CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT: A CONCERN FOR THE CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF KITUI.

BY

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DECLARATION

This Research Project is my original work and has not been presented for a degree in any other University

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this project work to my husband, Patrick, my daughter Faith and son, Brian for their patience, emotional support and encouragement during the study

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ABSTRACT

This study investigated the role of the church in addressing child abuse and neglect in Kitui. It was based on three objectives. The first one was to examine the Biblical teachings and African Traditional understanding of the importance of children and compare with the contemporary society. The second objective was to investigate the factors contributing to child abuse and neglect and their effects to the children in Kitui and the third analyzed the participation of the church in the protection of children from abuse and neglect.

The study used stratified, purposive and systematic sampling methods. Both primary and secondary sources of data were used. Primary data was obtained from interviews, questionnaires and focus group discussions while secondary data was obtained from library sources, internet and Catholic Diocese of Kitui programme reports in the Department of Child Welfare. The study was guided by three theories, psychoanalysis theory developed by Sigmund Freud, which explained the irresponsible behaviour of perpetrators of child abuse and neglect; Social Learning theory by Albert Bandura, which explained the effects of exposing children to abuse and neglect; and Structural Functionalism theory developed by Emile Durkheim, which explained that the church has a role to play in protecting children from abuse and neglect.

Three hypotheses were advanced for the study. First, in the African traditional Society and in Biblical world, children were protected from abuse and neglect. Second, irresponsible behavior of parents and Guardians accelerates the problem of child abuse and neglect. And third, the Church participates actively in addressing child abuse and neglect in the society. The first hypothesis was confirmed as it was discovered that the traditional African society valued children as they belonged to the community which participated in their upbringing until they were initiated into adulthood. Thus, the community protected children from abuse. The Bible also portrayed children as important as evidenced by the misery that the barren women underwent as they were despised by their fellow women for not having children. Children and welcomed them to his company, blessed, protected, and healed them.

The second hypothesis was also confirmed as individual factors and especially, drug and substance abuse, and poor parenting skills, were rated highest in contributing to abuse and neglect. Other factors included; family, social and cultural factors. Finally, the third hypothesis was also confirmed as the church was found to be actively engaged in different programmes that protect children from abuse and neglect. These included; Child Labour, Child Safety and Protection, Rehabilitation, Sponsorship, and Orphans and Vulnerable Children programmes.

The study made some recommendations based on the findings of the study which included; strengthening of the referral systems and networking, improved ways of creating awareness, training on parenting skills, and adoption of child protection measures by all churches in Kitui. Since all the programmes were having a concern for education, a research suggestion was given to investigate the role of the Catholic Diocese of Kitui in raising the literacy level in Kitui.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ACRWC-African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child

ANPPCAN- African Network for Prevention and Protection against Child Abuse and Neglect

CDK- Catholic Diocese of Kitui

CT-OVC- Cash Transfer for Orphans and Vulnerable Children

DCLC- District Child Labour Committee

DCO- District Children Officer

FGM-Female Genital Mutilation

ILO- International Labour Organization

IPEC- International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour

LCLC- Locational Child Labour Committee

NCCS- National Council of Children Services

NPA- National Plan of Action

OVC- Orphans and Vulnerable Children

TJRC- Truth, Justice and Reconciliation Commission

UNCRC- United Nation Convention on the Rights of the Child

WFCL- Worst Forms of Child Labour

WHO- World Health Organization

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Child abuse and neglect have become a concern to all humanity. Different associations and organizations around the world have set up committees, seminars and conferences to investigate and suggest ways through which these horrifying crimes could be eradicated and children's innocent humanity protected and respected. However, the number of battered children continues to increase progressively and those who leave their homes and join the ranks of street children is also on the increase, particularly in the third world countries.¹

The International community under the United Nations adopted the Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) on 20th Nov. 1989 to safeguard the rights of all children in the world.² The UNCRC protects the four pillars of children rights which include: survival, development, protection and participation. At a regional level, the African Union adopted the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACRWC) in July 1990. Kenya's ratification of UNCRC and ACRWC in 2000 was an indication that the country had committed itself to the implementation of its provisions. This was enacted through the Children's Act No.8 in 2001 which domesticated the UNCRC and the ACRWC.³

All these declarations are attempts to raise the moral consciousness of peoples and nations to the needs of children and the necessary care and protection they require against a ruthless, uncaring and immoral environment. Despite all these declarations, the conditions of most African children are endangered due to socio-economic and cultural factors as well as armed conflicts and natural calamities.⁴

¹Nasimiyu A.W. (2003): Child abuse and neglect: an African moral question P. 153 in J.N.K. Mugambi and A.

