

## CHANGING FAMILY STRUCTURES AND THEIR IMPLICATIONS ON THE GENDER ROLES IN NAKURU MUNICIPALITY, NAKURU COUNTY, KENYA

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### ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to investigate changing family structures and their implications on gender roles in Nakuru Municipality, Nakuru County. This study was conducted in Nakuru Municipality within Nakuru County and was confined to household heads. Main focus was on the five divisions within the Municipality namely; Lanet, Afraha, Kaptembwa, Baharini and Barut. The objectives of the study included examining factors leading to changing family structures; exploring how changing family structures has influenced gender roles; and ascertaining the influence of changing gender roles on children's behavior. A descriptive cross-sectional survey was conducted in Nakuru Municipality. This study used a sample size of 202 respondents selected through purposive and random sampling. Questionnaires and interview guide were used to collect data. Once collected, the data was coded, entered and analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version (20) was used to analyze the data which was then presented in graphs, pie charts, percentages and tables for ease of comprehension.

The study established that forces such as globalization, rural urban migration and education level had greatly accelerated change in family structure in Nakuru town. Women have been forced to take up family responsibilities that earlier on were performed by men. As children grow up irrespective of gender they tend to identify more with their mothers; Women contribute more towards the upkeep of the family compared to men. It is also found that most children irrespective of the gender, tended to copy from the parent that was close to them. Now that the child was left with the maid, they copied mostly from the house helps. This study's findings may give a clear understanding of the impact of the changing family structures on gender roles. Information generated provides a database for informed decisions to policy makers and help the Government of Kenya to address discrimination along gender lines that arise in the decision-making process.

**KEYWORDS:** Changing Family Structures, Gender Roles, Children's Behavior

### INTRODUCTION

Across time and space most societies and cultures marriage has been an important institution for structuring adult intimate relationships and connecting parents to one another and to any children that they have together. It is evident that the content and context of family life has changed and therefore, this study has been motivated by the various challenges facing the family structures today. Families are partly breaking up as a result of the rise in one-parent families, increase in cohabitation, divorce and separation, declining rates of marriage, increase in the number of illegitimate children born outside wedlock, teenage pregnancy, same sex marriage, female headed households, step family amongst others. Globally in every community, married couples have responsibilities and duties within the family structure. Gender division of labor

among different societal groups is different depending on differences in the community structures, norms and value systems. For instance, in Britain the family has undergone three major stages of development; pre-industrial family (1750) characterized as stable productive as an economic unit, father as head of household and exercised economic control over family. Asymmetrical family (1750-1900) disrupted by industrialization process, having absent fathers (at work) and emphasized women's role as "mother" and domestic laborer. Symmetrical family (20<sup>th</sup> Century) characterized as stable, child-centred, greater levels of equality between male and females (Young & Willmott, 2013).

In the Middle East upon introduction of Islam, gender and family roles changed. Islam advanced the placement of women in society although certain jobs were reserved for men. The status of women declined during Abbasid Empire. Subordination of women to fathers and husbands remained prevalent throughout the many generations that followed (Folger, 2012). In Europe, the Greek and Roman Empires had similar gender and family roles. They gained suffrage after World War I in many European countries (Folger, 2012). In Australia the diversity of families is evident in the growth of non-traditional family structures. Vast majority of children live with their mother after parents separate in either single-parent families or in step or blended families. These trends are linked to the increase in divorce and separation (Wise, 2003).

In Africa, males were superior in society and polygamy was common in many tribes. Women participated in struggles for independence in many African states. The respect women gained through their political voice in independence led to their eventual gain of rights which included suffrage (Folger, 2012). Families in Kenya have been evolving and there has been a paradigm shift in gender power relations in a study carried out in Kiambu. There is a gender role reversal as a result of which new gender identities have been created. Unable to live up to the unwritten cultural norms and values of behavior many men in Kiambu have succumbed to feelings of inferiority, uncertainty and frustrations. What used to be a culturally defined sharing of chores inside and outside the household has now changed.

