for youth and adults in Gusii land**

Effective socialization calls for requisite information and context specific experiences. According to the findings of the study, communities such as the Abagusii possess a wealth of community knowledge which can be tapped for enhancing the capacity of parents and young people in the community. This will enhance the adaptation of members of the local community to navigate the constraints brought about by contemporary changes and be able to tame the disruptive elements. This will lead to the realization of positive socialization outcomes for the young people. On this basis, the study recommends the provision of family and community education for the parents and the adult members of the community. The education programmes will go a long way in enhancing the parents' capacity as pro-social adults.

#### **5. Re – orientation of the Kenyan national youth policies**

The study sought to examine the efficacy of Kenya's youth policy. The findings of the study demonstrate that most of the country's youth policy initiatives aim at solving and addressing the youth in crisis. A more appropriate way is to target the young people before they get into crisis. This entails the outlining of programmes targeting the improvement of the socio – cultural environment and social institutions such as the family, schools and churches in the study area so as to make them to produce positive impacts on child and youth development. The study recommends a re-orientation of the national youth policies targeting the young people. The present focus clearly calls for a paradigm shift so as to place due emphasis on preventive actions and programmes, rather than mitigation. In this way, both the person centred (individual) and context specific (institutions) approaches are adopted. The former targets adolescents and young people directly to prevent problems or promote wellbeing, while the latter aims at transforming the social environment at the family, peer group, school and the other social organizations at the community level.

#### **6. Preservation of Gusii intangible cultural heritage by the local county government**

The findings of the study showed that most of the Abagusii community's values and norms are still relevant and indeed play an important role in safeguarding the role of relevant individuals and institutions in the socialization of young people in the community. The most important ones are those regarding the relationships among the young and older members of the community. An important question addressed in this study is how we can preserve the intangible cultural heritage that is still relevant in the contemporary society. Presently, we are losing this important cultural heritage, thanks to the exit of the cultural gate keepers through

natural attrition. The tapping of the devolved governance framework, under which the culture and heritage docket falls, provides an opportunity to spearhead the conservation of the local Gusii intangible heritage. There are innumerable cultural norms and values that are useful and if jointly applied with the modern ones will be invaluable for providing the required guidelines for modern living among the young people in the community. The specific norms to be targeted for preservations include the norms on behavior, marriage regulations, social control and general life guidelines.

### **7. Adoption of policy guidelines for media use by young people**

The study results showed that the digital media has become imbedded in the lives of Gusii rural youth. For both the young people and the adult population, it is thus captured as an indispensable tool in the socialization of young people in the study area. The aforementioned notwithstanding, the government has banned the use of media in by pupils and students within the precincts of educational institutions, while parents perceive the use of the media as being responsible for the “spoilt young people” in the study locality. However, the findings of the study demonstrate that despite the ban on media use in schools, the young people have unlimited access to the media, mainly the mobile phone both at home and in the schools. This portrays a paradox and contradiction of some sort and calls for effective policy interventions. This therefore, calls for the need for the government to control the exposure of the youth to harmful impacts of the media. The failure of compliance by individuals and institutions leads to the consumption of harmful content and messages of media leading to harm of the youth in society. The government should design policies and programmes to enable the teachers and parents to be in a position to guide the youth on the use of the new media for self-development. Information on their use will help to bridge the gap in knowledge between the young people and parents. Parents will also acquire the knowledge which they will utilize to teach their children on safe use of the mass media for self-development.

#### **10.4.2 Recommendations for further studies**

Socialization is a wide area of investigation. Several of its important aspects which could be useful in informing the current discourse on socialization were not included for study. A major limitation in the study, therefore, is that it was delimited to the rural region in the country. There is need for a comparative study in urban areas of the country, with a view to determining how these regions cope with the young people’s problems.

Secondly, the current study involved a multi – setting approach. This is likely to present challenges of isolating specific setting’s impact on the socialization of young people in the study area. There is need to conduct research aimed at finding out how the specific social contexts, independently contribute to the wellbeing of young people in the study area.

Additionally, as demonstrated by the findings of the study, the cultural variable is the most important determinant in explaining the socialization outcomes in the study region. The country is made up of diverse communities, who adopt a variety of cultural practice. There is, therefore, need to conduct similar studies in other regions of the country, with the sole aim of obtaining comparative data. Studies can also be carried out to learn how developed countries cope with this category of their population.

During the last phase of the study, there were emerging issues that touch on an important concern of the study. Specifically, the phenomena of youth radicalization, which results to violent extremism and pose an increasing threat to sub–regional and international peace and security was a recurrent concern among parents, religious leaders and government leaders. There is, therefore, need to conduct studies on adolescent, youth and socialization with a view to unraveling the drivers of youth radicalization in the region.

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**APPENDIX 1**

**MASABA YOUTH WELLBEING STUDY - SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE**

**Introduction and consent**

Dear Respondent,

My Names are Joseph Misati Akuma, presently conducting a survey on “Adolescent and youth Wellbeing in Rural Kenya”. The study is carried out in partial fulfillment of the requirements towards the award of a PhD Degree in Sociology at Universite de Pau et des Pays de l’Adour France. I would very much appreciate your participation in this survey. The session will take 40 – 60 minutes to complete. Participation in this Survey is voluntary. All the information that you will provide will be kept confidential and will be used only for purposes of this study and the data collected will be kept anonymous.

Thank you.

At this time, you may ask me anything concerning the survey.

May I begin the Interview Now?

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ (Continue)

No \_\_\_\_\_ (End the interview)

**RECORD THE TIME**

**START:** .....

**END** : .....

**INTERVIEWER NAME:** .....

**DATE** : .....



	Technical 06 Commercial or Secretarial 07 Teacher Training College (TTC) 08 University 09 Postgraduate 10	
7. What class/form/grade/year did you complete at this school.....?	Class/Form etc. <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>	
8. Are you currently attending school, college or university? Full-time or part-time	Yes, full-time 1 Yes, part time 2 No 3 Move to Q 10	
9. How many more years of education do you expect to receive	Years -----	
10. How old were you when you left School College or University	Age <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>	
11. Is the school, college or university that you attend(ed) a government or private institution?	Government 1 Private 2	
12. Is the school or university that you attend(ed) for...READ OUT	Boys and girls 1 Only boys 2 Only girls 3	
13. Now I have some questions about work. Have you ever worked for pay	Yes 1 No 2 Move to Q.19	
14. How old were you when you started working for pay?	Age in years <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>	
15. Are you currently working for pay?	Yes 1	

	No	2	Move to Q.19	
16. About how many hours a week do you work?	Hours	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	
17. What type of work do (did) you do? PROBE	..... .....			
18. How much do (did) you earn in a week?	Weekly wage	<input type="text"/>	Enter Unit... Move to Q.20	
19. Are you looking for work?	Yes	1		
	No	2		
20. What is your religion?	None		01 Move to Q.23	
	Roman Catholic		02	
	SDA		03	
	Pentecostal		04	
	African independent		05	
	Jehova witness		06	
	Muslim		07	
	Other.....		08	
	(SPECIFY)			
21. How often do you usually attend religious services?	Every day		1	
	At least once a week		2	
	At least once a month		3	
	At least one a year		4	
	Less than once a year		5	
	Never		6	
22. How important is religion in your life?	Very important		1	

	Important	2	
	Not important	3	
<b>B.FAMILY COMPOSITION &amp; COMMUNICATION</b>			
23. Now I have some questions about your family. Is your father alive?	Yes	1	
	No	2 Move to Q.29	
24. Does he live in the same household as you?	Yes	1	
	No	2	
25. Do you find it difficult or easy to talk with your father about things that are important to you?	Very easy	1	
	Easy	2	
	Average	3	
	Difficult	4	
	Very difficult	5	
26. What is the highest level of schooling your father attained?	Completed primary or less	1	
	Some secondary school	2	
	Completed secondary school	3	
	Some college or university	4	
	Completed college or university	5	
	Don't know	6	
27. Have you ever discussed sex-related matters with your father?	Yes	1	
	No	2	Move to Q.29
28. How often do you discuss sex related matters with your father?	Often	1	
	Occassionally	2	
	Seldom	3	