Nasimiyu Wasike (2003): Moral and Ethical issues in African Christianity

² The National Plan of Action for Children 2008-2012

³ ibid

⁴ Nasimiyu A. W op cit. P. 153

In African traditional societies, children were treasured and highly regarded. Getui (1998) confirms that the birth of children helped a couple towards stabilizing their relationship. She further affirms that failure to have children often resulted into a broken marriage. Hence a marriage without offspring was not recognized as a fulfilled marriage. And, in a patriarchal society, the birth of a boy ensured there was an heir to the family property who also defended the community. Children not only gave their parents prestige and social status, but were also an economic asset. For example, they helped in various family duties such as, agriculture or herding, depending on the type of society. Hence, the many children a family had the more honour it received from the community. Indeed, when parents advanced in age, their children provided them with the necessary care and support. Due to the significant role that children played in the society, they were protected by the entire community. And, cases of neglect and abuse as witnessed today in the society, rarely existed because of the well established codes of conduct that regulated behavior in the community. Children were taught how to interact with one another and with adults. Today, the responsibility of bringing up children is bestowed upon parents and maids who provide them with the basic needs. Moreover, communal responsibility has been replaced by individualism.

In the Bible, children are highly regarded. For example, in the Old Testament, a barren woman was despised by her fellow women and the society at large. An example is Hagar who despised her mistress Sarai (Genesis 16:4). Children expressed some aspects of God's relation to the family and were a sign of God's favour and blessings, (Genesis 4:1; 25:25-26; 29:32; 30:6) (Psalms 113:9; 127:3-5; 139:13-16) Abram's concern was to have a child as his heir (Genesis 15:2). In addition, it was the duty of parents and guardians to teach children the way of God and the traditions of their people through which God was manifested to them (Deuteronomy 4:9-10; 6:6-9; 11; Joshua 4:6-7).

In the New Testament children were deemed innocent and pure (Matthew 7:11). They were blessed by God's favour and were seen as gifts from God (John 16:21; James 1:17).

⁵ M.N.Getui: The Family, the Church and the Development of the Youth P.72 in J.N.K. Mugambi and L. Magesa (1998): The Church in African Christianity.

Jesus valued them as portrayed in Mark 10:13-16 when he received children into his company and blessed them. He also referred to them as the greatest in the kingdom of heaven because of their humility. He even challenged his disciples to humble themselves as children in order to enter the kingdom of heaven (Matt 18: 1-6). This is an indication of the love and trust that Jesus had for children.

In both the Biblical and African traditions, there were rare cases of child abuse because children evoked the best from the parents and guardians. These included: love, compassion, kindness, generosity, goodness, truth and beauty from their families and their communities. Children found their identity and security within their clans and ethnic groups.

In the contemporary society, children face various challenges which adversely affect their growth and development. Over the years, the government and stakeholders have instituted measures aimed at enhancing child care and protection. The government through the department of Children Services safeguards the rights of children as provided in the Children's Act. In every County, the department sensitizes people on the rights of children and provides care and protection to them. Many organizations that are interested in safeguarding the rights of children support the government in these efforts. Despite all the noble efforts by the government and stakeholders to address child care and protection, children still suffer due to neglect, trafficking, child labour, abandonment, children in conflict with the law, sexual and physical abuse, orphan hood, internal and external displacement of children, and destitution. These challenges make every child vulnerable to abuse and neglect at one moment or another.

1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

A child is accorded basic needs which include, food, clothing, shelter, education, medical care and psycho-social support that are required in order to have proper growth and development. When a child gets less of the above, it becomes difficult to grow and develop properly thus becoming vulnerable to abuse and neglect.

Children in different religious traditions such as Christian, Islam and African Traditional Religion are considered as gifts of God to humanity. And, in the African traditional setting, a child was protected from abuse and neglect. The community ensured proper growth and development of children. However, due to the changes in society, the African traditional family set up no longer holds its indigenous values. Thus, Christianity which accommodates the highest percentage of Kenyans should be in the fore front in addressing issues affecting children. Today, children are abused sexually, physically and emotionally. Some of them are abandoned, neglected, abducted, left in streets and involved in child labour. Cases of children being sexually abused by their teachers, religious leaders and even their own fathers are on the increase. Likewise, cases of children being assaulted and even killed by their own parents are reported frequently. This shows that children are not safe either at home, in school or even in churches. The question is how is the church responding to this crisis facing the innocent children? Is the church just sitting back and watching without doing anything, or is the church participating in search of a solution to the problems?

Furthermore, the church plays a significant role in penetrating the family circles of her members and ensures that religion is part and parcel of their everyday lives. What is the church's participation in the prevention of child abuse and neglect in the society? Although, researches have been conducted on contribution of the government and other stakeholders in addressing child abuse and neglect, there is scanty documented information on the participation of the church. It is this gap that the study sought to bridge. This calls for the need to examine the extend to which the church is involved in addressing child abuse and neglect in Kitui.

