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Toward Parental Empowerment: Exploring the Beneficiaries' Perspectives on Positive Parenting Education in Tanzania: A Case of Temeke District, Dar es Salaam Region, Tanzania

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Abstract:
This study explored the beneficiaries' perspectives on positive parenting education in Tanzania. Data were collected using interviews, FGDs and documentary review methods. The study also employed case study research design and qualitative research approach. The data indicate that parenting has remained a difficult area. Despite the interventions done to provide parents with parenting education that is considered to be positive, there are still some dilemma in the practice as the parents have accepted some of the skills and rejected or modified some of them to suit their local context. The findings also indicate that the beneficiaries' perspectives on positive parenting education are strongly influenced by their personal experiences, background, history, religion, legal and social-cultural attributes. The study concludes by holding that the successfulness of positive parenting education in Tanzania depends on understanding on what it means by good parenting among the local people and that not everything that is imposed to the local community can gain acceptance. The study has three fundamental recommendations; one is that the positive parenting education has to incorporate the traditional parenting education which is also perceived positive in a given context, even though it is considered negative in the eyes of expert. The study acknowledges that parenting issues are extremely contentious, they cannot be explained by single line of reasoning or model. Secondly, more studies have to be conducted to understand how positive parenting education is perceived across social-cultural and economic environment in Tanzania, the findings from which are to form the basis of improving parenting skills at a given area. Thirdly, positive parenting education in the communities require much time, need to be mainstreamed in different professions and supported by all social institutions available in the society. This is because; traditional practices among the local communities are deeply rooted.

Keywords: Parenting, positive parenting practices, modern parenting and social-cultural norms

1. Introduction

The contemporary world has seen parents and/or caregivers introduced to the idea that children require adult guidance and protection and that they should be provided with optimal parenting based on their developmental stage (Bibi et al 2013, Darling & Steinberg 1993, Darling 1999, Mwamwenda 2004). This reflects the widely-accepted importance of the link between children's current and future welfare (Baumrind 1967). Different research reports and publications done for example by Tame et al (2012), Belsky (1984), Berk (2003), Strage & Brandt (1999), Mwamwenda (2004), Maccoby & Martin (1983), REPSSI (2011), IRC (2015), have pointed out that proper parenting is extremely crucial time in a child's life, when every moment brings a new experience, and a new chance to learn and grow. That is to say, the socio-emotional, physical and cognitive development of the children influences many attributes of their future lives (Martin 2000). As a matter of insistence, parents exert a major influence on the way children express personality characteristics and behaviors.

Apparently, the world communities have widely recognized the significance of positive parenting to the development of children. Most of the parents understand that good parenting involves building supportive environment, modeling and mentoring their children (Pembe 2013). However, the question remains how can this be achieved? This question has rendered parenting to be a subject of long standing debate in various countries in the world. The debates have been revolving around the modern discourse of parenting (positive parenting) which does not support physical punishment and supported by scholars such as Gallinger (2007), Lefkowitz (1977), and Hyman (1997). International organizations such as IRC (2015), REPSSI, UNICEF (2015), andon the other hand traditional discourse of parenting which support the use of physical punishment and supported by scholars such as Benatar (1998), Williams (1999), and Osborne (2006).

The other debate has been whether it is possible to make a demarcation between physical punishment and physical abuse (Durrant, 2005). Some researchers argue that everyday types of physical punishment are not necessarily perceived as abusive acts (Larzelere, 1993; Baumrind, 1997). On the other hand, other scholars argue that all physical (corporal) punishments areregarded as abusive or

violence acts and that it is impossible to draw a line that make a distinction where punishment ends and where abuse begins (Cawson et al, 2000; Graziano, 1994).

The present attention in parenting arises as a result of the noticeable increase in behavioral problems, child abuse and neglect, juvenile crime, and delinquency (Berk 2003, IRC 2015, and UNICEF 2015). In Tanzania, there isan escalating number of children who are in conflict with the laws, growing number of vulnerable children who live in the street and who drop out from school (Anderson 2012, Chamwi 2014, Lalor 2004, Lugalla & Mbwambo 1999).

Most of the reasons attributing to vulnerable children in Tanzania include; mistreatment, violation of human rights, irresponsibility of parents in the provision of care and support to their children (Pembe 2013, IRC 2015, SOS 2014, UNICEF 2015). Because of this, there have been various projects and programmes initiated and monitored jointly by the government through the ministry of Health, Community Development, Gender, Elderly and Children and NGOs like UNICEF, IRC (International Rescue Committee), Child Protection and Care Reform, Save the Children, REPSSI etc. that offer parenthood education or skillful parenting approach to parents in Tanzania.

The reports by IRC[1] (2015, 2016) in Tanzania indicate that parenting education have been considered important as they have been able to change some of the negative parenting practices among its beneficiaries and thus promise to gain more positive results when expanded to different areas in the country. The reports have also shown that parenting groups have demonstrated improved awareness of positive discipline techniques. The programmesin particular are designed to provide alternative parenting techniques to caregivers that would improve their relationships with their children, and eventually increase health development of these children both physically, socially, emotionally and cognitively. Areas which have already benefited from these programmes in Tanzania include;Temeke in Dar es Salaam, Kasulu in Kigoma and Nyarugusu Refugee Camp in Kigoma. Further, the positive parenting trainings have reached more than 900 parents or care givers in Tanzania (IRC 2016).