29. Is your mother alive?	Yes 1 No 2 Move to Q.35	
30. Does she live in the same household as you?	Yes 1 No 2	
31. What is the highest level of schooling your mothers attained?	Completed primary or less 1 Some secondary school 2 Completed secondary school 3 Some college or university 4 Completed college or university 5 Don't know 6	
32. Do you find it difficult or easy to talk with your mother about things that are important to you?	Very easy 1 Easy 2 Average 3 Difficult 4 Very difficult 5	
33. Have you ever discussed sex-related matters with your mother?	Yes 1 No 2 Move to Q.35	
34. How often do you discuss sex related matters with your mother?	Often 1 Occasionally 2 Seldom 3	
35. Do you have any older brothers?	Yes 1 No 2 Move to Q.37	

36. Do any live in the same household?	Yes	1	
	No	2	
37. Do you have any older Sisters?	Yes	1	
	No	2 Move to Q.39	
38. Do you live in the household?	Yes	1	
	No	2	
39. In what order of birth are you in your family?	----- (Indicate exact order )		
<b>C.SOCIAL ACTIVITIES AND HABITS</b>			
40. And now I have some questions about your social activities. Do you go to clubs or parties where young people dance? If YES. How many times in the last month?	Number of times <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> Never 88 <input type="checkbox"/>		
41. Do you go to the movies? If YES. How many times in the last month?	Number of times <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> Never 88 <input type="checkbox"/>		
42. Do you drink alcohol? IF YES. On how many days in the last one month have you ever drunk alcohol?	Number of days <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> Never 88 <input type="checkbox"/>		
43. Do you ever smoke cigarettes? IF YES. How many have you smoked in the last 7 days?	Number of Cigarettes <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> Never 88 <input type="checkbox"/>		

**D: REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH INFORMATION AND KNOWLEDGE**

44. Young people learn about <b>puberty</b> -I mean the ways in which boys' and girls' bodies		(a)	(b)	(c)
		Most Important	Second	Preferred

<p>change during the teenage years- from many sources. They may learn from teachers at school, parents, brothers and sisters, from friends, from doctors or they may learn from books, films and magazines. What has been the most important source of information for you on this topic? And the second most important?</p> <p>(CIRCLE MOST IMPORTANT IN COL 1 AND SECOND MOST IMPORTANT IN COL 2)</p> <p>From whom, or where, would you prefer to have received more information on this topic? (CIRCLE ONE ANSWER IN COL.3)</p>	School teacher ( 1	01	01	01
	Mother (2	02	02	02
	Father ( 3	03	03	03
	Brother (4	04	04	04
	Sister (5		05	05
	Other family	05	06	06
	Members (6	06	07	07
	Friends ( 7		08	08
	Doctors ( 8	07	09	09
	Books/magazine(9)	08	10	10
	Films/Videos (10)	09	11	11
Other (Specify) (11)	10			
		11		
45.Now I want to ask you a similar question about sources of information on the <b>sexual and reproductive systems of men and women</b> -I mean where eggs and sperm are made and how pregnancy occurs. What has been the most important sources of information on this topic? And the second most important? (CIRCLE		(1) Most important	(2) Second	(3) Preferred
Schoolteacher (1)	01	01	01	
Mother( 2)	02	02	02	
Father ( 3)	03	03	03	
Brother (4)	04	04	04	
	05	05	05	

<p>IN COLS. I AND 2.)</p> <p>From whom or where, would you prefer to receive (or prefer to have received) more information on this topic? (CIRCLE ONE ANSWER IN COL.3)</p>	Sister (5)	06	06	06
	Other Family Members (6)	07	07	07
	Friends (7)	08	08	08
	Doctors (8)	09	09	09
	Books/magazines(9)	10	10	10
	Films/videos (10)	11	11	11
	Other (Specify... (11)			

<p>46. Now there is a third similar question about sources of information on relationships- I mean how boys should treat girls and vice versa. What has been the most important source of information on this topic?</p> <p>And the second most important? CIRCLE IN COLS 1 AND 2</p> <p>From whom, or where, would you prefer to receive more information on this topic?</p> <p>CIRCLE ONE ANSWER IN COL.3</p>		(1)	(2)	(3)
		Most Important	Second most important	Preferred
	School teacher(1)	01	01	01
	Mother(2)	02	02	02
	Father(3)	03	03	03
	Brother (4)	04	04	04
	Sister (5)	05	05	05
	Other family	06	06	06
	Members (6)	07	07	07
	Friends (7)	08	08	08
	Doctors (8)	09	09	09
	Books/magazine(9)	10	10	10
			11	11

	Films/videos (10)	11		11
	Other(Specify.)(11)			
47. Some schools have classes on puberty, on sexual and reproductive systems and on relationships between boys and girls. Did you ever attend school classes on any of these topics?	Yes	1		
	No	2		
	Not sure	3		
	Never been to school	4	Move to Q.49	
48. Do you think that there should be (more) classes on these topics, fewer classes or were the number about right?	More	1		
	Less	2		
	About right	3		
49. Now I have some other questions on sex and reproduction. I will read you some statements. Please tell me whether you think the statement I true, or false, or whether you don't know.	True	1		
	False		2	
	Don't Know		3	
	Not sure		4	
<b>50. A woman can get pregnant on the very first time that she has sexual intercourse.</b>				
<b>51. A woman is most likely to get pregnant if she has sexual intercourse half way between her</b>	True		1	
	False		2	
	Don't know		3	

<i>periods</i>	Not Sure	4	
<b>E: CURRENT HETEROSEXUAL RELATIONSHIPS</b>			
52. Have you ever had a girl/boyfriend? By girl/boyfriend, <i>I mean someone to whom you were sexually or emotionally attracted and whom you 'dated'</i> (use local terms to specify going out together unaccompanied by other adults)	Yes	1	
	No	2 Move to Q.83.	
53. How many girl/boyfriend have you had?	Number	<input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>	
<b>Ask The Following Sequence of Questions About Current (Most Recent) Girl/Boy Friend</b>			
What is Her /His first name .....			
54. How old is NAME? Probe for current age	Age	<input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>	
55. When you started your relationship, was NAME single, married, divorced or separated?	Single	<input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>	1
	Married		2
	Divorce		3
	Separated		4
56. When you started your relationship with NAME, was NAME a full time student, working or neither?	Full time student		1
	Working		2

	Neither	3	
57. How many months or years ago did you first 'date' NAME?	Months <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> or Years <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> Ago ago		
58. Has the relationship ended?	Yes 1 No 2 Move to Q.61		
59. How many day/weeks/months did it last? I mean from the first time you 'dated' to the last time?	Days ..... Or Weeks ..... Or Months .....		
60. Who decided to end the relationship? You, NAME or both of you.	Me 1 NAME 2 Both 3 Other 4		
61. During the time you were/have been 'dating' NAME did you 'date' have you 'dated' anyone else?	Yes 1 No 2		
62. How would you describe your relationship with NAME? Was (is) it (a) a casual friendship; (b) a serious relationship but with no intention of marriage; or (c) an important relationship that might lead to marriage?	a. Casual 1 b. Serious 2 c. Important/might lead to marriage 3 d. Engaged to be married 4		
63. Have you ever had sexual intercourse with NAME?	Yes 1 No 2 Move to Q.94		

**QUESTION 64 - 82 ARE ONLY FOR THOSE WHO HAVE EXPERIENCED  
PENETRATIVE SEX**

<p>64. Think back to the first time you had sex with NAME- I mean the first time that the penis was in the vagina.</p> <p>a. I forced NAME to have intercourse against her/his will</p> <p>b. I persuaded NAME to have intercourse</p> <p>c. NAME persuaded me to have intercourse</p> <p>d. NAME forced me to have intercourse</p> <p>e. We were both equally willing</p>	<p>a. I forced 1</p> <p>b. I persuaded 2</p> <p>c. NAME persuaded 3</p> <p>d. NAME forced 4</p> <p>e. Both willing 5</p>	
<p>65. And would you say it was planned or unexpected?</p>	<p>Planned 1</p> <p>Unexpected 2</p>	
<p>66. Was this the first time that you had full sexual intercourse in your life?</p>	<p>Yes 1</p> <p>No 2</p>	
<p>67. How old were you at the time you first had sex with NAME?</p>	<p>AGE <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> 1</p> <p>2</p>	
<p>68. Did you regret having intercourse with NAME on that first time?</p>	<p>Yes, regretted 1</p> <p>No, not regretted 2</p>	