1.3 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The study was guided by the following specific objectives;

- a) To examine the Biblical teachings and African Traditional understanding of the importance of children and compare them with the contemporary society.
- b) To investigate the factors contributing to child abuse and neglect and their effects to children in Kitui.
- c) To analyze the participation of the church in the protection of children from abuse and neglect.

1.4 JUSTIFICATION AND SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Children in Kenya constitute more than half of the 38million total population, while 20% of the population is under the age of five.⁶ This portion of population cannot be ignored because children are incapacitated in making decisions that affect them. They rely on their parents or guardians for care and protection. Children also face various challenges that adversely affect their growth and development. These include; suffering due to neglect, trafficking, child labour, abandonment, children in conflict with the law, sexual and physical abuse, orphan hood, internal and external displacement of children, and destitution among other challenges. All these challenges affecting children call for action in order to protect them in future. Without intervention, children will continue to suffer in silence. Hence, the need for a study to address the issue at stake in the society.

Children as referred to both Traditional African set up and in the Bible played a significant role in the lives of the community. In Christianity, they are referred to as innocent beings. Jesus even recognized them in his ministry because of their humility (Matthew 18:1-4). And, Christians are called upon to protect their children from abuse and neglect.

The study investigated the role of Church in addressing child abuse and neglect, a reality in the contemporary society. Given that the church is a religio-social institution that influences individuals and the society, the government and other agencies can partner with it in addressing child abuse and neglect.

⁶ The National Plan of Action for Children 2008-2012

The findings from this study will benefit parents and guardians in understanding their role in protecting children from abuse and neglect in addition to understanding the different forms of abuse that could affect their children.

The government and other agencies concerned with the welfare of children are encouraged to understand different challenges facing children and establish how they can network to protect them from such cases of abuse and neglect.

The study is expected to have a significant impact on churches not only in Kitui but also all over the country with a view to understanding their role in protecting children from abuse and neglect. Hence, this will ensure that children under their care are able to access basic needs for their proper growth and development.

1.5 SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The study investigated the role of the church in addressing child abuse and neglect with special reference to Kitui as one area that records cases of child abuse and neglect as reported from the Department of Children Services.⁷ The researcher selected the Child welfare Department in Catholic Diocese of Kitui, in Kitui Central District of Kitui County. The Catholic Church was chosen because of its enthusiasm in child welfare activities and dominance in the area.

The study does not however delve into each and every aspect of the various activities of the Diocese because its concern is in the Child Welfare Department.

The researcher selected other key informants from the community members and government departments concerned with child welfare in Kitui.

Kitui District Children Office cases register 2012.

1.6 LITERATURE REVIEW

1.6.1 Introduction

Studies have been conducted concerning child abuse and neglect because the problem is real and continues to threaten the existence of children in every society and in all cultures. It is experienced in western cultures just like in African cultures. Following the changes associated with modernization in the society today, the problem is on the rise. In this section, views of different authors are discussed in relation to child abuse and neglect. The chapter examines the various causes of child abuse and neglect and their consequences to the children. In addition, it explores the place of a child in African traditional society, the biblical significance of children and their place in the contemporary society.

1.6.2 Factors Contributing to Child Abuse and Neglect

Child abuse entails various forms of mistreatment which culminate in direct violation of the rights of a child.⁸ These forms include physical, sexual and emotional abuse.

According to World Health Organization (2006), child maltreatment is best understood by analyzing the complex interactions of a number of factors at different levels. These include; individual, relationship, community and societal levels. The individual level deals with biological variables such as age and gender together with factors dealing with personal history that can influence an individual's susceptibility to child maltreatment. The relationship level examines an individual's close social relationship for instance with family members or friends, that influence the individual's risk of both perpetrating and suffering maltreatment. Factors at the community level relate to the settings in which social relationships take place such as neighborhoods, workplaces and schools, and the particular characteristic of those settings that can contribute to child maltreatment such as social norms which encourage the harsh physical punishment of children, economic inequalities and the absence of social welfare safety nets.⁹

⁸ The National Plan of Action for Children 2008-2012

^e http://whqlibdoc.who.int/publications/2002/9241545615-chap3-eng.pdf

The African Network for Prevention and Protection against Child Abuse and Neglect (ANPPCAN) gives several factors that contribute to child abuse and neglect. These include; the emotional state of parents, lack of or poor bonding between child and caregiver; family crisis; undesirable characteristics of a child, and the background of the parents. These are some of the factors that may expose a child to abuse and neglect.¹⁰ According to ANPPCAN report 2008, poverty is rampant in Kenya... with majority of those affected being women and children who comprise more than half of the population. The manifestation of poverty results in neglect, with children going without basic needs like food, shelter, clothing and education. This indicates that poverty is a key factor that contributes to child neglect.¹¹

1.6.3 Effects of Child Abuse and Neglect

According to National Plan of Action 2008-2012, majority of neglected children suffer from ill health and lack general necessities of life. Some end up on the streets in an attempt to fend for themselves.