Worldwide studies show that some of the factors leading to changing family structures include: poverty levels in families (Cancian and Danziger, 2009), fertility rates (Mekonnen, 2012), the shift from polygamy marriage type in Africa (Schafer, 1997), single-parenthood (Antonie and Nanitelamio, 1991), changes in rural areas (Silberschmidt (2001), changes in child-bearing and employment status of both men and women. Complex families with children from different biological parents living together in a social family have now become very common as well as having the same sex parents and even having partnership such as living-apart-together. The role of men as household heads had disappeared (Silberschmidt, 2005). Lauer & Lauer (1999) indicates that the demographers give an estimate that the step family will be the main type of the American family by 2010.

Research has continued to reveal that the family structure can facilitate or limit the ways in which parents are able to positively influence the future outcomes of the children (Amato & Keith, 1991; Amato, 2001; Sigle-Rushton & McLanahan, 2002). Family interaction is the sum total of all the family roles played within a given family and is a useful frame of reference for understanding the role of within family processes, or features of the family environment that impact on the individual child development. Atteberry & Owens (2005) concluded that family composition had significant effects on the academic experiences and social development of children.

This study was guided by two theories; Gender schema theory postulated by Bem (1993) and which gives a deep and clear understanding on how we are able to adapt or assimilate roles that initially belonged to the other gender by

explaining how culture is able to influence gender roles. The second theory is general systems theory on the other hand will be used in this study to give an understanding on how changes have occurred in the society since it does give focus on society, its structures and their significance for other structures. Society is made up of different parts termed as systems such as economy, education, family, religion, legal system and that each part has its own function.

Nakuru Municipality has started taking up a new status of being the most polluted and congested town in Kenya today due to the 1.7 million people who reside in this town. Among the challenges that are facing this Municipality are; shortage of water, street families and garbage collection, poor planning of housing, congestion and high level of insecurity (Wambugu, 2012). It is against this background that this study will seek to establish whether changing family structures have led to a paradigm shift in the gender roles and if this is the case establish its impact on the family structures within Nakuru Municipality.

## PROBLEM ANALYSIS

In most societies the family systems are based on the gender roles. Gender roles help members to run the family within the bounds of the culturally defined responsibilities. However, change in the gender roles may affect the smooth functioning of the family. The changing lifestyles and socio-cultural environment, changes in the gender roles within the family have been inevitable. More women are taking up roles that were traditionally perceived as male roles while on the one hand men are either taking up female roles or abandoning their roles. The societal-defined gender roles may crash with the modern roles of family members and many families may experience the dilemma of the crashing gender roles. It is this complexity in family relations and roles changes at the household level that are not well understood. This study therefore intends to investigate the changing family structures and their impact on the gender roles within Nakuru Municipality.

## METHODOLOGY

The study used cross-sectional survey which allowed an exploration of the changing family structures. Nakuru Municipality has been chosen for this study due to its recent expansion in terms of economic, political and social changes. The socio-economic aspects have changed over the years thus influencing the family structure. Different tribes live together in over eighty (80) neighborhoods. This made it possible to get a broader view on changes in the family structures. According to the Kenya National Bureau of Statistics GoK, (2010), the total number of households in Nakuru Municipality is 68,469. Sample size was thus, calculated from this number of households in Nakuru Municipality as stated by the Kenya National Bureau of Statistics. The sample size (202) was calculated using Kothari (2004) formula. Stratified sampling technique was employed, whereby, sampling frame was drawn from the five divisions in Nakuru Municipality namely; Lanet, Afraha, Kaptembwa, Baharini and Barut. Within these divisions, the Municipality has fifteen Civic Wards namely; Lanet, Menengai, Afraha, Hospital, Industrial-Area, Shabab, Kaptembwo, Rhoda, Langalanga, Lake-View, Shauri-Yako, Bondeni, Kivumbini, Barut-East and Barut West. Kothari (2004), formula was used to calculate the sample size for this study as follows:

$$n = \frac{z^2 \times p \times q \times N}{e^2 (N - 1) + (z^2 \times p \times q)}$$

Whereby: n= is the required sample size

$z_2$  = is the standard normal deviate set at (1.96) which corresponds to 95% confidence level.

p= is the proportion in the target population estimated to have characteristics being measured

q= the proportion that will not be studied i.e. (1-p)

e= the precision rate or the acceptable error.