The parenting education has also been conducted with the aid of state policy, state and international regulations and acts. For example, the law of the child act (LCA) of 2009, child development policy of 2008, Marriage act number 5 of 1971 which altogether put emphasize on the best interest of the child. In addition, parenting trainings have been in compliance with different international conventions and charters like the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child 2011, United Nation Convention on the Rights of the Child 1989 which also insist on the best interest of the child. For example, according to the law of the child act 2009, It is stipulated that the child has right to be heard under section 11, "a child shall have a right of opinion and no person shall deprive a child capable of forming views the right to express an opinion, to be listened and to participate in decisions affect his well-being (LCA 2009:5). The law underlines the importance of giving children an opportunity to participate in decision making that affect their lives.

However, not much is known about the beneficiaries' perspectives on positive parenting education in the intervened areas in Tanzania. The study in particular would like to establish what changes have been observed following the positive parenting trainings and if not what has not been changed in their parenting practice and why. The study would like to know which parenting practices are positive and supportive in the intervened area that can contribute to address behavioral problems, child abuse and neglect, juvenile crime, and delinquency in a local context.

This is important because each child reveal a particular kind of manners depending on the way he or she has been raised in a given social environment. I would also like to put clear that the subject of parenting is very broad. Therefore, in this study the focus was on a few selected issues namely; parental care and responsibility, child freedom and participation, use of corporal punishment, workload and gender-division of labor, child-parent relationship, child-parent communication and expression of loving words to children. I would also like to say that the children that this study refers to are any persons below the age of eighteen (18). In the following part, a theoretical framework is presented.

2. Theoretical Framework

This study was guided by the theory social constructionism. The evolution of social constructionist theory can be traced to four traditions; first, phenomenology---the study of meanings of peoples' actions from their point of view. Second symbolic interaction tradition---the study of symbolic meanings and interpretations attached to social actions and environments Third, ethno methodology–the study of how, in practice, people construct social order and make sense of their social world. Fourth, historical studies---the use of people's life stories in understanding their experiences and socially constructed reality (Hutchison & Charlesworth 2003, Lewis & Ritchie 2003).

Social Construction theory was popularized by Berger &Luckmann (1966). In principle, the theory holds that the notion of an objective truth does not exist. Rather, knowledge is constructed through social interaction, subjective interpretation and influenced by social processes like culture (Berger & Luckmann 1966). Therefore, most of the things we take for granted are not essentially objective facts about the world, independent of human subjectivity, instead the products of human inter-subjectivity. The basic contention of social constructionism is that reality is socially constructed, contextual, dynamic and multiple (Berger & Luckmann 1966).

Social constructionism looks upon individuals as being influenced by cultural, political and historical development, in specific times and places. To put this theory in the perspective of this work, we would say that the way parenting has been practiced differ from areas to areas because they are socially constructed. This is because the social realities have been shaped by social-cultural, historical and interpersonal processes at a given area. Also, it is of interest to understand that the social realities regarding parenting practices might be different from one individual to another because of its dynamicand multiplicity characteristics.

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[1]International Rescue Committee

3. Methods and Materials

3.1. Research Design
This study used a case study design to understand the beneficiaries' perspectives on positive parenting education in Tanzania. Case study refers to an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon in depth and within its real-life context. The case study is mainly useful when the aim is to develop a profound understanding of an issue, organization or phenomena (Yin, 2009:18). Here, the case was the beneficiaries of positive parenting education in Temeke District, Dar es salaam, Tanzania. The decision to carry out a case study was on the need to have the findings which are context-specific and historically driven.

3.2. Research Approach
This study employed qualitative research approach. This was attributed to the following reasons; First, it was possible to study the parenting beneficiaries' perspectives relatively deeply Creswell (2009). Second, the approach permitted data collection from a variety of sources (triangulation of methods and sources) and hence making the data more credible Creswell (2009). Third, the informants involved in the study had a wider opportunity to tell their story through discussions in focus groups and face to face interviews Creswell (2009). Fourth, qualitative research approach was preferred because it is situational or context-specific. The experiences shared by the informants were perceived to be shaped by the their social cultural-context and historical processes Creswell (2009).

3.3. Data Collection Methods
This study also used interviews and documentary review methods of data generation. The study conducted interviews to the beneficiaries of positive parenting education and dealt with existing or available data that are originally recorded or left behind or collected earlier by a different person from the current researcher (Curry et al 2009, Kothari 2004, and Vartanian 2011). Secondary data were employed because they were less costly, easy to access Vartanian (2011). Before using these data, assessment was also being made to ensure their reliability, suitability and adequacy (Kothari 2004).

3.4. Study Area, Population and Time
The study was conducted in Temeke District, Dar es Salaam Region, in Tanzania. Temeke was purposely chosen because it was one of sampled Districts in Tanzania where positive parenting trainings were conducted by IRC[2]. The study area consisted of the following areas in Temeke District; Kilimahewa-Tandika, Maguruwe-Tandika, Azimio, Keko Mwanga A, Keko Mwanga B, Mtongani, Kilungule and Kiburugwa. The study population was the beneficiaries of parenting education in Temeke District from which the sample was taken.This study took three months from August 2016 to October 2016.

3.5. Sampling Procedure and Technique
Since this study was targeting the beneficiaries of positive parenting education, the sampling procedure was non-random and the technique employed was purposive. Under purposive sampling the organizer of the investigation purposively chooses the particular units of the universe to constitute a sample (Kothari 2004, Patton 2002). The sample size constituted 28 informants of which 11 informants participated in interviews and 17 informants participated in three different Focus Group Discussions. The sample size was not pre-determined. Rather, it was based on the principle of saturation point in qualitative research.