Child abuse could have physical effects such as physical injury to the child whose pain and suffering leaves deeper emotional scars. Sometimes, abuse can lead to lasting or recurring health problems. There are also psychological effects such as isolation, fear and untrustworthiness. These immediate emotional effects can transform into lifelong consequences, including low self-esteem, depression, and relationship difficulties. Other psychological conditions associated with abuse are panic disorder, dissociative disorder, attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder, post-traumatic stress disorder and reactive attachment disorder. Abused and neglected children could also have behavioral effects leading to delinquency, teen pregnancy and drug abuse.¹²

According to World Health Organization, 2006, exposure to maltreatment and other forms of violence during childhood is associated with risk factors and risk- taking behaviors later in life. These include; violent victimization and the perpetration of violence, depression, smoking, obesity, high risk sexual behaviors, unintended

¹⁰ http://www.anppcankenya.co.ke/index.php?option_com-content&task=view&tad_15&Itemid_67

¹¹ ibid

¹²Corby, B. (2006): Child Abuse: Towards a Knowledge Base

pregnancy, and alcohol and drug use, such risk factors and behaviors can lead to some of the principal causes of death, diseases, cancer, suicide. Child maltreatment therefore contributes to physical and mental health outcomes that are costly, both to the child and to society, over the course of a victim's life.¹³

1.6.4 The Place of a Child in African Traditional Society

Mbiti (1969) observed that marriage and procreation in African communities were a unity and without procreation marriage was incomplete.¹⁴ This explains the crucial place for children in the traditional society. Their birth helped a couple towards stabilizing their relationship and failure to have children could result into a broken marriage.

Nasimiyu (2003), argues that in traditional Africa, a childless marriage was calamitous and disastrous to a couple, the extended family and the clan. This is an indication that a child belonged to the community. The main purpose of the marriage was to bear children and the woman's status in the society depended on the number of children she bore and her entire life was centered on children. Without children, marriage could not be sealed and the woman involved became very vulnerable and helpless. Once children were born, marriage was sealed and it was very rare for such a marriage to be broken.¹⁵ This view is supported by Magesa (1998), who argued that a man could be drawn into acquiring many wives because of the potential to have a greater number of children.¹⁶

Ongong'a (2003) holds the above views about children in traditional Africa. He examined the way African communities traditionally organized and provided for the proper survival of children by ensuring their communal existence. An individual lived and found meaning in their life in relation to other members of the community. Since children did not necessarily belong to their biological parents, the entire community was expected to share in the responsibility of their up bringing. Children were made to learn

¹³ http://whqlibdoc.who.int/publications/2002/9241545615-chap3-cng.pdf.

¹⁴ Mhiti J. S. (1969): African Religion and Philosophy P.

¹⁵ Nasimiyu op cit. P. 154

¹⁶ Magesa Laurenti (1998): African Religion. The Moral Traditions of Abundant Life P. 129

at an early age that just as everyone contributed to their survival, they too should reciprocate when they come of age, to their parents and the entire community ¹⁷

1.6.5 Biblical Significance of Children.

The Bible portrays children as important beings who are recognized both in Old Testament and New Testament. In Jewish culture children were taught to honour their parents. And, in this way they bonded with them emphasizing reverence to God. Parents cared, loved and provided for their children in accordance with God's laws.¹⁸

According to Nasimiyu (2003), children constituted a woman's purpose in life.¹⁹For, a barren woman was disregarded by her fellow women and the society (Gen 16:4). Children symbolized God's favour and blessings, while grandchildren were the crown of old age (Ps 128:3; Prov 17:6). They expressed some aspect of God's relation to the family because through children, God's immanence is symbolically made present in the family (Gen 4:1; 25:25-26; 29:32; 30:6). Children received good gifts from their parents, were innocent and pure, and only good things could be given to them (Matt 7:11). Nasimiyu (2003), further argues that children are blessed by God's favour and are expected to grow strong and full of wisdom. However, it is the duty of parents and guardians to teach children their traditions and the way of God. (Deut 4:9-10; Joshua 4:6-7). The understanding of children as blessings from God, as portrayed by Nasimiyu, could contribute to respect for them hence minimizing the chances of their abuse.