N = Total number of households within Nakuru Municipality

=68,469

Therefore the sample size of this study will be calculated as follows:

$$n = \frac{(1.96)^2 \times 0.05 \times 0.95 \times 68,469}{(0.03)^2(68,469 - 1) + (1.96)^2 \times 0.05 \times 0.95}$$

$$n = 202$$

The study employed cluster sampling technique in accessing the target sample. The three clusters used included high-class, middle-class and low-class classifications on the basis on income and occupation. Therefore sample size of 202 respondents was then divided into three categories that is sixty- seven households (67) for two groups and sixty eight (68) for the final group. The three groups represented respondents from high-class, middle-class and low-class statutes. The key informants will be ten (10).

Data was collected using questionnaires and the interview guide for the key informants. Prior to use the tools were validated with help of University Supervisors. Data collected was coded, entered and analyzed using statistical package for social sciences (SPSS) version twenty. Descriptive statistics (means frequencies and percentages were computed for each objective.

Approval was sought from the Board of Postgraduate Studies, Egerton University. A research permit was also sought from the National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation. Personal information was kept anonymous while conducting the study, the researcher also received informed consent from the people involved in the study giving an assurance that information obtained was strictly for the purpose of this proposed study only. Confidentiality and anonymity of information collected was adhered to.

The collected data was categorized, edited, coded, and analyzed. Responses in the Likert scale were assigned numerical values to make quantitative analysis possible. Qualitative data obtained from the open-ended items was analyzed with similar answers grouped together according to the responses from themes for analysis. The main themes and patterns in the responses were identified and analyzed to determine the adequacy, usefulness and consistency of the information. Quantitative data was computed for descriptive statistics (frequencies, means and percentages) with the aid of SPSS Version 21 and Microsoft Excel 2010, and thereafter the result will then be presented in the form of tables and charts.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

### Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents

The study was able to obtain 182 respondents which was made up of 70% female and 30% male. However, the study is able to capture and analyze useful data from both gender represented in the study. Almost all the respondents were aged above 30 years. This shows that most of respondents were mature enough and experienced to provide useful information for the study. The respondents selected had at least secondary education level and thus were fairly represented in this study to avoid biasness and they were knowledgeable enough to provide information sought through the questionnaires. It was further established that most of the respondents had educational level above 'A' level, thus implying that they were well educated, hence their perception in this study was from an informed point of view. According to a study by the OECD (2011) across many countries both in the developing and developed countries, women with higher levels of education are more likely to live in households without children.

The study also established that 60% of the respondents were married, while 30% were either single parents separated, while 10% were widowed. The percentage of single parents was not favorable considering the fact the single parents have been found to have great challenges in bringing up children. Following a divorce, mothers and children experience a substantial drop in their standard of living (Bradbury & Katz, 2002), in part because of the loss of economies of scale and in part because many nonresidential fathers fail to pay adequate child support (Garfinkel & McLanahan, 1986). It was also found that 59.3% of the respondents lived in their house with three or less persons, that is to say, that most household sizes were smaller compared to the past where nuclear families were large.

Majority of the respondents (70.9%) were employed, while 24.2% were self-employed, while 4.9% were unemployed. Those employed were mainly from the public sector working teachers, doctors, clerks or accountants, while those in the private sector were made up of varied categories such as managers, doctors, accountants, drivers, security officers. It was important that perception of respondents per occupation is established since as the findings show some occupation tended to influence behavioural aspects related to change in family structure. It was also found out that most income was earned through employment status. Most employed couples tend not to have enough time for family gender specific roles and thus would delegate these tasks to house helps. Most of the respondents indicated that their spouses earned between 20000 and 60000 Kenya shillings. Highest income levels were reported to be earned by male spouses, implying that males earned more than females. Women have tended to prefer men with a high(er) level of educational attainment. Today some men with low income tend to shy away from marriage thus working women would rather raise their children as single parents than stay with a man who cannot live up to their economic expectations.

### Factors Leading to Changing Family Structures

#### Size of the family

The findings show that 72% indicated that the change in family structure was reflected in the form of reduced family size. The reduction of the family size is attributed partly to economic difficulties, low levels of income, the high cost of living, the costs of education of children and the desire to maintain a better standard of living, which is best achieved within the more affordable smaller size family. Consequently, the nuclear family with its parents and children became the model of society and soon ruled out the traditional, extended family usually constituting three generations.