69. On that first time did you or NAME do anything to avoid a pregnancy?	Yes 1 No 2	
70. What method did you use?	Condom 1 Pill 2 Injection 3 Withdrawal 4 Safe period 5 Other.....	
71. Did you ever discuss contraception with NAME? If YES Did you discuss contraception before or after your first had intercourse?	Before first intercourse 1 After first intercourse 2 Never 3	
72. Where did you or NAME get this method? (CIRCLE ONLY ONE).	Shop 1 Pharmacy 2 Govt. Clinic/health Centre/Hospital 3 Private Doctor/Nurse/Clinic 4 Friend 5 Other..... 6 Don't know 9	
73. Whose decision was it to use a method always/sometimes/never? Was it mainly your decision, NAME'S decision or a joint	My decision 1 NAME'S decision 2	

decision?	Joint decision	3	
74. MALES: Did NAME ever become pregnant by you?  FEMALES: Did you ever become pregnant by NAME?	Yes  No	1  2 Move to Q.90	
75.What happened to the pregnancy?	Currently pregnant  Abortion  Miscarriage  Live-birth  No sure	1 Move to Q.80  2 Answer Q.76-79  3  4  5	
76. Why did you opt to procure the abortion?_____			
77. How and where do the pregnancy terminated?_____			
78. How much did it cost?			
79. Who or how did you got the money for the procedure?_____			
80. Were you ever concerned that you might catch AIDS or another sexually transmitted disease from NAME? IF YES very or somewhat?	Very concerned  Somewhat concerned  Not concerned	1  2  3	
81. Were you able to do anything to reduce the risk of infection?.	Yes  No	1  2	

82. What did you do? Probe	Use condoms	1	
	Take medicines	2	
	Other(.....)	3	

**F: TYPES OF HETEROSEXUAL CONTACT**

<p>(Answer to 52. is “No”). You told me that you have had no girl/boyfriends. I now want to ask you about any sexual contact that you may have experienced.</p> <p>Answer to Q.52 Is “YES”. You have told me about your relationship with NAME. Apart from her/him and any earlier girl/boyfriends. I now want to ask you about other types of sexual partners that you may have experienced.</p>			
83. Some young people are forced to have sexual intercourse against their will by a stranger, a relative or an older person. Has this ever happened to you?	Yes	1	
	No	2	Move to Q.86
84. How many different strangers, relatives or older persons have forced you to have sex against your will?	No	<input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>	
85. Did you or the sexual partner do anything to avoid a pregnancy on these occasions? If YES Always or sometimes?	Always	1	
	Sometimes	2	
	Never	3	
86. People pay money or gifts in exchange for sex. Has this ever happened to you?	Yes	1	
	No	2	

87. People receive money or gifts in exchange for sexual intercourse? Has this ever happened to you?	Yes No	1 2	
88. How many women/men you have had sex with for money or gifts <i>for the last one year?</i>	No. <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>		
89. Did you or your sexual partner use any <i>preventive method</i> to avoid a pregnancy on these occasions? IF YES Always or sometimes?	Always Sometimes Never	1 2 3	
<b>FOR THOSE NEVER EXPERIENCED SEXUAL INTERCOURSE</b>			
90. People have mixed reasons for not having intercourse. I will read out some reasons. Please tell me for each reason whether it applies to you or not.	Applies	Do not apply	Don't know/Not Sure
I don't feel ready to have sex.	1	2	3
I have not had the opportunity			

I think that sex before marriage is wrong			
I am afraid of getting pregnant			
I am afraid of getting HIV/AIDS or another sexually transmitted infection			
91. And now I have a question about your future plans about sexual intercourse. Which of these statement best describes your plans. READ OUT  a) I Plan to wait until marriage b) I plan to wait until I am engaged to be married c) I plan to wait until I find d) I plan to have sexual intercourse when an opportunity comes along.	Marriage 1 Engagement 2 Love 3 Opportunity 4		
92. Do you feel any pressure from others to have sexual intercourse? If YES A great deal or a little?	A great deal 1 A little 2 None 3 Move to Q.94		
93. From whom do you feel pressure? PROBE & CIRCLE ALL THAT APPLY	Friends 1 Relatives 2 Work colleagues 3 Partner/Special friend 4 Other..... 5		

## G: USE AND PERCEPTIONS OF HEALTH SERVICES

94. Have you ever visited a health facility or doctor of any kind to receive services or information on contraception, pregnancy, abortion or sexually transmitted diseases?	Yes 1 No 2 END	
95. How many times have you sought services or information from a doctor or a nurse for these services in the last twelve months?	Number of times ..... Did not seek care in last 12 months 0 END	
96. Thinking about your last visit, did you go to a government clinic, health centre or hospital or a private doctor or clinic?	Government 1 Private 2 Mission 3 Other..... 4	
97. When you last saw a doctor or a nurse, what was your reason for going?	Contraception 1 STD 2 Gynecological exam 3 Pregnancy test 4 Pregnancy termination 5 MCH 6 Other.....7	
At this facility 98. Did you see any posters on contraception?	Yes No 1 2	
99. Were you given brochures on contraception?	1 2	
100. Did you attend a talk on contraception?	1 2	
101. Did you request contraceptive services during the consultation?	1 2	
102. Did the doctor or nurse talk to you about: a. Contraception? b. Sexually transmitted diseases? c. Pregnancy?	Yes No 1 2 1 2 1 2	
103. Did you feel comfortable enough to ask questions?	1 2 Move to Q.105	

104. Were the questions you asked during the consultation answered adequately?	1	2	
105. Was there enough confidentiality?	1	2	

**A: Household Demographic Information**

**Background Information ( age, Schooling , Work, Religion, Religiosity)**

Please give information about members who *usually* live in your household

HH1	HH2	HH3	HH4	HH5	HH6	HH7	HH8	HH9	HH10	HH11
Line No	Name	What is the sex of NAME' ? 1. Male 2. Female	How old is NAME (Age in completed years )	What is NAME Marital status (administer to all members of age 12 and Above)  1. Married 2. Single 3. Divorced 4. Separated 5. Widowed	What is NAME highest level of education  1. Primary 2. Secondary 3. Middle leve college 4. University 5. Post Primary, 6. Post graduate 7. Don't Know 8. None	What is NAME religion  1. Catholic 2. Prorestant 3. Muslim 4. Hindu 5. Traditional 6. No religion 7. other specify	What is NAME employment status ( administer to all members of age 15 and above)  1. Subsistence farmer 2. Pastoralist 3. Employed( Formal) 4. Employed Informal 5. Unemployed 6. Business 7. Home Maker 8. Student 9. other -specify	Can NAME read and write in any language  1. can read but not write 2. can partially read and write 3. can read and write well 4. can	Is NAME currently in school or college  1. Yes 2. No	What is NAME relationship to head of household  01. Head 02. Wife/husband partner 03. Son / Daughter 04. Son in Law 05. Grandchild 06. Parent 07. Parent in law 08. Brother or sister 09. Co. Wife 10. Other relative 11. Adopted/fo step-child 12. Non relative 13. Dont Know
1										
2										
3										
4										
5										
6										
7										
8										

**END**



## APPENDIX 2

### MASABA YOUTH WELLBEING STUDY- FGD GUIDE FOR PARENTS

#### Introduction & Consent

Hello, Thank you for being here today. Let me introduce myself; my name is Joseph Misati. I am a PhD student at UPPA, France and will be facilitating our group today. If you agree to participate, we will ask you to freely and honestly discuss your views, attitudes and responses on various topics touching on the well-being of young people in your local community and the country at large. All the information that you provide will be stored, on a confidential basis on a computer and used solely for the purpose of the research. The results of the research will be important to understanding of your views on this central aspect of your lives and inform related policy decisions. To open up our discussions, let's start with a word of brief introductions.