3.6. Data Analysis
Merriam (1998:11) write that, "The analysis usually results in the identification of recurring patterns that cut through the data or into the delineation of a process." Content analysis was employed as a strategy for analyzing data in this study. Content analysis looks at documents, text, or speech to see what themes emerge and what do people talk mostly (Hsieh & Shannon 2005). Schurink (1998) explained qualitative content analysis as a strategy for analyzing data that emphasize on the formulation of concepts, insights and understanding from the patterns of data instead of the exact figures gained from the accurate measurements. Thus, the findings of this study were analyzed in light of the recurrent patterns of data portrayed by the beneficiaries of positive parenting education. In the following section, the findings of this study are presented.

4. The Findings
In this section, the findings of the study are presented and discussed. The discussions centered on the following areas; parental care and responsibility, child freedom and participation, workload and gender division of labor, the use of corporal punishment, child-parent relationship and playful interaction, child-parent communication, and expression of loving words. These were among the areas which were touched when the positive parenting education was imparted to the parents/guardians or care givers of Temeke District in Tanzania. In fact, the beneficiaries of parenting education represented the local discourse of parenting while the presenters of positive parenting education represented mostly the modern discourse of parenting.

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[2]IRC means International Rescue Committee

4.1. Parental Care and Responsibility

The findings generated by interviews and FGDs showed that all the parents and guardians expressed their positive attitudes towards parental care and responsibility. The informants appreciated that the training they received exposed them more on how to take care of their children so as to make them grow physically, socially, cognitively and emotionally. One of the parents said;

- We really appreciate the parenting education because we have been exposed to many positive things. Some of us did not know that there is a parental responsibility stipulated in the law of child act but now we know that it is a must to provide care which enable children to grow physically, socially and emotionally. This has empowered us as parents, especially women (36 years, primary education, Tandika-Kilimahewa).

Another informant talked much on health issues. She was actually looking into the significance of the training in health aspect. The informant remarked that the training has been fruitful because she has improved her knowledge of adhering to hygienic issues like washing hands properly by the children and family members;

- I have gained a lot from the training the caring skills including how to make my children look health. In fact, we had been doing this but it was a bit different from this one. For example, we have taught how to observe hygiene…we have been taught to use running water when washing our hands instead of poured water in the dish and how to wash our hands thoroughly. This is good because we are affected by cholera in the area. I know for sure our children are going to be free from cholera if parents adhere to hygienic principles. We parents, have to be careful because the outbreak of cholera affects us as well(25 years, primary education, Tandika-Maguruwe).

Another informant talked about nutrition and vaccination. The informant pointed out that they have taught that for children to grow well they need to be properly fed. The informant had the following to say;

- We have benefited a lot from the positive parenting education. It has enhanced my skills when it comes to nutrition and child vaccination in order to protect them from diseases. We have been conscious about issues of nutrition and vaccination but as human being we sometimes take it easy or business as usual. We now need to work hard in order to get money to procure nutritious food for our children etc. (29 years, primary education, Azimio).

Overall, the findings indicate that informants have benefited a lot from the section of parental responsibilities and care education. The findings show that the informants were willing to change and have improved their ways of cleanness, nutrition so that they can realize their child's growth physically, cognitively and emotionally. The informants have also shown their understanding that they are legally responsible to provide parental care. Tanzania the law of child act 2009 addresses parental care by stipulating that every parent or care giver shall have duties and responsibilities whether obliged by law or else towards his child which include the obligation to protect the child from discrimination, neglect, violence, abuse, exposure to bodily and moral risks and oppression; provide care, guidance, maintenance and assistance for the child and pledge of the child's continued existence and growth (LCA 2009).

4.2. Child Freedom and Child Participation

According to the informants during interviews and FGDs, it was pointed out that child participation is good in ensuring positive up-bringing but it has to be limited in some ways. The informants' inclinations were informed by their personal experiences, level of education and social context. The participants remarked that it is dangerous to give total freedom to children because they are immature and thus need to be tightly guided. One of the informants had the following sentiments;

- I would like to say that it is good to allow children to put into effect their freedom but this cannot be applied a hundred percent, maybe it is about fifty percent. The rest it is the parents to decide. For example, it may create more problems if you allow your children to decide the type of food they want…. I am sure those children will be niggling when the food they want is not there…In my view children are supposed to be taught to accept what the parents are able to provide. Otherwise, children will be wondering about in the neighbor houses looking for the food they like (43 years, primary education, Mtongani).

Another informant had something to say with regard to children participation in decision-making. The informant pointed out that children have to be given that chance to decide but parents are the ones to have a final say. The informant had the following explanations;

- I tell you my fried children have to be given a chance to decide on things that affect their lives but parents should have the final say…. for example, you find a parent has paid a lot of money for schooling and yet the child wants to work at the salon or as a sex worker. Is it possible? Unless if you are mud! Children have to be guided. The same applies to the choice of friends…children should be guided to choose good friends…. Otherwise they will be polluted outside there. Look at the foreigners like Asians and Europeans, do they allow their children to mingle with ours? It is because they know that there is a problem with child freedom(45 years, secondary education, Kilungule).