### Female Headed Households

The findings also show that 67% indicated that change in family headship contributed to the change in family structure. The increase in female headed households is due to variety of reasons including widowhood, migration, non-marital fertility and marital instability (Bruce and Lloyd, 1992). In recent decades an increasing number of women, particularly rural women, have become heads of households because men, the traditional heads of households, had left for work or other reasons. Moreover due to civil unrest, and displacement, a refugee situation exists in a number of countries in the region, often resulting in females taking over the task of running the household.

### Single Parents Family

48% of the respondents indicated that single parent family is one of the factors that contributed to change in family structure. Households that include two adults generally have greater opportunities to avoid poverty, since the second adult on average adds more too potential income than to needs. Thus, declines in marriage and increases in divorce are both poverty increasing. Cohabiting couples may capture the same benefits as marriage, though the implications of cohabitation for official poverty measures, as well as for actual economic well-being, are complex.

### Separated family structures

The results show that 36% indicated that separated family structures also contributed to change in family structure. It is no longer the case that all marital unions, whether formal or informal reach the final dissolution through death. A considerable proportion of unions are disrupted suddenly for reasons such as desertion, separation or divorce. An obvious failure in family relationship is where husband and wife cease to live together. Divorce is the final dissolution, leaving both spouses legally free to enter another marriage contract.

### Reasons why Family Structures Have Changed

The reasons why family structures have changed in Nakuru town were as provided in Table 1.

**Table 1: Reasons Why Family Structures Have Changed**

	Frequency	Percentage
Reduced family size	131	72%
Change in family headship	122	67%
Single Parent family	87	48%
Separated family structure	65	36%

According to the respondents, the main reasons responsible for the change in family structure in Nakuru town included: Cost of living (51%), Nature of occupation and earning (29%), Level of education of women leading conflicts and divorce (20%), Marriage not a prerequisite for family (19%), Divorce and Separation (14%), Responsibility sharing (8%), Neglect of responsibilities (7%), Culture Erosion (7%), Extra marital affairs (6%), No Response (5%), Frustration in the family due to high salary by women(5%), Lack of trust to one another(5%), Reversed gender roles source of conflict(4%), Liberalization and decision making(4%), Women have become independent and bread winners(4%), Pressure of modern life (3%), and Work place challenges (2%). The percentage in brackets represents the percentage of respondents citing that reason.

### **Contribution of Education to Change in Family Structure**

The findings show that education had contributed towards change in family structure in the following ways: Education has led to independent mindedness, especially in decision making (48%); More time spend on studying and life exposure (30%); Distance of work place and lifestyle (25%); Well family and birth control (23%); Family breakdown due higher salary of female partner (20%); Erosion of culture (15%); It has women to be rebellious in marriage (12%); Women uplifting their standard of living (2%). This implied that education level did contribute to changes in family structure. The percentage in brackets represents the percentage of respondents citing that reason.

### **Contribution of Rural Urban Migration to changes in the Family Structure**

The respondents were asked to explain how rural urban migration had contributed to changes in the family structure. The findings show that rural urban migration had contributed to changes in the family structure in the following ways. It had resulted into interaction and lifestyle change, Extra Marital Affairs, Abandonment of rural responsibilities by men, Small families due to economic strain, Erosion of cultural heritage, Peer group motivation.

### **Contribution of Globalization to Changes in the Family Structure**

Almost all the respondents save 4% agreed that globalization had contributed to changes in the family structure of households in Nakuru Town. Globalization thus, seems to have greatly influences in the family structure of households. It has led to new lifestyles, which are associated with family disruption and social and domestic violence. Globalization has given birth to some form of hybrid identity, which is not favouring the traditional family structure. This finding is in line with the finding by Sobha (2006) which associated globalization is with rapid and significant human changes. The movement of people from rural to urban areas has accelerated, and the growth of cities in the developing world especially is linked to substandard living for many. Family disruption and social and domestic violence are increasing.