1. Every community has its own problems. As parents (father/mother); what are the major problems in this community/village. – Kera egesaku ngebuate emechando yaye. Inwe buna abaibori (omogaka/ omong'ina) mechando ki emenene ere ase egesaku/ ekenyoro eke?
2. Are adolescents/young people a major problem in your village/community? – Ekegori egeke/ abasae nkoreta bare emechando ase ekenyoro?
3. Who is an adolescent/youth? – Ing'o okoroka omosae?
4. In your community how important is the stage of adolescence/youth?(both in the past/present) – Ase egesaku kiaino, ekegori egeke/ abasae nkere neng'encho enene?
5. According to your community (Gusii) what various life stages did/does an individual pass? – Koreng'ana negesaku kiomogusii mbitambokero ki omento agoetera ase obogima?
6. At each and every one of the life stages, individuals were expected to be so socialized and be provided with information on important matters affecting their growth and wellbeing. In each and every one of these :-  
Ase kera egetambokero kiobogima, abanto mbaganeirie gotebiwa igoro yebinto aoao bikoreta ogoonchoreria ase ogokina kwabo. Ase kera egetambokero:  
Whose role was it? Negasi yang'o yareng'e?  
What goals were targeted? Nkerenga ki kiarengegoikeranigwa?

What specific norms/skills/knowledge were imparted? Nsemi gose imbu ki chiareng koorokererigwa?

7. In your views what factors affect the rearing (socialization) practices? Ase ebirengereri biao, mbinto ki biareng gotanga chinchera chiogokinia?
8. Is there a relationship between socialization (rearing) and delinquent behavior formation among young people in your community? Nchera nere orabwekanie ogokonigwa gwekegori egeke nechimbu chimbe chikomera ime yabo?
9. What different rites of passage did/does an individual pass through in order to become a full time adult in your community: (Method(s), symbolic meaning, Actual teachings) Meyega ki omento agoetera erio abe omento omonene/ omogima ase agesaku (chinchera, eng'encho yaye, ogoemia)
10. Have there been changes in the above today? Goonchoreria konde kwabeire ase ebi gwakanire abwo igoro?
11. The future of your community depends on how well you succeed in preparing young people to be productive members of society. As grown ups today, reflect back during your time as adolescents, were demands for adulthood the same as those of today? Explain. Chingaki chigocha chiegesaku kiao nigo chigochi kororekana korwa ase enchera tokobaarigania abasae koba abengencho ase egesaku. Ntwe buna ekegori ekenene torigererie chingaki chiaetire, ebinto biaganeirie korwa ase abanto abenene mbibwekaine ebiganeirie rero? Eresa.
12. If no what can be done in society to make the adolescents to be ready to today's and future challenging adulthood? Onye teri bo ninki kerakorwe erio ekegori egeke kiariganiwe ase obogima bwabono nobogocha bwekegori ekenene/
13. The household is a source of emotional support and important vehicle of socialization for young people. Is this the case in your community? What hinders the above? Enka nero egosira ekegori egeke ase chinchera aoao. Nere obamaene ase egesaku kiao? Ninki gegotanga ogosira okwo?
14. What is your view concerning the impact of instability in the lives of couples in today's families? Ase ebirengereri biao ninki amatokeo yabanto banywomaine gotamenya nomorembe amatuko aya?
15. What role(s) did/does the father/mother/child play in the socialization process and function? Ninki egasi yomogaka/ omong'ina/omwana ase ogokina boikeranu ase egesaku?

16. How has the role of women during the family cycle changed today in terms of child care? Ng'aki egasi yomong'ina igoro yokorera omwana yaonchoreirie ase chingaki chiabono?
17. Has the Emergence of female headed households affected the satisfaction of family needs and child rearing practices? Ogocha gwechifamilia chiteneneire nabang'ina nchibwate kende gekorenta ogoonchoreria ase akogania gwefamilia nechinchera chiokorerera abana?
18. What role did/ does the extended family and kinship ties play in providing stable support networks for adolescent and youth up bring in your community? Ngasi ki egokorwa nechifamilia chingare ase ogokinia ekegori egeke nabasae ase egesaku kiao?
19. Do /did the community elders play any role in enabling the youth transit properly from childhood to adulthood in your community? Abagaka na abang'ina begesaku mbabwate egasi yogokonya abasae korwa obwana goika obonto obonene ase enchera ing'ikeranu?
20. What roles do Parents/Teachers / Health professionals and other relatives play in socialization of young people in your community? Ngasi ki abaibori/ aborokia/ abanyagitari nabairi bagokora ase ogokinia abasae ase egesaku kiao?
21. What types of initiation ceremonies exist in this community? Meyega ki yebitamokero ere ase egesaku kiao?
22. What are the differences (if any) exist in terms of themes, meaning and participants today compared to traditional ones? Ngoonchoreria ki kwabeire ase ekerenga, engencho gose abanto bakobikora ekero okiregereria rero nechingaki chia kare?
23. Do you think initiation of girls should continue, what are its benefits and disadvantages? Okorengereria okwarokigwa gwechinyaroka mbuya kogenderere? Obuya gose obobe bwaye ninki?
24. Do you think adolescents/ young people in your community are acquiring the repertoire of social resources which will enable them to be fully functioning adults in the new social world of the 21<sup>st</sup> century or are there mismatches between the adolescents' preparation and the present demands for adulthood? Okorengereria ekegori egeke/ abasae begesaku kiao nkonyora bare ebinto biganeirie korwa ase egesaku biragere bamenye buya ase chingaki echi gose okwariganigwa nkori boronge?

25. What role did/ does religion play in the upbringing of young people in society?  
Ng'aki edini egokonya ase ogokinia abasae ase agesaku?
26. How are the current changes in terms of the youths' exposure to the media affected them? (Positive /negative) Ng'aki ogonchoreria kwobogima na mono abasae korigereria chitelevisheni na gotegerera chiredio kwarantire ogonchoreria okuya gose mamincha?
27. What role did the culture play in enhancing adolescent/ youth wellbeing in your community? Ngasi ki ekemira kebuate ase ogokonya ekegori egeke/ abasae komenya buya ase egesaku?
28. Should children be taught much about the traditional forms of the past in your community? Ase egesaku kiao nere buya abana basomigwe igoro yamang'ana amakoro aetete kare?
29. What role has the political system /Government played in helping the young people in your community? Ninki esekari yakorire erio gokonya abasae ase egesaku kiao?
30. How do conditions of poverty negatively affect the wellbeing of young people in your community? Ng'aki obotaka bogosaria okoba buya kwabasae ase egesaku kiao?
31. Do you experience increased violence by young people your community? Kwarorire okomenteka kwobosaria kwabasae ase egesaku kiao?
32. What changes have occurred in the family structure/ model/, that affect adolescents young people ( positively /negatively.) Ngoonchoreria ki kwabeire ase okoagacheka gwefamilia gokorenta ogoonchoreria kwabasae ase enchera engiya gose embe?
33. What can be done to change / better adopt the basic social institutions to better prepare young members of your community for life in future? Ngoonchoreria ki korakorwe ase oboroso bwegesaku erio gokonya koarigania abasae ase obogima bogocha?

## APPENDIX 3:

### MASABA YOUTH WELLBEING STUDY- FGD GUIDE FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

#### **Introduction & Consent**

Hello. Thank you for being here today. Let me start by introducing myself. My name is Joseph Misati Akuma. I am a PhD student at UPPA, France. If you agree to participate in our interview, I will ask you to freely and honestly share in the group your views, attitudes and responses on various topics towards the wellbeing of young people in your local community. All the information will be stored, on a confidential basis on a computer and used for the purposes of the research only and nobody will be identified in anything that is published from the study. The results of the study will be important to understanding of your views on this central aspect of your lives and inform related policy decisions.