The explanations above indicate that despite the parenting education the parents have acquired from parenting trainings, they still negotiate with that knowledge and often compare its applicability to their local environment. In Tanzania, it is traditionally believed that children should be raised in a strict way, exposing them to social-cultural values prevailing in their societies. Failure to do so, it has been believed that children may choose a wrong direction. Most of the parents during interviews and FGDs acknowledged that they had been taught about child rights like the right to express themselves, the right to education, the right to rest and play, right to be cared for and others.

However, the informants argued in African context children's rights have boundaries. The nature of children in Africa determine the degree of freedom and that they cannot apply some of the controversial parenting practices which are used by the white people since they have different social context, history and culture. According to the informants, children have to be given a space to exercise their

rights but they have to be tightly guided and monitored. Others added that the current problems of child behavior, deviance to some of the children have been attributed to the total freedom they have been provided with by their parents, especially to those families which seem to be modernized.

Other informants had a different opinion with regard to child participation. The informants remarked that child participant and freedom can better be realized in rural areas than in urban areas. This is because of the nature of the environment. One of the informants said;

- At least in the rural areas it is possible to give freedom to children to choose their friends because we know them by names, families and background but in urban areas it is a challenge. The world has changed a lot if you really love your children you will restrict them. Look at the way the house is congested and a lot of activities like local clubs, local cinema halls, lots of unemployed youth seated idle on the streets drinking konyagi brew known as "viroba". How can you accept freedom in such an environment? (39 years, secondary education, FGD at Keko Mwanga "A").

The above explanations show that parenting responsibilities and obligation might be different between urban and rural areas as well. In the urban areas parents have to limit their children as much as they can, owing to numerous risks as opposed to the rural areas which have less risk. Similar observation has also been made by Bornstein (2007, 2014) who argue that permitting children flexibility and autonomy may result in positive outcomes when children live in safe areas and their peers are less likely to take on risky behavior, but in high-risk neighborhoods, higher degrees of parental control might be essential.

4.3. Workload and Gender Division of Labor

The informants agreed that a reasonable home workload to children build their life skills, hardworking spirit and degree of independent thinking. The informants pointed out that they were raised with the aid of physical work and they see it working to their children. According to the findings, the informants were informed by their personal experiences and social environment. One of the informants had the following to say during interviews;

- I concur with the idea of simple and manageable workload to our children. I am considering the issue of age in assigning tasks to my children. I would like to say that I appreciate the parenting education because I now know what type of work has be assigned to a child who is four years as opposed to ten years and above (36 years, primary education, Azimio).

Another thing in connection to workload is an issue of gender division of labor. The informants acknowledged that they had received education on gender division of labor to their children. Most of the informants who were interviewed (7 out of 11) had the view that children are supposed to be raised equally. This is because the world is changing and thus there is no need to set aside the activities for male and female children. One of the informants had the following to say;

- Gender division of labor is outdated especially in urban areas and in these modern times. Children are supposed to learn each and everything irrespective of their gender. All children learn domestic and non-domestic chores like how to cook, wash clothes, clean house, gardening etc. this help them to be hardworking, creative and resist life challenges when they grow up. It is dangerous to raise a male child in a manner that is different from a female child. It will be a burden to you and the community in the future (36 years, secondary education, Kiburugwa).

In supporting this idea, during the FGD another informant added that; female and male children have to be treated equally because of the need to provide equal chances for children to study, do their homework etc. however, the situation was different from the one of the informants out of eleven informants who were interviewed. The informant remarked that children are supposed to be raised differently. Male children have to be prepared to assume greater roles in the society like decision making etc. The informants who argued in this way used to refer to the village life style claiming that the modern education has swept these values and thus that is why the current male generation is weak in many aspects; one of the informants had the following to say;

- Iam one of the receptors of positive parenting education but I would say not everything is good…I remember when I was growing up in my village; we had institutions like jando and unyago initiation ceremonies. Boys and girls were taught differently and they had different responsibilities. By doing this we had good boys who were taught to be brave, warriors. Look nowadays, male children cannot even chase away a thief. That is why in our areas young deviant children known as "panya road" flourish. It is because they were taught domestic work. In my view boys and girls can never be the same (Male informant, secondary education, FGD Kilungule)

On the gender roles and workload, the findings overall indicate that the parents have changed the attitude of being biased over the gender roles of their children. the findings of this study confirmone of the tenets of social constructionist theory that social reality is socially constructed, dynamic and constantly changing (multi-layered) as argued by Berger and Luckmann (1966), the beneficiaries of parenting education of Temeke have no exception to this. The informants showed that perceptions of the people towards gendered workload to their children have started changing. On the other hand, the other informant who expressed different opinion seemed to be informed much by the family history on issues of division of labor and not very much exposed to education. This shows that some of the traditional values and norms in the societies are deeply rooted to some of the people.

4.4. The use of Corporal Punishment

The informants' perspectives on the use of corporal punishment such as canning or spanking, beating to their children for behavior shaping and modification were almost universal. The informants' contentions were influenced by their personal experiences, history, religion and social-cultural reasons. The informants argued that in the African context, it is difficult to raise a child in the absence of stick. The informants pointed out that they usually communicate with children about behavior expectations and their consequences when they are socialized but children seem to change behavior with the aid of spanking. The stick is used to reinforce good or

desirable behavior as it makes a child remember more straightforwardly than any other punitive strategies. One of the informants during interview had the following to say;

- The use of canning in disciplining children is unavoidable in our context. Unless if you want a child to be deviant in the future! We have been raised in that way and we see that it has worked in our life. I would say although I have been educated to use alternative methods, I will still use the stick as long as I have communicated with my children about expected behavior and its consequences before punishing them. I am telling you children learn mostly that parents are serious with spanking but is should not be applied without good reasons (Female informant 39 years, primary education, Mtongani).