The findings further revealed that 51% of the respondents indicated that globalization had led copied lifestyle and values, 48% indicated that globalization had exposed families to external information that contributed to change in family structure. 24% of the respondents stated that it had led to borrowed family behaviours and practices leading to breakups; while 23% linked it to new definition of parental roles and responsibility. Other issues attributed to globalization included: erosion of cultural family values; separation and neglect of family matters; birth control methods thus small families; foreign cultures has led to immorality; and interracial marriage. Copied lifestyles do influence the changes in the traditional family structure. Sobha (2006) argues that the difference in regions, topography and climate allow for different types of lifestyles and culture. The family is exposed to change steering information which in time either tears it a part or influences the family structure. Today information is rapidly shared through social media; through networks such as Facebook, which is detrimental to the traditional family structure. Behaviours from other civilization have through globalization brought a new definition of parents' roles and responsibilities and to be precise, reversed gender roles. Parker and Wang (2013) noted that the way mothers and fathers spend their time has changed dramatically in the past half century. Dads are doing more housework and child care; moms more paid work outside the home.

### **Contribution of Occupation to Changes in the Family Structure**

It was established that 88% of the respondents agreed that occupation of family members in Nakuru had contributed to changes in the family structure, while 12% did not think so. Marital status is also strongly linked to views



about the ideal work situation, and the gap in views between married and unmarried mothers has widened significantly in recent years. The occupation of family members in Nakuru had contributed to changes in the family structure in the following ways: Children left under care of house help due job commitment by both parents (51%); Demanding occupation leading to family crisis (Such as unfavourable work timings/schedules) (48%); Parents having little time for their family responsibility (47%); Different work location means spouses are living separately (42%); and the fact that occupation had made women to start undermining men due to high salary and superior career (36%). Other issues with a percentage below 35% included: increased equality in responsibilities; exposure to new lifestyles; ability by each spouse to own property separately; and the fact that occupation is now a basis for marriage partner choice and stay in marriage.

### **Influence of Changing Gender Roles on Children's Behavior**

Almost all the respondents (98%) agreed that gender roles had changed in families. This implied that indeed gender roles had changed significantly. Men were performing roles that were traditionally meant for women, while women were also performing the roles performed by men. Changing gender roles in parents is considered critical in this study as to have an influence on children behavior. Both parents need to be present. Because the father plays such a critical role in the development of children's gender roles, his absence has been related to disruptions in gender typing in preadolescent boys and to problems in relationships with peers of the opposite sex for adolescent females. Families actively play a role in gender-role socialization by the ways in which they organize the environment for the child. Boys and girls are dressed differently, receive different toys to play with, and sleep in bedrooms that are furnished differently.

The respondents were asked to indicate the gender roles that have changed and gave the Responses provided in Table 2.

**Table 2: Gender Roles That Have Changed**

	Frequency	Percentage
Provision for the Family is left to one spouse (women)	87	48%
Neglect of responsibility (transfer of task to house helps)	85	47%
Responsibility of children to take care of themselves	72	40%
Equality in sharing of responsibilities	71	39%
Family headship and decision making	45	25%
Parents spending less time with children	44	24%
Land ownership was illegal but now is legal	23	13%
Too much work transferred to children by parents	22	12%
Not Response	6	3%

Gender roles have changed in the following ways: Provision for the Family is left to one spouse (women) (48%); Neglect of responsibility (transfer of task to house helps) (47%); Responsibility of children to take care of themselves (40%); Equality in sharing of responsibilities (39%); Family headship and decision making (25%); Parents spending less time with children (24%); Land ownership was illegal but now is legal (13%); and Too much work transferred to children by parents (12%). The findings show that some responsibilities that were meant for men such as provision of food through farming, hunting have now been left for the women. Another interesting shift is the fact that some critical responsibilities have been shifted to the house helps. Parents seem to have neglected their roles and thus leaving children with nothing important to learn from them. Another important aspect noted is the fact that there are today child headed households and children taking care of themselves. This shift is not good, since it may interfere with the children's' personality and social growth. Family headship has also shifted in that today there are so many women headed households.