To open up our discussion, let us start with a round of brief introductions.

#### **Adolescents/Youth perceptions on Community problems**

What Problems / challenges do adolescents face in your community?

Of the above, which ones do you consider most pressing?

What is the cause of the problems you have mentioned above?

Whom do you think can help eradicate the problems?

Do parents/Teachers/Religious leaders/Government make any attempt to solve the challenges?

What is being done, if any, to solve the problems?

What should be done to solve these challenges?

#### **a) Role of parents / caregivers in socializing young adolescents**

1. **Roles in the family** – obligations and expectations specific to parenting role; gendered division of parenting role.

a. What do parents do in a family? What is their job in a family?

b. Is there a difference between mothers and fathers?

c. Is there anything that mothers are better at and fathers are better at and vice versa?

**2. Experiences of care and support** – including responsiveness and sensitivity to children’s needs.

a. How do parents look after their children?

b. Examples of caring activities; how does the nature of the parent’s role change over time?

Are there differences for boys and girls?

**3. Experiences of monitoring and control** – including discipline.

a. What about rules and expectations? Rules about whereabouts, activities. Expectations about behaviour that is ‘acceptable’. How does this change over time? Are there differences for boys and girls?

b. How do parents know about what their children are up to? What works, what doesn’t work?

What role do children play in this? Do parents have a right to know?

**4. Strategies of punishment** – perceptions of ‘acceptable’ forms of punishment, including verbal and physical punishment.

a. What do parents do when their children misbehave, break the rules? How does this change over time? Are there differences for boys and girls?

b. What’s your view on parents using physical punishment with their children?

c. What rights do parents have? What rights do children have?

d. Why do parents use these forms of punishment?

e. Does it depend on the age of the child, whether the child is a boy or a girl, what the child has done wrong?

f. Do you think physical punishment should be banned/made illegal? Why? Why not?

**5. Effective parenting strategies** – emotional, behavioural and relational impact of different approaches.

a. What works as a good way of punishing children? Why does this work?

b. What doesn’t work? Why does this not work? What might be better?

c. Does this depend on the age of the child? What the child does wrong? Whether the child

is a boy or a girl?

**6. Childhood and parenthood compared** – exploration of rights and responsibilities in families.

a. What is the difference between being a child and being a parent in a family?

b. Do parents have rights over their children? Do children have rights over their parents?

Why/Why not?

c. What responsibilities do parents have for their children?

d. Do children have any responsibilities in their families?

### **b.) Role of social Institutions**

#### **a) religious institutions in Socialization of youth**

How does your coming to church /Being religious influence your attitudes and behavior mode?

What measures of religiosity /church teachings /doctrines lead to healthy /socially desirable outcomes?

In which way if any does the church enable you to acquire:

- Self control and personal virtue to guide for life choices
- Organizational contexts and cultural substance to foster constructive life practices
- Provision of adult and peer group role models
- Valuable community life skills & leadership skills beyond religious activities
- Coping skills to tackle stress, emotional, interpersonal conflict and enhance wellbeing & life capacities
- Linking youth to wider resources of helpful information, resources and opportunities

In what ways do you think the church is not providing enough influence

Are there cases where the youth are detached, uninvolved and fail to engage and benefit from positive religious influence

**b) Education**

1. At school are you taught on how to relate with other members of the society both at school and at home? What are some of these teachings? When and how are they taught?
2. In your opinion, are these teachings important and practical to you?
3. Do you think rites of passage e.g. initiation is relevant today? How?
4. Do you feel the attachment towards the significance of this traditional form of education? Why?

**c) Mass media**

1. Do your parents allow you to have mobile phones at home? Why do they or don't they?
2. What dangers might arise if children are allowed to use mobile phones outside guidance of parents/teachers at home and/or at school?
3. Does TV viewing affect your wellbeing? How?

**d) Leisure time**

1. What are some of the recreation activities are you are involved in at school, home, mass media and at the church?
2. Do these activities have an impact on your wellbeing? Explain
3. Have recreation activities changed over time? How have they changed?
4. How has technology transformed these activities that you can be engaged in?

**e) Transition to adulthood**

1. At what age are the youths expected to take up responsibilities like starting a family? Are they currently taking up these responsibilities at these expected times?



## APPENDIX 4

### GROSSARY OF EKEGUSII AND KISWAHILI WORDS

#### **Ekegusii**

Abagusii	-	People who inhabit Gusii land in Nyanza region
Abegarori	-	People who are not consistent they change midstream
Changaa	-	Illicit brew
Chinsoni	-	Respect
Chinywomo	-	Marriage
Ebiombe	-	Self-help groups
Ebisarate	-	Specific huts for young men constructed away from homestead
Echumuia	-	Small Christian Community
Egesagane	-	Uncircumcised girl
Emuma	-	An oath
Enyaroka	-	A girl
Esaiga	-	Hut inhabited by boys
Esikimu	-	Settlement Scheme
Gusii	-	Place inhabited by Abagusii
Maansae	-	Maasai land
Masomberera	-	Not well filled
Obware	-	Rite of passage marking movement from childhood to adulthood
Omoisia	-	Lad (uncircumcised boy)
Omomura	-	A boy
Ribina	-	A specific dance meant to attract rain during drought
Sungu sungu	-	A group of people who engage in community policing

#### **Kiswahili**

Ayah	-	House help
Kazi kwa Vijana-		Work for youths
Kofia	-	Hat
Kopa credo	-	A common term among young people referring to borrowing airtime
Okoa Jahazi	-	Save when in problems
Pesa kwa wazee-		Money for the elderly

## APPENDIX 5

### SAMPLE SIZE DETERMINATION IN MIXED METHODS RESEARCH

Relationship between Sample and Population Sizes using Probability Sampling Techniques

Population Size	Confident that the sample estimates population Within $\pm 1\%$	Confident that the sample Reflects Population Within $\pm 5\%$
100	99	80
500	476	218
1,000	906	278
2,000	1,656	323
3,000	2,286	341
Infinity	9,604	384

**NB:** The table uses a confidence limit of .05, which means that there is a 95% chance (19 out of 20) that the sample statistic will be representative of the population parameter.

**Source:** Teddie, C and Tashakkori, A (2009) "Sampling Strategies for mixed Methods Research" PP.168 – 196. In Foundations of Mixed Methods Research. Sage.Los Angeles.

APPENDIX 6(a)  
LIST OF STUDY PARTICIPANTS

1. ALFRED NYACHOTI	47 YEARS
2. ANGELINE OTONDO	38 YEARS
3. ANITA KEMUNTO	12 YEARS
4. ARONI AMINGA	38 YEARS
5. AUGUSTINE OKINDO	45 YEARS
6. AZNA NYABOKE ANYEGA	15 YEARS
7. BARANABA AOSA	64 YEARS
8. BASWETI AMWATA	58 YEARS
9. BENARD MAKWAE	52 YEARS
10. BENJAMIN OSORO	17 YEARS
11. BRIAN ISENA	16 YEARS
12. BRIAN MOTANYA ONKWARE	16 YEARS
13. BRIAN SIMBA	15 YEARS
14. CAROLINE AMENYA	12 YEARS
15. CATHERINE ORUKO	15 YEARS
16. CHARLES MOKUA OCHENGE	68 YEARS
17. CHRISPUS OMWERI	17 YEARS
18. CLINTON MEYENGA	15 YEARS
19. COUNTRY DIRECTOR OF CULTURE	N/S
20. COUNTRY DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION KISII COUNTY	N/S
21. D.E.O MASABA SOUTH SUB-COUNTY	N/S
22. DANIEL AMING'A	38 YEARS
23. DANIEL ONGERE	18 YEARS
24. DAUDI NYAMBEGA	42 YEARS
25. DAVIS KERORE	16 YEARS
26. DEDAN MWEMBI	14 YEARS
27. DISMUS ONDIEKI	16 YEARS
28. DOMINIC NYABOCHWA	17 YEARS
29. DOMINIC OMINGO	16 YEARS
30. DOUGLAS MOMANYI	16 YEARS
31. EDWIN GESICHO	38 YEARS