The informants claimed that the alternative methods of discipline like withdrawing the gifts or privileges, words of warning or verbal punishment, and time-out are time consuming strategies, they can be applied may be for the first time, they do not totally fit in the Tanzanian context as sustainable disciplinary options. The informants were also of the view that the nature of children determine the type of punishment they are given. Some of the children are very difficult to change. Children of this nature continue to portray bad behavior even if you warn them several times. Although the widely-acknowledged use of sticks, the informants were aware that excessive punishment, random beating, abusive words, denying food to their children, locking children in their houses are not good parenting practices though some of the them apply; as one of the informants said during the FGD;

- Sticks are part and parcel of the child growth in our context but we as parents need to remember that the government has restricted the number of sticks to our children from the family to their schools. Since the purpose of punishing a child is to correct behavior it is not recommended to strike them randomly, not to deny food your children, not to lock children in the house, not to use abusive languages to children. Unless if you have another agenda apart from behavioral change! Me I only concur with the useof sticks. We should be honest; the use of sticks was even supported by our first president who recommended the corrupt leaders to be canned. Just imagine, if it is applied to the adults, why not children? (Female informant 35 years, primary education, Mtongani).

Adding up to the previous speaker, another informant said;

- We have been taught that excessive use of sticks make the children to portray more oppositional behaviors and conduct problems in the community. I would like to say that it depends. Some of children can only be corrected by using that option and we see that it is working. I have an example, I had a child who was almost becoming a thief…. I was canning her whenever I found out she had done that it to me asa parent or her fellows. She is now doing well even at school, she is humble, you cannot believe! You know children have a tendency of testing how parents react but when the parents are strict with the use of stick they cannot make jokes. These issues bwana are difficult, I think also they need to take more time educating the care givers; it should not be taken as an overnight process! It need time to talk with people because it is something that has been there for ages (Male informant 38 years, primary education, Mtongani).

Another informant who was in favor of spanking had the following to say;

- The use of stick is extremely essential and necessary but as parents who have been educated we have to consider the age, mistake and the environment. The use spanking may be a problem when it is done without a good purpose and without considering the age and nature of mistake. Even the Holy Scriptures like the bible in the book of proverbs, it is writtenor recommended to use the rod to discipline a child as he will not die and this has been reiterated in several verses in the same book of proverbs (Female informant, 37 years, primary education, Mtongani)

Another informant during the same FGD argued that;

- Even the government knows that the use of sticks cannot be avoided. That is why they insist to apply of reasonable strokes when canning a child. We all know what is happening now to our children. When the government said that teachers are supposed to seek for permission from their heads in order to apply caning, it has made some of the students to become cruel, careless, and not responsible at all. This is an open truth. I really do not know how the future generation will look like! (Male informant, 43 years, primary education, Mtongani).

The above statements were supported by the rest of the parents that children have to be punished with love and purpose and parents have to gauge the kind of mistake that necessitate the use of physical punishments. The parents pointed out that none of them would like to punish his or her children without a good reason. Physical punishment has been applied because children do not conform to the societal values and norms. The history shows that the use of physical punishment has been there for ages before the period of colonialism, during the period of colonialism and after the period of colonialism. For example, before the period of colonialism the deviant children and all age categories were punished by using sticks following the orders of the family chairpersons, clan leaders, community elders and other local leaders. This was thought to be an appropriate solution in their social environment.

According to the informants during the FGD, the use of corporal punishment has a long history in Tanzania, it is deeply rooted and a preferred mechanism of correcting behavior among the children and the community at large. Similar observation was also noted by Paul (2014) that corporal punishment existed in Tanzania even before the colonial rule, it was a most useful strategy of correcting the abnormal behaviors amongthe delinquent children in the Tanzanian communities, it has been passed on from generations to generations and its administration to children was the order of the day. The same practice was noted by Ishengoma (2012), Mwakikagile (2006), Peterson (2000) who asserted that the colonial government to some extent inherited this practice from the Tanzanian chiefs who applied customary laws that propagate corporal punishment in their respective areas like Mangi of Kilimanjaro, Mkwawa of Iringa and Omukama of Bukoba, just to mention a few.

The practice was vividly evident during the period of colonialism in Africa where the use of corporal punishment including canning, spanking was applied to Africans. Ishengoma (2012) further noted that in Tanzania for example, both the Germany and British

colonialists reinforced this practice in their operations and passed the corporal punishment ordinance in 1930 which became the principle law in administering all forms of corporal punishment.

The law for example, acknowledged whipping in case of adults and canning in case of children/juveniles. For example, the British colonial government supported the use of corporal punishment to children at schools believing that without the use of corporal punishment popularly known as *kiboko* the African's progress in education would be very slow (Final Report of the Law Reform Commission of Tanzania, 1996 as cited by Mwakigagile 2010).

Ishengoma (2012) further argue that the practice has not changed much in Tanzania even after the period of colonialism. That in Tanzania, the law is still valid, in power in Tanzania cited as CAP.17, (R.E.2002) of the laws of Tanzania and which was amended in 1963, 1972 and 1989. Ishengoma (2012) pointed out that after its independence Tanzania mainland retained colonial law and enacted others to broaden its applicability. It is based on this that even the Law of the Child Act, 2009 has maintained the application of corporal punishment to children.