### **Influence of Changed Roles on Children**

It was established that some of the virtues that children learned from their parents. The mean score for the aspects were as follows. Hardworking, determination and confidence (19.8); Role and occupation (11.5), Academics (9.9); Responsible and availability (8.2); Christianity Life (6.6); Household chores (4.4); Independence (3.3); Dressing (2.7); Aspiration (2.7); Integrity (2.7); Decision making and Academics (2.2); Humbleness (2.2); and Generosity and love (1.6). These implied children are learning or copying a lot from the parents, their behavior and the way they go about their responsibilities. The findings show that at least virtues like hardworking, determination and confidence, implying thus that the opposite (laziness and lack of confidence) is also copied. The roles and occupation are also copied, thus the shift in roles is also copied by the children. What we note here that the shift in changed roles is actually being copied by children and thus time is coming when the traditional roles will be long forgotten.

### **Father Figure in the Case of Single Mothers**

The findings show that 33% respondents indicated that the father role in the case of single mothers was played by uncles, 15% indicated mothers themselves, 15% indicated the role was performed by brothers, 11% by father, 7% by grandfather, 7% by church members and friends. In the past there was nothing like an absent father, since in most communities the child belonged to the community thus the community members would step to assist.

### **Unchanged Gender Roles despite Changing Times**

The male roles that remained unchanged despite the changing times were as follows, family responsibility such as education (66%) chief bread winner/provider (27%) family headships (16%) security for the family (14%) land buying and dowry negotiations (5%) house construction and homestead setting, property owners, decision making on complex family issues and family investments. The findings show that indeed male roles have changed greatly with only a few traditional roles being retained. The result in respect to female roles despite changing times was provided as follows in order of frequency: Cooking (63%); household chores (55%); raising children (48%) healthcare for children (34%); taking care of family (14%); and gender advice to female children (14%). The findings showed most traditional roles of female had been retained as opposed to male roles. Cooking, household chores and raising children were still to a great extent considered female roles.

### **Assigning Specific Roles or Duties to Children by Gender**

Majority of the respondents (76.9%) indicated that they did not assign specific roles/duties/activities to their children by gender; the 18.7% that did so indicated that they were guided by the nature of work and not gender.

### **Rebelliousness of Children**

The findings show that 65.9% of the parents did not see their children as being rebellious, while 34.1% thought otherwise. Those that saw their children as rebellious attributed these behaviors to factors such as gender issues (28.6%), Peer pressure (4.9%); distractions (2.77%); and laziness (1.1%). This implied that families were doing all it takes to ensure that their children are disciplined, but the lingering question is how this is done. This is however, discussed in section 4.5, where we note the role of house helps.

### Good Behavior Seen in Children

The main good behaviors seen in boys included obedience (51.1%), Household chores and education 34.6%. Others behaviour included being hardworking, co-operative and taking care of babies. Good behavior seen in boys included protectiveness and assisting girls (32.4%), courage and creativeness (23.1%), obedience (26.4%) and performing all chores. This implied most parents were keen in transferring good attributes down to their children. There is shift from the traditional roles in that we notice that boys are seen performing all chores. Main bad behaviours seen in boys included drug abuse (14.3%), arrogance (12.6%), disrespectfulness (9.3%), inappropriate dressing style (8.2%), oppressing girls with work (2.7%), Other included fighting, dating daily, late-coming to the house, women behavior and careless in their duties. These behaviors seem to be caused or created by the fact that family structure is changing. Therefore we can say that change in family structure has led to these bad behaviours.

Bad behavior seen in girls today as follows: Disobedience (14.8%), inappropriate dressing mode (14.3%), laziness (6%), drugs (6%), teenage pregnancies and drinking (4.9%), long chatting on social media (2.7%), and expensive life style. These problems seen in children would not be condoned sometime in the past, when the family was intact and parental responsibilities were taken seriously.

### Child Indiscipline Status in School

It was established that 132 out of 182 parents (73%) indicated that they had never been called to school for any indiscipline for their child or children, the rest either had been called or chose not to respond to the question. The 41 respondents that have been called to school indicated as follows: 53.7% of the 41 had been called once, 34.1% indicated twice, 9.8% indicated more than trice. This show that not so many parents used in the study had been called to school for their children's indiscipline cases, most of those that had been called indicated that had asked so once or twice. To establish the relationship between family structure and children's indiscipline cases in schools a Pearson correlation was computed as shown as below.