In the Old Testament, children are referred to as precious gifts from God and were received as a blessing (Ps 127:3-5). Begetting and giving birth to children is an order of creation under God's special blessing (Gen 1:28). Here, fertility forms an essential part of God's promise to Abraham and his people (Gen 12:3). In addition, mothers of many children were called Blessed (Gen 24:60), while a childless woman was considered a curse. An example of the prayers of Hannah shows the misery of barrenness and great

¹⁷ J. J. Ongong'a :The Violence of Child Abuse in: From Violence to Peace: A Challenge for African Christianity. P. 135

¹⁸ Gidney D. (2003): Children in the Heart of God: A Biblical Perspective for Church and Home. P.56

¹⁹ Nasimiyu Op Cit P. 158

thankfulness for the gift of a child (1Sam 1ff). Again, a barren woman could give one of her maids to her husband through whom she could have children (Gen 30:1-13).

Jesus treasured children in his teachings and welcomed them in his company. In Mark 10:16, He is said to had taken children in his hands and blessed them. Jesus also referred to them as the greatest in the kingdom of heaven because of their humility. He challenged his disciples to humble themselves as children in order to enter the kingdom of heaven (Matt. 18: 1-6). This demonstrates how Jesus valued children. In the epistles, children are commanded to obey and honor their parents. Parents are also commanded not to provoke their children (Col 3:21) but to bring them up in the way of the Lord with discipline. The New Testament portrays children as humble, tender and simple beings. They also express God's love, providence, authority and protection to His people.

1.6.6 Children in the Contemporary Society

The National Council for Children Services (NCCS) in collaboration with other organizations developed a framework for the National Child Protection System for Kenya. It was clear to them that millions of children all over the world continue to be victims of violence and exploitation in the home, at school or within their community, the very settings that are supposed to provide a protective environment for them. Hellen Waweru the chairperson of NCCS in the foreword of the framework for the National Child Protection System for Kenya says that Child Protection is a multi-sectoral and multi-disciplinary affair that requires involvement of everyone. This she associates with the fact that over half of the population of Kenya is constituted by children some of whom live in different situations of vulnerability.²⁰

When the Truth, Justice and Reconciliation Commission (TJRC) held their hearings at the Kenyatta International Conference Centre on 13th December 2011, children selected from across the country narrated to the commission members how they were brutally defiled. Some of them reported they were impregnated during the 2007 post-election violence incidences in Kenya. [Ally Jamah, an editor with Standard media group, observed that members of the public who attended the hearings shed tears as the children

²⁰ The Framework for the National Child Protection System for Kenya, P.1

narrated their horrifying ordeals in the hands of their tormentors. The TJRC acting chairperson Tecla Namachanja explained that during periods of violent conflicts, children suffered the worst human rights violations which included, rape, torture, female genital mutilation, forced labour and prostitution.²¹ These are some of the experiences children are undergoing in the contemporary society.

Kenya has made significant development in addressing obstacles that inhibit full realization of children's rights. The UN Convention on the Rights the Child (UNCRC) and the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACRWC) have been domesticated and incorporated into Kenyan law mainly through the Children Act of 2001 and now the Constitution of 2010.²² Many organizations are involved in Child Protection in Kenya. All these attempts, as Nasimiyu (2003) puts it, are meant to raise moral consciousness of people and nations to the needs of children and the necessary care and protection they require against a ruthless, uncaring and immoral environment.²³

Ongong'a (1979) gives examples of most common areas where children are neglected and exploited. These include: child abandonment, child battering, children in prison with their mothers, academic pressure, female circumcision, child-marriage, sexual abuse, exploitation, tourist influences and influence of the mass media.²⁴

The government and other agencies have joined efforts to fight the vice of child abuse and neglect. The studies done on child protection rarely give the contribution of church in addressing this issue which is a reality in the society today. This therefore prompted the researcher to investigate the role of church in addressing child abuse and neglect, given that church is a crucial system of the society with great influence on individuals and society. Thus, it could complement the efforts of the government and other agencies in addressing child abuse and neglect.

²¹ The Standard Newspaper, Wednesday December 14, 2011

²² The framework for the National Child Protection System for Kenva

²³ Nasimiyu op cit P.153

²⁴ J.J.Ongong'a op cit P.138

1.7 HYPOTHESES

(a) In the African Traditional Society and in Biblical world children were protected from abuse and neglect

(b) Irresponsible behaviour of parents and guardians accelerate the problem of child abuse and neglect.

(c) The Church participates actively in addressing child abuse and neglect in the society.

1.8 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

A theory is an explanation of observation that can show us how to intervene, predict behaviour, and guide research²⁵ This study utilizes three theories which include, psychoanalysis theory, Social learning theory and Structural Functionalism theory.