32. EDWIN OMBUI	18 YEARS
33. ELIUD NYAKIA	14 YEARS
34. ELIUD NYAKINE	49 YEARS
35. EMILY LUMUMBA	19 YEARS
36. ESTHER GEKONGE	36 YEARS
37. EVANS MBAKA	45 YEARS
38. FAITH MOMANYI	15 YEARS
39. FAITH NYAKERARIO NYAMWEYA	13 YEARS
40. FLORENCE BWARI	40 YEARS
41. FLORENCE NYAGAK A	38 YEARS
42. FRED MOGUSU	12 YEARS
43. FREDRICK ONTITE MOMANYI	15 YEARS
44. FREDRICK RATEMO	12 YEARS
45. GEORGE NYABWANGA	38 YEARS
46. GETRUDE MOMANYI	17 YEARS
47. GITONGA	N/S
48. GRACE BONARERI MOSE	N/S
49. HAPPINESS MACHUKI	17 YEARS
50. ISAAC OGOTI	15 YEARS
51. ISABOKE TIRIMBA	42 YEARS
52. ISAYA ORINE	14 YEARS
53. JACKSON ONGERI	15 YEARS
54. JANE KERUBO NYMONGO	28 YEARS
55. JANE MONYANGI	48 YEARS
56. JANET GESARE	25 YEARS
57. JANET MOKAYA	17 YEARS
58. JOHN MORUMBASI	62 YEARS
59. JOHN ORETI	14 YEARS
60. JOHNSON MABUKA	18 YEARS
61. JOSEPH MAMWACHA	N/S
62. JOSHUA GWAKO	42 YEARS
63. JOSHUA ONDITI	18 YEARS
64. JSTIN MABEYA	17 YEARS
65. JUDITH MACHOKA	16 YEARS

66. JUDY SWANYA	19 YEARS
67. KEFA BANYI	54 YEARS
68. KEMUNTO MAISIBA	52 YEARS
69. KEMUNTO MOCHUNGO	38 YEARS
70. KEREMECIA KEMUNTO	62 YEARS
71. KREMESIA NYAGECHANGA	74 YEARS
72. KWAMBOKA OGERO	38 YEARS
73. LAVENDA MICHIRA	17 YEARS
74. LEAH NYAKERARIO	15 YEARS
75. LEAH NYAKERARIO	16 YEARS
76. LILIAN NYABONYI	64 YEARS
77. LYDIA KEMUNTO MOMANYI	19 YEARS
78. LYDIA MORURI	19 YEARS
79. MACHUKI MORURI	42 YEARS
80. MARCELINE GITEYA	52 YEARS
81. MARCELLA OTUKE	N/S
82. MARIA BANCHIRI	48 YEARS
83. MARION ORUTWA	16 YEARS
84. MARTHA MAISIBA	58 YEARS
85. MARTHA MAISIBA	10 YEARS
86. MARY MOSONGO	18 YEARS
87. MARY NYABAYO	44 YEARS
88. MATHEW MOGIRE MAGERO	68 YEARS
89. MATHIAS GEKONGE	18 YEARS
90. MATUNDURA ARAKA	66 YEARS
91. MAUREEN NYANCHAMA MASAKI	19 YEARS
92. MORANYA MENDUKU	48 YEARS
93. MOSES MEMBA	53 YEARS
94. MOSES MOKAYA	19 YEARS
95. MOSES OKONDO	15 YEARS
96. NANCY ONSONGO	18 YEARS
97. NAOMI BORURA	52 YEARS
98. NATHAN MAKORI	62 YEARS
99. NATHAN MOGIRE NYAGERO	57 YEARS

100.	NICKSON ARERI	16 YEARS
101.	NYAGAK OMBAKI	42 YEARS
102.	NYANGARESI GWAKO	81 YEARS
103.	OBONYO OMURWA	52 YEARS
104.	OBONYO OMURWA	52 YEARS
105.	OENGA OMWENGA	14 YEARS
106.	ONDERI OKIRIGI	83 YEARS
107.	ONGUBO OMayio	68 YEARS
108.	ONYAMBU NYANCHWANI	72 YEARS
109.	OSCAR ONGAGA	17 YEARS
110.	OSORO MENDUKU	68 YEARS
111.	OYAGI ATUTI	48 YEARS
112.	PACIFICA OBWOCHA	64 YEARS
113.	PHILES KAMANDA	64 YEARS
114.	PIUS MOKUA	17 YEARS
115.	PRICILLAH NYABIYA ANGWENYI	15 YEARS
116.	REBECCA BITUTU	21 YEARS
117.	REBECCA BITUTU	55 YEARS
118.	RICHARD NYANSIMERA	35 YEARS
119.	RICHARD NYANSIMERA	62 YEARS
120.	ROBINA OGUCHE	67 YEARS
121.	ROBIN AMENYA	13 YEARS
122.	RODA KWAMBOKA OGATO	21 YEARS
123.	RUTH MOKEIR ONGAKI	14 YEARS
124.	RUTH OTWORI	15 YEARS
125.	RUTH OTWORI	15 YEARS
126.	SABINA MIRWOBA	48 YEARS
127.	SAMSON GITEYA	19 YEARS
128.	SAMWEL NYABWANGI	78 YEARS
129.	SAMWEL ONYIEGO	58 YEARS
130.	SHDRACK OYAGI	17 YEARS
131.	SIKWERI OKONGO	72 YEARS
132.	SIMEON OMIAKO	33 YEARS
133.	SIMON MONGARE	17 YEARS

134.	SELVAM SAHAYA	N/S
135.	SUSAN ABUTA	19 YEARS
136.	TERESA MORAA	24 YEARS
137.	TOM NYAMBATI	18 YEARS
138.	VINCENT BIKERI	17 YEARS
139.	VINCENT NCHORE	42 YEARS
140.	VINCENT ONDIEKI	19 YEARS
141.	WILFRED AREBA	48 YEARS
142.	WILLIAM NYAMARI	13 YEARS
143.	WILSON NYARIKI	16 YEARS
144.	YUBINARISI MIRUKA	54 YEARS
145.	YUNIA OYARO	44 YEARS
146.	YUNIA OYARO	72 YEARS
147.	YUVINELIS ASUTA NYANDEMO	54 YEARS
148.	ZACHEUS NYARANGI	18 YEARS
149.	ZIPPORAH ONSONGO	28 YEARS

**APPENDIX 6(b)**  
**FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION SAMPLES**

<b>CATEGORY : Women</b>		<b>PLACE : Sosera</b>
<b>DATE : 27.07.2014</b>		
<b>NAME</b>	<b>AGE</b>	
1. Winfridah Kemunto	43	
2. Angeline otondo	35	
3. Evaline nyambane	30	
4. Jane Michira	40	
5. Grace Oyugi	52	
6. Florence Nyagaka	29	
7. Linet Biyaki	23	
8. Yunis Moraa	32	

<b>CATEGORY : Women</b>		<b>PLACE : Geteri</b>
<b>DATE : 18.07.2014</b>		
<b>NAME</b>	<b>AGE</b>	
1. Judy Nyagaka	26	
2. Victoria Osebe nyaanga	42	
3. Mellen kerubo	22	
4. Yunia Ntabo	33	
5. Elizabeth moraa	18	
6. Yusalia Moraa	26	
7. Veni Nyagaka	43	
8. Naomi Siko	18	



<b>CATEGORY : Women</b>		<b>PLACE :Bongonta</b>
<b>DATE: 19.07.14</b>		
<b>NAME</b>	<b>AGE</b>	
1.Risper Nyambane	34	
2. Mary Ondieki	35	
3.Rebecca Sagini	21	
4.Hellen Ombui	26	
5.Janet Mirioba	35	
6.Everline Omari	26	
7.Jiliana Siko	28	
8.Edna sarange	30	

<b>CATEGORY : Women</b>		<b>PLACE :Ichuni</b>
<b>DATE : 26.07.2014</b>		
<b>NAME</b>	<b>AGE</b>	
1. Sara Monyangi	35	
2. Teresa Mageto	42	
3. Sibia sarange	35	
4.Anna moige	38	
5.Birita Onsongo	45	
6.Mary Monene	38	
7. Susan Mandere	42	
8. Julia Menge	42	