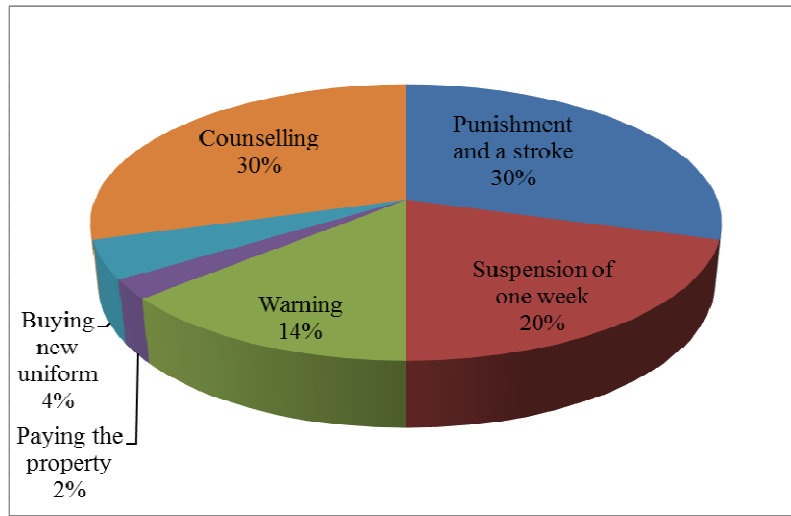
**Table 3: Relationship between Family Structure and Indiscipline Cases of Children**

		Family Structure has Changed	Indiscipline Case for Child or Children
Family structure has changed	Pearson Correlation	1	.046
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.537
	N	182	182
Have you ever been called to school for any indiscipline case for your child or children?	Pearson Correlation	.046	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.537	
	N	182	182

The findings in Table 3 show that there is a positive Pearson correlation between changed family structure and indiscipline cases of children at 0.046. However, this is slightly below the significance level at 0.05. This implied that even though there is a relationship, it is not statistically significance. Other factors seem to be in play besides change in family structure in contributing to children indiscipline.

**Action taken In Curbing Indiscipline**

The response in respect to the action taken to curd indiscipline cases among children are as provided in Figure 1.



**Figure 1: Action Taken in Curbing Indiscipline**

The findings in Figure 1 show that the actions taken to address indiscipline among children included: punishment and a stroke (30%), counselling (30%), suspension of one week (20%), warning (14%), buying new uniform (4%), paying the property (2%). From the responses it emerges that the form of indiscipline determined the form of punishment to be applied. The study also shows that the children were also punished at home.

It was noted that while 76% of the respondents indicated that they did not notice indiscipline cases in their children, the rest reported the following forms of indiscipline seen in their children. Irregular school or class attendance (6%), defiance (4.9%), rudeness to teachers (3.3%), harassing classmates (2.7%), chronic avoidance of work(1.6%), arriving late during opening day and shortening of school uniform. Other forms of indiscipline included: alcohol abuse, lack of respect of property, harassing classmates and verbal insults, exam malpractice, and make-up application.

**Time Spent With Children in a Week**

Very few parents could afford spending more time with their children. Most parents spent less than three days in a week with their children. This could be due to changes brought about by occupation and busy schedules.

**Freedom Due to Family Structure**

Most parents had no cases of teenage pregnancies at their homes represented by 84.6%, while those who had such cases, were represented by 4.4%. 162 respondents (89%) said that their children are not free to do what they want while 20 respondents represented by 11% said that their children are free to do what they want. This therefore shows that most parents are concerned into shaping their children behavior, to become better members of the society. Majority of the parents delegated some of their roles to the house help as represented by 70.9% while 28% of the parents did not delegate any roles to the house help. This shows that 121 of the respondents had full trust to their house helps as opposed to 59 respondents.

### **Roles Delegated to the House Help**

Some of the major roles delegated to house helps included washing dishes (65%), cleaning the house (62%), preparing meals (57%), doing laundry, grocery shopping, and caring for children represented by 51% respectively. Most respondents indicated that house helps were not delegated family investment (70%), paying bills (68%), paying for children education (59%), and upkeep of the family (54%). This shows that these roles were majorly undertaken by the parents included doing laundry, preparing meals, grocery shopping, cleaning house, washing dishes and caring for children.