Psychoanalysis theory was developed by Sigmund Freud (1856-1939) a Viennese psychiatrist. According to Freud, human behaviour is determined by irrational forces, unconscious motivations, and biological and instinctual drives as these evolve through key psychosexual stages of life. He argued that people have a conscious mind which is attuned to an awareness of outside world, a preconscious mind that contains hidden memories or forgotten experiences that can be remembered and an unconscious mind containing the instinctual, repressed and powerful forces.²⁶

The theory advances that personality consist of three systems. These include; id, which comprise of amoral basic instincts, and which operates according to the pleasure principles; ego, which is the conscious, decision making 'executive of the mind' which operates according to the reality principles; and the super ego, which is the mind that operates according to the moral principle.

The basic tenets of psychoanalysis are; besides the inherited constitution of personality, a person's development is determined by events in early childhood; human behaviour, experience and cognition are largely determined by irrational drives; those drives are largely unconscious; attempts to bring those drives into awareness meet psychological

²⁵ Babbic, E. (2004): The Practice of Social Research

²⁶ Corey G. Theory and Practice of Counseling & Psychotherapy. P 36

resistance in the form of defense mechanisms; conflicts between conscious and unconscious (repressed) material can result in mental disturbances such as neurosis, neurotic traits, anxiety, depression among others.²⁷

According to Freud, the first three stages of development which include; oral stage, anal stage and phallic stage, are the foundation on which later personality development is built. When a child's needs are not adequately met during these stages of development, an individual may become fixated at that stage and behave in psychologically immature ways later on in life. Thus, the theory is used to explain some irresponsible behaviours of perpetrators of child abuse and neglect. This theory could not explain the immediate effects of child abuse or even the role of church and there social learning and structural functionalism theories were used to compliment it.

Social learning theory developed by Albert Bandura (1986). He argued that learning takes place in social context. What individuals learn from environment determines their behavior and also the change of their behavior.²⁸ The theory holds idea that behavior can be learnt, unlearnt and re learnt. This involve stages such as; attention, retention, production and motivation. Learning can affect behaviour in many ways with both positive and negative consequences. It can teach completely new behaviours and can also increase or decrease the frequency of behaviour that have previously been learnt or encourage behaviours that were previously forbidden.

Studies have shown that exposure to maltreatment and other forms of violence during childhood are associated with risk factors and risk taking behaviours later in life.²⁹ This is an indication that children who are exposed to abuse and neglect grow up with the understanding that what they experienced is the normal way of life and are thus likely maltreat their peers and their own children.

Structural functionalism theory was developed by Emile Durkheim and holds the idea that society is like a human body. And, just as the body is made up of various parts that need to function together and properly for it to be healthy, so is the society. Each part

²⁷ Gladding S. T. Counseling. Pearson Internal Edition. p. 199

²⁸ Corey G. Theory and Practice of Counseling. p. 36

²⁹ World Health Organization report, 2006.

needs to be in a state of equilibrium, or balance. It also recognizes that the society has evolved over time just like human body.

According to Talcott Parsons (1951), behavior is driven by our efforts to conform to the moral code of society. The purpose of such codes is to constrain human behavior in ways that promote the common good. An organism's purpose is survival. Likewise, in order for a society to survive, the sub-systems (The family and other institutions) must function in ways that promote the maintenance of society as a whole. This is similar to how a person's organs must function in interrelated ways in order to maintain a healthy body. For Parsons, the key to societal survival is shared norms and values held by its individual members. Deviation from these norms leads to disorganization, and threatens the survival of the system. Therefore, the family as a key system must be stable in its functions.

In this study, the family's stability is crucial in ensuring child protection. Sometimes it could be disturbed by death, separation, divorce, or any other aspects, thus threatening children and making them vulnerable to abuse and neglect.

As the society changes, the African traditional family set up can no longer hold its indigenous values. This is the reason why Christianity which is cherished in Kenya and accommodates the highest percentage of the population is expected to ensure that its members adhere to Christian ethics thus constraining their behavior in ways that promote the common good. The internalization of Christian values in the family set up enhances unity and stability thus creating a conducive environment for bringing up children safe from abuse and neglect.

The structural functionalism theory is used in this study to explain that the church as a sub-system in the society is expected to work with other sub-systems such as family, and other institutions to ensure stability in the society. Child abuse and neglect is an aspect of disorganization and therefore, the church has a role in protection of children from abuse and neglect.

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1.9 METHODOLOGY

1.9.1 Study Area

The study was carried out in Kitui Central District, in Kitui County³⁰, an area which is predominantly occupied by the Akamba, the fifth largest ethnic group in Kenya that numbers approximately 3.5 million people (2009 census). Although there are many churches in this area, the study dealt with the Catholic Diocese of Kitui which is widespread in the area.