**CATEGORY : Women**

**PLACE : Amabuko**

**DATE : 30.07.2014**

<b>NAME</b>	<b>AGE</b>
1. Elmerida Kombo	28
2. Oliver Omari	42
3. Alice Bonareri	41
4. Sara Bogonko	30
5. Merciline Kwamboka	38
6. Lydia Mwene	49
7. Mary Saisi	39
8. Moraa Ondieki	58

**CATEGORY : Women**

**PLACE : Matibo**

**DATE : 4.08.2014**

<b>NAME</b>	<b>AGE</b>
1. Gladys Ochenge	45
2. Susana Oyaro	56
3. Julia Nyaboke	32
4. Salome Mokeira	28
5. Josephine Omweri	40
6. Trusila Obegi	34
7. Sylvia Omweri	48
8. Junter Nyabonyi	34
9. Sarah Moraa	45
10. Janet Ombati	52

<b>CATEGORY : Men</b>		<b>PLACE : Matibo</b>
<b>DATE: 12.07.2014</b>		
<b>NAME</b>	<b>AGE</b>	
1.Samwel Onyiego	51	
2 Omori Joshua	42	
3.Fredrick onyari	78	
4.Charles Otoki	46	
5. Simon Omaiko	33	
6.Agostino Okindo	45	
7.Patrick mageto	59	
8.Peter Omoso	61	

<b>CATEGORY : Men</b>		<b>PLACE : Ichuni</b>
<b>DATE : 28.07.2014</b>		
<b>NAME</b>	<b>AGE</b>	
1.John Michira	45	
2.Japeth Obare	28	
3.Johnson mosiria	43	
4.Ronald guto	55	
5.George otiso	38	
6.James Mogaka	42	
7.Kennedy Mosiori	43	
8. Abraham Okaru	58	
.		

**CATEGORY : Men**

**PLACE :Riamichoki**

**DATE: 29. 07. 2014**

**NAME**

**AGE**

1.John nyauma	34
2.Francis onuonga	42
3.Hudson oirura	35
4.Zebedeo Ontiri	28
5.Jackson kambi	32
6.Fred Moindi	42
7. Evans Mogusu	48
8.Dennis Nyaanga	38
9. Julius Ondicho	35
10.Alfred Nyakenanda	52
11.Jonah moturi	34
12. Stephen Arita	45

**CATEGORY : Men**

**PLACE : Mesabisabi**

**DATE : 2.8.2014**

**NAME**

**AGE**

1.James Orori	26
2.John Nyauma	44
3.Tom Magati	38
4.Evans Onyando	42
5.Justus Asanyo	36
6.Kennedy Ondieki	44
7.Edward Maiso	35
8. Stanley Omayio	45

<b>CATEGORY : Men</b>		<b>PLACE :Geteri</b>
<b>DATE : 6.8.2014</b>		
<b>NAME</b>	<b>AGE</b>	
1. Erastus Machogu	54	
2. James Osumo	44	
3. Zacharia Ombuna	56	
4. Ezekiel Oginda	44	
5. Anthony Nyagaka	34	
6. Ronald Michieka	44	
7. Julius Sanganyi	34	
8. Julius Nyaanga	45	

<b>CATEGORY : Men</b>		<b>PLACE :Nyasike</b>
<b>DATE: 12. 08. 2014</b>		
<b>NAME</b>	<b>AGE</b>	
1. Lazarus Nyandieka	38	
2. James Mogambi	44	
3. Evans oanya	55	
4. Job Bunde	43	
5. Zephaniah atati	44	
6. Andrew Nyaanga	58	
7. Albert Osiemo	45	
8. Evans Mosota	38	

**CATEGORY : Men**

**PLACE :Ikorongo**

**DATE : 16.08.2014**

**NAME**

**AGE**

1.lawrence Siko	45
2.Job Ombwori	38
3.Kefa moseti	55
4.David kibwage	42
5. John Okongo	34
6.Kennedy Ochora	58
7.Andrew Nyamwamu	61
8.Henry Okwoyo	58

**CATEGORY : Men**

**PLACE :Riabigutu**

**DATE : 22.08.2014**

**NAME**

**AGE**

1.Henry Mangaa	48
2.Kefa Mochoge	45
3.James Nyakoe	38
4.David Mogire	44
5.Tom Monda	38
6.Joseph Nyabuto	58
7. Sylvester Moindi	42
8. Meshack Borura	47

**CATEGORY : Youth**

**PLACE : Metembe**

**DATE: 16.07.2014**

**NAME**

**AGE**

1. Brian Nyangau	16
2. Sunda Andrew	17
3. Ezra Osano	16
4. Ema Nyamisa	16
5. Job Nyariki	17
6. Sylvester Michira	16
7. Aggrey Nyamwamu	16
8. Diana Mokeira	16
9. Mary mageto	16
10. Beatrice Moragwa	15
11. Dolphine Mochoge	16

**CATEGORY : Youth**

**PLACE : Ramasha**

**DATE: 21. 07.2014**

**NAME**

**AGE**

1. Azael Nyakeriga	17
2. Doreen Nyayiemi	15
3. Nancy Omasire	16
4. Callen Mairura	16
5. Dorothy Nyagaka	17
6. Mary Nyakundi	21
7. Charles Mogaka	16
8. Elvin Makendo	19
9. Rose Ogoti	16

<b>CATEGORY : Youth</b>		<b>PLACE :Matibo</b>
<b>DATE : 22.07.2014</b>		
<b>NAME</b>	<b>AGE</b>	
1.Naomi Moraa	18	
2.Ruth Bonareri	17	
3.Margaret Obonyo	23	
4.Linet Kerubo	20	
5.vane Mokeira	19	
6.Vera Kwamboka	19	
7. Zipporah Onsongo	21	
8. Janet Kemunto	18	
.		

<b>CATEGORY : Youth</b>		<b>PLACE :Engorwa</b>
<b>DATE : 19.07.2014</b>		
<b>NAME</b>	<b>AGE</b>	
1.Ogendi Fredrick	14	
2.Raphael ratemo	14	
3.Victor Nyamosi	24	
4. Albert Sagini	19	
5. Peter Maangi	23	
6. Diana Michira	20	
7. Faith Ondieki	28	
8. Linet Makori	22	
9. Doreen Matingae	21	
10. Vena Mokuu	20	
11.Yunia Ondieki	16	
12. Johnstone mosima	22	



<b>CATEGORY : Youth</b>		<b>PLACE :Bogeche</b>
<b>DATE : 25.06.2014</b>		
<b>NAME</b>	<b>AGE</b>	
1.Justine momanyi	18	
2.Rebecca Orina	17	
3.Judy Nyariki	17	
4.Naomi Gekonge	28	
5.Geoffrey Nyasinga	20	
6. Justine onchuru	16	
7.Dennis Moenga	19	
8.James Ogucha	22	
9.Gibson Gichana	26	
10.Fridah orucho	22	
11.Lydia Obae	24	
12.Duke Mangaa	28	

<b>CATEGORY : Youth</b>		<b>PLACE :Amabuko</b>
<b>DATE: 26.6. 14</b>		
<b>NAME</b>	<b>AGE</b>	
1.Thaddeus Moindi	28	
2.McDonald Mongare	22	
3.Mary Ogaro	26	
4.Lephine Mochumbe	16	
5.Nahashon ongori	25	
6.Dancan Mageto	21	
7.edwin otwori	18	
8.Dinah Achimba	22	
9.Elizabeth Mose	26	
10.Henry Onchoke	18	

**CATEGORY : Youth**

**PLACE :Masimba**

**DATE : 28.06.2014**

**NAME**

**AGE**

1.Sharon Kombo	23
2.Ruth Kwamboka	26
3.Brian ombati	28
4.Asenath Ondicho	22
5.Erick ratemo	20
6.Maria Isaboke	22
7. Sylvia Nyagaka	23
8. Derrick Ogwora	26
9. Enoch Achuti	22
10. Daniel ogato	26