### **Why Parents Delegated Some Roles to the House Helps**

Most respondents (101 out of 182) delegated some of the roles to the house helps because of the nature of their occupation as represented by 55.5%. 52 respondents represented by 28.6% saw no need to delegate roles to the house helps.

### **How Changing Family Structures Has Influenced Gender Roles in Nakuru Municipality**

The findings show that most household chores are done by women (4.04); currently women have been forced to take up family responsibilities that earlier on were performed by men (3.95); as children grow up irrespective of gender they tend to identify more with their mothers (3.62); men tend to be listened to and obeyed more than the women in the households (3.56); Women contribute more towards the upkeep of the family (3.52); In current times most men have lost the headship position in the households in decision-making (3.47); Women have more influence on their children behavior than men (3.47); Women take care of most of the financial responsibilities in the home (3.40); Men have more authority over children than women in most households (3.31); Your working life interferes with the gender roles you perform (3.24); Men contribute more towards the education of their children (3.11); Most of the ownership of the family property is owned by men (3.03); Men pay for most bills in the household (3.00).

### **SUMMARY**

This section contains a summary of the findings presented in the order of the research objectives.

- The study sought to examine factors leading to changing family structures. Forces such as globalization, rural urban migration and education level had greatly accelerated change in family structure in Nakuru town. According to the findings, the main factors leading to changing family structures included high cost of living, nature of occupation and earning, level of education of women leading conflicts and divorce, marriage not a prerequisite for family, divorce and separation, responsibility sharing, neglect of responsibilities, and culture erosion and extra marital affairs.
- Changing family structures has influenced gender roles in Nakuru Municipality in the following ways. Currently women have been forced to take up family responsibilities that earlier on were performed by men. As children grow up irrespective of gender they tend to identify more with their mothers; Women contribute more towards the upkeep of the family; In current times most men have lost the headship position in the households in decision-making; in some households, women take care of most of the financial responsibilities in the home; and in some cases women have more authority over property than men in most households as opposed to the past.

- Regarding the influence of changing gender roles on children's behavior, the study established as follows. The findings show that most children irrespective of the gender, tended to copy from the parent that was close to them. Now that the child was left with the maid, they copied mostly from the maids. The boys who were close to the mother ended up copying what the mother was doing as a result, a reversal of gender roles. Forms of Indiscipline were noticeable that could be linked to change parenting style. The findings show that most parents did not have enough time with their children in a week and had in fact delegated critical parenting roles to the maids.

## CONCLUSIONS

Based on the study findings the study concludes as follows:

- Family structure had indeed changed owing to forces such as globalization, education, rural-urban migration. This situation was further compounded with factors such as high cost of living, demanding occupation, level of education of women. These factors make the traditional family structure unfavorable to some couples. Education brings with it the understanding that small family size is better than large family size, and that women can manage family affairs without male dominance.
- Changing family structures have had both positive and negative influences on gender roles. Women have been faced by circumstances to take up family responsibility. Consequently, there are situations where men have lost headship leaving women to exercise authority over property. Within the structures, men and women have learnt to appreciate each other's roles and redefine gender roles.
- Most parents in Nakuru town seem to have delegated sensitive parental roles to the house helps. Children were copying very much from the house help since they spend very little time with their parents. Cases of undisciplined children are linked to failure of parents to exercise their direct authority to the children as it was in the past. In other words, change in family structure was a contributor to decaying morals.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Following the findings and conclusions the study recommends the following:

- The Government of Kenya should consider putting in place policies that define and guide families on the specific gender roles, since the change in family structure has led to unfavourable reversal of gender roles.
- The Government of Kenya should consider mobilizing resources for educating families on the possible dangers associated on the shift of parental responsibilities on children due to change in family structure.
- Parents should consider allocating time to be with their families away from their busy schedule so as to be able to provide adequate parental guidance and support to their children.
- The Government of Kenya through the Ministry of Culture should consider putting policies in place that support the traditional family structure against harmful forces such as negative effects of globalization and negative education.
- The Government of Kenya should consider setting appropriate structures that reach the household level to detect, understand and resolve family structure oriented challenges that affect gender roles and parental responsibilities.

- There is need for the Government of Kenya to take action against irresponsible parents to ensure that no children are adversely affected by the dynamics of family structure.

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