Inshengoma (2012) further argues that in Tanzania until 2009 there was no law which required parents, guardians or care givers to refrain from administration of corporal punishment in homes, schools, in care institutions and care takers. Though the government enacted the Law of the Child Act, was enacted in November 2009 which under section 13 it does not forbid the administration of corporal punishment to children in juvenile courts, school, at home and in institutions and that it has been retained because of the research which was conducted by the report of Law Reform Commission of Tanzania of 1996, in which majority of the citizens preferred a reasonable punishment as a method of correcting children. The insistence of the law is that corporal punishment should neither be conducted in a degrading manner nor exceed limits.

According to the informants; some of the parents, guardians, and heads of families, clan members, elders and other local leaders have continued to use the same approach in correcting behavior of the children and the community in general. One of the informants who had lived in Arusha region but now residing in Temeke, commented that the use of corporal punishment still exists though it is declining in some areas due to education, resistance from the government and religion. The informant mentioned that in Arusha for example, a place known as River camp soldiers and some areas of the Maasai society, corporal punishment has been openly applied to community members who misbehave like using nasty dressing, and other deviant acts.

The current findings presented in this article confirm the social reality among the Tanzanian communities that the use of physical punishment to children is unavoidable and influenced by personal experiences, history, religion, legal and social-cultural processes. That is why one of the informants above argued that even Mwalimu Nyerere, the first president of Tanzania used to say that the corrupt leaders are to be spanked twelve strokes on the day they enter in jail and twelve strokes on the day they are released from jail. Although, the practice is on the way out today in Tanzania, it still has a strong influence in some of the local communities especially in the rural areas as one of the informants argued.

- The use corporal punishment is socially acceptable…if most of the people were raised in that way and still it is applied even to the adult population, then children suffer more. But I would say because of massive sensitization, this parenting practice is dilapidated (Male informant, 38 years, secondary education, Kiburugwa).

Another social reality connected to social-cultural processes is that informants would like to raise their children because of their personal experiences. Most of the parents commented that they cannot change some of parenting practices totally because that is what they have found in their societies as societal norms. According to Berger and Luckman (1966), the already prescribed meanings and actions in the society are referred to as "symbolic universes". These have been constructed to provide legitimating to the created societal norms and values.

These are set of beliefs that everybody knows that aim at making the institutionalized structure credible for the individual—who might otherwise not understand the underlying logic of the established norms. The statement that in Tanzania parents use physical punishment because they were raised in that way was reiterated by ISC (2015), IRC (2015), Pembe (2013)as they also found that parents believe that children should be raised very strictly and with the assistance of bodily punishment. One of the reasons attributing to that situation is that some of the parents believe that they have been raised in that way. Thus, they want to pass on what they had learned and experienced when they were young to their children.

4.5. Child-parent Relationship and Playful Interaction

The findings show that the beneficiaries of parenting education have accepted that it is really important to build positive relationships with children because children become more open and trusting their parents. The informants' views seemed to be informed by their personal experiences and level of education. However, the informants had the view that child-parent relationship has to be carefully considered. Since some of the children misuse the relationship, the informants asserted that there is must be some distance between them and children. One of the informants had the following to say;

- I would say that positive child-parent relationship is important because children get time to learn from parents, they become open but intimacy should not be too much. Our children take advantage of that opportunity in a wrong way. I am a witness of my neighbor who was very close to her female child to the extent that she did not accept what people said pertaining to bad behavior of her daughter. As a result, that child has visibly become cruel, deviant and does not sleep at home at the tender age of fourteen years! Who is to blame? (Female informant, 25 years, primary education Keko Mwanga "B").

The above quote exemplifies that the parents who benefited from parenting education have accepted to build relationship with their children. However, they have decided to modify that relationship and make some distance in order to suit their context. The argument that children misuse the relationship was universal among the informants. In Tanzania, the traditional parenting practices appreciate the gap between the parents and their children. This has been practiced to make the children respect their parents but also other aged

people in their communities (Paul 2014). In the past, some of the communities in Tanzania were not allowing children to eat with elders in one table, speak loudly in front of elders with the exception of that time when grandparents want to narrate stories to their grandchildren.

Informants also highlighted that the pattern of interaction and relationships between the male parent and female child is expected to be different from the female parent and male child. In most cases, male parents have close contact to their male children. The same applies to women parent with their female children. The informants argued that when children reach the age of ten and above they are supposed to choose parent of their respective gender otherwise children will be lazy. For example, one of the informants had the following to say;

- Although we have been taught to be close to our children irrespective of gender, Iam of the view that this is not realistic. This is because for example a male child who turn ten years and above tend to be very close to female parent. We discourage that, they have to be close and more open to male parents because they can be lazy in thinking and acting commonly known as soft children. We have experienced this. Mothers tend to be so responsive to children, this affect the children cognitive development (Male informant 32 years, secondary education, Keko Mwanga "A").

The above explanations indicate that the children who turn ten years and above are supposed to be closely connected to either their mother or father based on their gender for better parenting practices. One of the reasons attribute to that was the fact that when a girl child turn ten years she starts asking about reproductive health information, which traditionally in Tanzania cannot be channeled through fathers. However, not all the parents accepted that. Some of the parents had a different view that this traditional practice of being biased in parent is out of date and that they have to show cooperation to both children irrespective of their gender. One of the male informants had the following to say;

- In the modern world, parents have to be close and open to their children…things have already changed. All parents have to assume their responsibilities in parenting (41 years, College education, Azimio).