1.9.2 Study Population, Sample Size and Sampling Procedure

In order to meet the set objectives, the study targeted employees of the Catholic Diocese of Kitui in the Department of Child Welfare, Community members, opinion leaders, government officers in departments that deal with children, religious leaders and children.

The stratified sampling method was used to select respondents from the Catholic Diocese of Kitui whereby the five programmes in the Child Welfare department formed five strata and from each stratum, two employees were picked randomly. A total of ten employees were selected, while three religious leaders were randomly selected. The researcher also used the purposive sampling technique to choose two locations from the seven locations found in Kitui Central. This approach ensured there was equal representation of rural and urban communities in the study. Twenty five community members were selected from each location employing the systematic random sampling technique where every third house was picked and one person randomly selected.

The purposive sampling method was further used to choose other key informants who included 12 government officers (two children officers, two probation officers, four police officers, two education officers, and two judicial officers), and ten opinion leaders.

Two children institutions found in Township Location were picked. And from each institution, six children were randomly selected.

³⁰ A map of Kitui County is appended.

1.9.3 Data Collection Methods and Analysis

In order to collect the required data, the researcher used both primary and secondary sources. Primary data was gathered using questionnaires, interviews, and focused group discussions. Eighty five Questionnaires were distributed and out of these eighty were dully filled and returned. The questionnaires were administered in two ways; self administered and researcher- administered. These two ways ensured both literate and illiterate respondents were reached and accommodated. A research assistant was engaged in administering the questionnaires to the community members. Interviews were guided by a structured questionnaire.

Two focus group discussions, one with the catholic Diocese of Kitui and another with key informants who are stakeholders in children matters were conducted in Kitui. Secondary data was gathered from library sources, internet and programme reports from the Catholic Diocese of Kitui.

The answered questionnaires were checked for accuracy, uniformity and completeness. While, Focused group discussions and in depth interviews were recorded and transcribed into several themes and offered useful information for quotation and verbatim. The data was then arranged according different topics that represented the chapters of the report. Data from the questionnaires were analyzed and presented in a descriptive manner using tables and graphs. This data was then used in analyzing the objectives of the study and in testing the set hypotheses. Furthermore, conclusions and recommendations were made based on the obtained findings

CHAPTER TWO

CHILDREN IN TRADITIONAL AKAMBA AND BIBLICAL CONTEXTS 2.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter examines some insights on the importance of children in African traditional society as well as in the Biblical teachings. Since the majority of Kenyans are Christians, the traditional African attitude towards children, and the Biblical teachings on the same may be of paramount importance in generating information that could assist the present African Christian to better relate well and care for the children hence protecting them from abuse.

As the study focused on the Akamba traditional society as a representative of the other African communities' attitude towards children, it is important to briefly examine the historical background of the Akamba community.

2.2 THE AKAMBA OF KENYA

The Akamba are a Bantu speaking ethnic group who live in the semi-arid parts of the Eastern Province of Kenya. Ukambani stretches East from Nairobi to Tsavo and Northwards to Embu. Historically the Akamba migrated into Kenya, from Western region of Tanzania also known as (Unyamwezi) along the Usambara mountains, in the 14th Century and settled in the Taveta area before migrating northwards to the Nzaui Hills in the present day Makueni district. Their further dispersal occurred in the 17th Century when some Akamba moved to Mbooni, Kitui, Mwingi and the fringes of central province. The Mbooni group later moved to the present day Machakos and Kangundo districts.³¹

The Akamba were originally hunter-gatherers, who later adopted agriculture when they occupied the new arable lands. However, they practiced barter trade with the Kikuyu,

³¹ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/kamba-people

Maasai, Meru and Embu people in the interior, the Mijikenda and Arab people at the Coast.³²

In Akamba culture, the family plays a central role in the community where the father is the head of the family and ensures security while the mother is tasked with bringing up the children.

2.3 CHILDREN IN AKAMBA TRADITIONAL SOCIETY

Among the Akamba, marriage is only complete after the offsprings Mbiti (1969). This is expressed by the special treatment accorded to the expectant mothers in the community. She was expected to observe some sexual and food related taboos. According to Mbiti (1969) it was believed that some food could interfere with health and safety of the mother and the child. This is why the Akamba prohibited the expectant mother from eating fat, beans and meat of animals killed using poisoned arrows during the last three months of pregnancy.³³

The birth of a child was celebrated by the entire family and community at large. When a child had been born, parents slaughtered a goat or a bull and invited many people to rejoice with the concerned family. The newly born child received a joyous welcome to the family and community at large.

As the children grew up, they were communally brought up by their parents and to the whole community. They were taught to live harmoniously and moved from one household to another with ease and were well accommodated by their aunts and uncles.