**CATEGORY : Youth**

**PLACE :Nyanturago**

**DATE: 16. 06. 2014**

**NAME**

**AGE**

1.Vane Onuonga	24
2. Gideon Basweti	22
3.Abraham oirura	27
4.Simon ontiri	22
5. Jackson Omari	28
6.William Osiemo	26
7. Jemima Moindi	21
8.Lilian Ondicho	25

<b>CATEGORY : Youth</b>		<b>PLACE : Ichuni</b>
<b>DATE: 22.06. 2014</b>		
<b>NAME</b>	<b>AGE</b>	
1.Lilian Oginda	28	
2.Mary Siocha	14	
3. Billiah Ondieki	18	
4.Lydia Sarimo	20	
5. Judy Maina	18	
6. Teresa Nyameino	22	
7.Rudia Ogwanga	16	
8. jeriah bichage	20	

<b>CATEGORY : Youth</b>		<b>PLACE :Getengereirie</b>
<b>DATE : 25.06. 2014</b>		
<b>NAME</b>	<b>AGE</b>	
1.Sibia Momanyi	16	
2.Grace Sanganyi	28	
3.Salome Mwene	22	
4.Naomi Tongi	18	
5.Ezra Onsongo	23	
6.Nehemia okebiro	18	
7.Naftali Asuta	22	
8.Derrick Onsomu	28	
9. Charles Ombiro	22	
10.Hazael Moragwa	20	
11.Charles Mabuka	22	
12. Peterson ondieki	28	

## APPENDIX 7

### SONG (AKANG'AINA AMANDAZI)

#### AKANG'AINA AMANDAZI

Ayie bang'entire abana  
ing'o gose oratorie abana aba bonsi bakorera amabera igainki ekio baba,  
inki ekio baba ogokorainki  
ekio baba oikaranserete  
abwo norosana ndoche omwana akorera  
abwo norosana inyigwete omwana akorera  
omomura ongeete omwana oyo nere ogerete ngoita x2

*Akangaina amandazi, akangaina anywome x 2*  
*oonchokire obeire ekebarabara*  
*oonchokire baaba*  
*oonchokire obeire ekebarabara*  
*oonchokire taata.*

Inche omwana anye kondera  
inche omwana anye gonsumbuua  
nkong'enta inde inche. Hi! Inche ngoita inde.  
akang'aina esoda, akangaina chipsey x2  
akangaina eroast , akangombia sweetie x 2  
*oonchokire obeire ekebarabara, oonchokire baba x 2*

Gaki bono inche ngai ngochia  
mama ngoita inde, mama ngoita inde  
omwana oyo ende ing'irane oboiseke  
naende ing'irane,naende ebara  
inche inyore echiro  
ekero indabe n'omwana oyo  
bamura mbakonyancha x2  
ise omwana ondokire *e scrap*  
*oonchokire obeire ekebarabara, oonchokire baaba x 2*

*Akangaina amandazi, akangaina anywome X 2*  
*oonchokire obeire ekebarabara*  
*oonchokire baaba X 2*

Yaani obeire bobbe omomura oyo  
nonya baba biachire kombo tari ogoita omwana X 2  
omwana oyo nekengwerere tamanyeti kende yaya X2  
mambia baba intwe inkonganya tore, ningo gose oratigare X 2  
tiga goita *e chief*  
tiga goita omogambi x 2  
tong'enta, ong'ente e nurse  
tong'enta e doctor  
tiga mambia arwarietong'enta , tong'enta omwarim  
tiga mambia asomie X 2  
tong'enta , ong'ente *omopastor* , tiga mambia arandie  
*onyorireegechipse*  
tong'enta , ong'ente omoteri, tiga mambia ateere X 2

*Akangaina amandazi, akangaina anywome x 2*  
*oonchokire obeire ekebarabara*  
*oonchokire baaba*  
*oonchokire obeire ekebarabara*  
*oonchokire taata X 2.*

5. Ndoche bono yabeire bobe mochio oyo, abamura babeire bobe  
Ndoche bono yabeire bobe mochio oyo, abaiseke babeire bobe  
ekero abande bakorigia abana , abande ngoita bare X 2  
ekero ogoita omwana baba, baba bono aye n'omoriri X 2  
ase amachiko ikomi, eria *sita ogoita nekebe*  
ekero ogoita omwana *n'echilaana* baba kweretera X 2  
kaa norigie omwana oyo , origie ere akobore X 2
  
6. Hallo!  
gaki bwangire kobwata esimi  
ngaki bono gaki ngokora  
sweetie, sweetie kiane!  
kwangeire oborito, bono kwangeire koombia esimi yaneebange aye onge chibese ingende  
induserie oboritomama ominto nache antige.Abaibori bane boka nabatindi
  
7. mama nabeire morito  
morito! morito omwana one !  
mbosoku ki bono okondetera  
tata omino gose nache atotige !,  
egento ingokora tiga ingende gochia maate  
omwana obeire morito  
morito pi !  
togende gochia maate aa bochaberi atoruserie enda  
yaa – ya, yaa – ya bwone yaa-ya

*Akangaina amandazi, akangaina anywome x 2*  
*oonchokire obeire ekebarabara*  
*oonchokire baaba*  
*oonchokire obeire ekebarabara*  
*oonchokire taata X 2.*

8. Ekero kwagoreretwe esoda baba  
naende gwasaba chipsey  
aye kwegokia kwaigwa buya  
oborito bogocha kwarera, naende gwateba ngoita ore.

APPENDIX 8

AUTHORIZATION BY KISII EDUCATION OFFICE

appendix 5

REPUBLIC OF KENYA  
MINISTRY OF EDUCATION SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY.

Telegram: "EDUCATION"  
Telephone: 058-30695  
When replying please quote  
[cdkisiit@gmail.com](mailto:cdkisiit@gmail.com)



COUNTY DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION  
KISII COUNTY  
P.O. BOX 44  
KISII.

---

STATE DEPARTMENT FOR EDUCATION

Ref: CDL/KSI/RECH/I/4

22nd April, 2014

Joseph Misati Akuma  
University of Pau and  
Pays de L'Adour  
FRANCE.

**RE: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION.**

Following your research Authorization vide your letter Ref. NCST/RCD/DRMD-W/008, to carry out research in Kisii County this letter refers.

I am pleased to inform you that you carry out your research in the County on "*Socio-economic and cultural determinants of youth well being in rural Kenya.*" Your Research ends on 31<sup>st</sup> July 2015.

Wish you a successful research.

RICHARD L. CHIEPKWAI  
COUNTY DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION  
KISII COUNTY.



APPENDIX 9  
RESEARCH PERMIT BY NACOSTI

REPUBLIC OF KENYA



**NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY**

Telephone: 254-020-2213471, 2241146, 254-020-2673550  
Mobile: 0711-783787, 0735404245  
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secretary@naci.go.ke

P.O. Box 29620 01000  
NAIROBI-KENYA  
Website: www.naci.go.ke

Our Ref: **NCSI/RCD/DRMD-W/008**

Date: **17<sup>th</sup> June 2013**

Joseph Misati Akuma  
University of Pau and  
Pays de L'Adour  
France.

**RE: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION**

Following your application dated 13<sup>th</sup> June, 2013 for authority to carry out research on "*Socio-economic and cultural determinants of youth well being in rural Kenya.*" I am pleased to inform you that you have been authorized to undertake research in **Kisii County** for a period ending 31<sup>st</sup> July, 2015.

You are advised to report to the **County Commissioner and County Director of Education, Kisii County** before embarking on the research project.

On completion of the research, you are expected to submit **two hard copies and one soft copy in pdf** of the research report/thesis to our office.

  
**DR. M. K. RUGUT'LE, PhD, HSC.**  
**DEPUTY COUNCIL SECRETARY**

Copy to:  
The County Commissioner  
The County Director of Education  
Kisii County.

*(The National Council for Science and Technology is Committed to the Promotion of Science and Technology for National Development)*

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