On playful interaction, the informants had the view that playful interaction is important in the cognitive, social and physical development of a child but that is possible with children under the age of five. The informants were aware of the techniques to be used to make a lovely playful interaction. The informants mentioned things like storytelling, singing songs and walking around together. However, all of the informants 11 who commented on this during the interviews acknowledged that some of these are applicable and some not due to tight schedule of their days. Some of the informants shared that they have only one day off in a week and sometimes when they are at home their children are at schools. One of the informants had the following to say;

- It is important to build attachment with children. This is possible though playing, singing together but due to the nature of children that exercise is possible to children under the age of five may be. Sometimes these programmes are constrained with tight schedules at work and life challenges which make the parents impolite. Some of us work all days in a week and some have only one day, may be for business people around at their homes. In most cases I come back home very late, with work frustration, stress etc. it is really very difficult to maintain it but it is good (Female informant 33 years, secondary education, Kilungule).

The findings show that the parents aspire and are ready to apply playful interactions in order to enhance their attachment with their children but they cannot do that because of the heavy workload at their workplace which make them feel tired to respond to emotional needs of their children. Due to the stress of their work and life challenges make them feel stressed and frustrated to the extent that they become rude. The findings of this study confirm the observation done by Annette (2002) and Christopher (2013).

Both scholars argue that poverty and other life challenges that build into parent's stress constitute the influential factors in the style of child rearing that portray reasonable elements of authoritarian parenting style. For example, the lower working-class families in most cases do not get that time of building relationships and attachments like the middle and upper classes because of the planned schedule which spare time to provide supportive parenting to children.

The previous research done by Wamoyi and Wight (2014) in Tanzania, also found that parents' occupations influence the time they have to spend with their children. Increasingly, parents prioritize employment over child care as the child aged. For example, the time mothers spend with their children turn down fast after infancy for several reasons. Those older siblings and other relatives are more likely to take care for non-breastfeeding children and when children turn seven years, they might go to school. Consequently, the meeting point between parents and their older children is through domestic and farm activities.

Also, the contention that playful interaction is most applicable to children under the age of five year confirms the gap between the parents and their children when they start to be more conscious. The social reality is that most of the parents in Tanzania are ready to do many things to their children including telling them loving words who are still at infant stage rather than the ones who are already conscious. The conscious children are expected to learn how to do things and guided by their parents.

4.6. Child-parent Communication

According to the informants, communication is another area that was touched during the training. The informants reported that the parents have to be open to their children and make a supportive environment for children to share information with them. However, some of the informants expressed their different opinions on how this should be done. Some of the parents and guardians argued that prior to the training eye contacts were restricted and some did not pay attention to it but today they have learnt its importance.

Some of the parents also pointed out that Childs' negative expressions were not allowed to their parents, and that communication was almost indirect especially when children wanted to communicate with their fathers. The informants added that these communication patterns were sourced by their own experiences, cultural-values and norms. One informant said;

- Communication is a bit controversial….me I think I would accept that some of the principles like Childs' eye contact is out of data because we want our children to be free. The current world is different…if you restrict eye contact because you were taught that it is improper then it is wrong because children have a lot to say and their eyes can tell many things. But I am a bit against the child to be free to the extent of shouting at me or expressing his or her views in a rude way. A good child is the one using a polite language even if a parent has mistaken (Male informant 42 years, secondary education, Mtongani).

Another informant had the following sentiment;

- Me I see it is positive the children to talk directly to their parents…we have been taught that attachment and building relationship with children is realized through communication. So, I think communication should not be a barrier. A part from that we have been taught that parents should communicate with their children directly as well. This is good because the children build attachment and trust the one he or she is communicating with. We were also taught that parents especially fathers have to give present or gifts to the children directly and not through a third party (Female informant 37 years, secondary education, Tandika-Maguruwe).

During the FGD at Azimio ward, some of the informants also said in some of the neighbor families, children start with their mothers, aunts and sometimes uncles to pass the information to their parents. In the past, most of the Tanzanian parents used to believe that eye contact between a child and a parent was considered impolite and irrespective. But things have started changing. The informants argued that they do not support it because the children might be in need of something but due to that long chain, they fail to get a reasonable and timely support. The informants argued that some of the norms were more appropriate in the past. However, the informants marked that children should not portray an arrogant eye contact this shows that a child is not humble.

The findings show that all the parents appreciate that communication with children should not be indirectly but rather directly. The findings also have shown that children still need to respect their parents through the way the way they talk to them. Most of the parents supported the idea that children are not supposed to use hard language to their parents in whatever circumstances. The findings also show that social reality is dynamic even though it is shaped by social-cultural factors. Berger and Luckmann (1966) argue that apart from the taken for granted reality and developmental aspects of humanity, some aspects of humanity are created, maintained and changed in our interactions with others through time.

4.7. Expression of Love and Loving Words to Children

The informants pointed out that it is abnormal in the community to tell their children that they love them. Instead, they do something that show that they love them or telling other people that they love their children than the children themselves. The informants' arguments were informed by their personal experiences that they were not raised in that way, social-cultural norms that regard issues of affection in front of others as a taboo. Also, the informants mentioned on the disadvantages of too much appreciation to children and that they believe African children grow crazy when they are expressed with loving words that parents love them. One of the informants had the following to say;

- Our children should not be told "I love you" every time. This will create problems in the future as they will grow thinking that they are very special in this world. As a result, they will not be creative, independent in their life. We can show that we love our children by simply doing and not saying. What I know is that normally parents tell their friends, relatives about their love to children other than children themselves (Female informant 33 years, primary education, Kilungule).

Adding to the previous speaker during the FGD another informant had the following sentiments;

- First of all, I would like to commend the IRC for their parenting training. However, there are some issues which are not easy in the eyes of people. I think it is difficult to tell my children that "I love them". This can be possible to children under the age of five but to children beyond that age, it will raise different interpretations in our communities. Some will say I am pretending to live like a European people in African soil. I am sure most of the parents cannot tell their children above the age of ten that they love them as a way expressing their love (Female informant, 37 years, primary education, Kilungule)

This statement was shared by most of the participants during the FGDs and interviews that they remember the way they were raised their parents did not use the words such as "I love you" Rather, their parents did something like buying something for them, giving them a certain privilege that showed that they were being loved, as an alternative. The informants expressed it sounds un- natural to tell their children that they love them.

The findings also show that some of the parents cannot use such words because they were not told or socialized when they were young and thus they cannot start something which was not there in the community. The informants added that if those words were not used before it means they were not accepted in the eyes of past generation. According to the social constructionist theory by Berger & Luckmann (1966) people learn, through their interactions with each other, to classify the world and their place in it, based on shared meanings, or shared understandings about the world. In this view, the beneficiaries understanding on what it means by appropriate parenting depends on their social interaction and these understandings shape their subsequent social interactions.

Some other parents said that they can tell their friends or relatives that they love their children but they cannot do that to their children directly. Nevertheless, the other few informants had a different opinion regarding this, one of the informants who was positive on the use of warm words to children had the following to say;

- Me I do not have any problem to tell my children that I love them. Actually, words and actions have to complement each other. If you raise your child on actions alone it is a problem at the same time telling your children that you love them without actions is a problem as well. Parents need to balance (Male informant, 37 years, College education, Temeke stereo).

The findings have found that the use of words as a way of expressing parents love to their children stumble upon the social-cultural norms in Tanzania. The phrase has been negatively perceived in the sense that it is abnormal to use words that show affection openly

between people. Further, these words have been associated with sexual issues which are taboo in most of the local communities and most people think that they fit in the western context. This confirms the fact that in most African societies the reproductive health information is not always discussed between the parents and children because it is regarded as a taboo. Most of the children learn about reproductive health when they are attending schools and during *jando* and *unyago* initiation ceremonies.

The question is that how are children taught about reproductive health issues in urban areas where initiation ceremonies are not practiced? This question deserves another research. Nevertheless, there are some elements of change among educated parents who give the impression to see things differently. The findings show that these words have gained acceptance among the educated parents who according to their education and exposure, they do not find any problems using them to their parents. Scholars like Annette (2002), Chao (2001) have also underlined that typical parent-child relationships, interactions are without uncertainty determined by cultural factors, social classes, education and income level.

5. Conclusion

The data indicate that parenting practice has remained a difficult area and cannot be explained in a single line of reasoning in Tanzania. This is to say that it is context-specific, informed by social-cultural processes and background of a given area and population. The findings have shown that in spite of the interventions done to provide parents with parenting education that is considered to be positive, not much has changed in terms of practice. The parents have accepted some of the skills and rejected or modified some of them to suit their local context. This has portrayed a picture of continuity and change of traditional parenting practices among the beneficiaries of positive parenting education in Tanzania, which are considered negative in the eyes of expert or facilitators of positive parenting education.

The study concludes by arguing that there are some elements of change among the parents in terms of their parenting practice and at the same time there are some social-cultural norms and values that perpetuate the traditional parenting practices. Thus, the successfulness of positive parenting education in Tanzania depends on understanding what it means by good parenting among the people and that not everything that is imposed to the local community can be socially accepted. The study in particular would like to make a point that the subject of parenting is controversial in our social environment. People have been raised up in an environment that has legitimized a certain parenting practice like the use physical punishment and it has worked for ages. Therefore, these practices like others which are considered unsuitable in the modern world have to be contained first and then improved rather than declaring that they are violent.

6. Recommendations

The study has three essential recommendations; one is that understanding the social-cultural norms and values is important in a given society because of different social environment. The positive parenting skills which the parents or care givers are provided with have to incorporate the traditional parenting skills which are also regarded as positive according to the local people. In other words, the so-called positive parenting education has to acknowledge and employ more integrative approaches/community involving strategies that would appreciate and accommodate the local knowledge as a point of departure.

Secondly, more studies have to be conducted to understand how positive parenting education is perceived across social-cultural and economic environment in Tanzania. The purpose of doing this is to design the interventions which are context-specific and research informed at a given area. Tanzania does not have a homogeneous population. Sometimes the social reality and parenting practice of one area might not be the same to other areas and the fact that the there is no one model of parenting which can be applied in all situations and in all areas.

Confirming the observation of this article, Grolnick (2003:68) asserted that there is no universally "good" parenting style but rather good or proper parenting spins around on the productive impact it has on the child and his or her development stages as whole. Thirdly, positive parenting education in the communities should not be treated as a clash programme or project---that has specific time limit. It has to be mainstreamed in different professions and supported by all social institutions available in the society. This is because; some of the practices among the local communities seem to be deeply rooted and thus thorny to be changed within a short period of time.

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