The Akamba performed various rituals which ensured children grew up well until they were initiated into adulthood. The youth were ritually introduced to the art of communal living through two important mandatory initiation rites. The first stage conducted in the month of August took place when children were aged between four and seven years of age. Boys were circumcised by specialized men while girls underwent clitoridectomy. Children were encouraged to endure the painful operation without crying, shouting or flinching. Those who persevered the exercise bravely were highly praised in the

³² http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/kamba-people

³³ Mbiti op.cit p. 135

community. After this operation, the community members celebrated by dancing, singing, drinking beer, pouring libation and offering food to their ancestors. The initiates were secluded and stayed in designated houses where they healed from. During this period, relatives visited and accorded them presents.³⁴

The severing of the skin from the sexual organs symbolized separation from childhood while the endured physical pain marked the beginning of training into difficulties and sufferings of life. The presents given to them by their relatives were a token of welcome and appreciation into the community. This demonstrated that the young people were now mature and responsible to own and inherit property.³⁵

This first stage of initiation demonstrates that the community valued children and ensured they were fully incorporated to the communal life. Every member of the community participated in this occasion to show communal solidarity and propagate the same to their children. This made Children to be recognized as part and parcel of the community.

The second stage of initiation was marked by seclusion of the initiated boys and girls from the public to live in huts built away from the village, a ceremony that lasted for seven days. During this period, the supervisors and teachers who accompanied them introduced them to manhood and womanhood. The initiates learnt educational songs about their community, the importance of corporate living, how to defend their community without fear and were allowed to participate in community matters.³⁶ This indicates the community's keenness in educating children about adult life. During this time they were taught to observe various taboos and regulations that governed the community and the punishment that was meted on offenders in the community. It was through such depth training, that children learnt appropriate behaviour as they grew and matured into responsible adults.

The above information indicates that the community valued their children and had a caring attitude towards them.

³⁴ ibid P. 158

³⁵ ibid P.161

³⁶ ibid P. 162

2.3.1 Children and the Family Lineage

Every Akamba man was expected to get married because it was his wife and children that guaranteed his lineage upon death. The community observed various forms of marriages in an attempt to beget children. One example was ghost marriage which Mbiti notes that "... if a son dies before he has been married, the parents arranged for him to get married "in absentia", so that the dead man is not cut off from the chain of life. It may not matter very much about the biological link: it is the mystical link in the chain of life which is supreme and most important....Children may therefore be born long after the person has died physically, but these continue the genealogical line.³⁷

The second form of marriage is 'iweto'- woman to woman where a woman is socially married to another woman for procreation purposes. This form of marriage among the Akamba Traditional society, was practiced by a married woman who was either barren or had given birth to girls only. After initial consultations between the woman and her husband, the couple chose a girl whom to incorporate into their family. The wife in her husband's presence or in the presence of one of the elders from her husband's family designated or pronounced the girl to be the wife of her son who was never born and she was expected to bear him children.³⁸

Thirdly, there existed child marriage which was arranged in cases where an elderly couple bore an only son in old age. Hence, the father of the boy chose a girl for his only son and proposed to her family. The girl was given to one of the male relatives to act as a genitor on behalf of the young son. This was observed so that before the father's death, his son could have children to remember him.³⁹ Apart from the above discussed forms of marriages, there also existed various cases of levirate and sororate marriages in the community. The underlying factor for all the marriages as portrayed by Middleton (1953) was to perpetuate the family name and social continuity.

39 ibid

³⁷ ibid, P 144

³⁸ Middleton J. (1953): The Central Tribes of the North Eastern Bantu, P. 90

2.3.2 Children and the Economic Status of the Family

Children were considered a great resource to the family. And, Magesa (1998) states that a man could be drawn into acquiring many wives because of the potential to have a greater number of children.⁴⁰In the traditional Akamba Community, Polygamy developed into institution linked to the economy. For example, a man with many cattle and a large piece of land needed more wives and children to manage his property. Polygamous marriage among the Akamba was therefore linked to the economic status of the family. This is because the number of wives and children one had, described his personal worth and wealth. Children were thus a sign of wealth and prestige. And, marrying more than one wife resulted into many off springs.⁴¹

2.3.3 Children and Family Cohesion

Birth of children in the African traditional society helped a couple towards stabilizing their relationship and failure to have children resulted into a broken marriage.⁴² In addition, a childless marriage was calamitous and disastrous to a couple, the extended family and the clan.⁴³ This is an indication that a child belonged to the community. The main purpose of marriage was to bear children and the woman's status in the society depended on the number of children she bore and her entire life was centered on children. Without children, the woman involved became very vulnerable and helpless. But, once children were born, the marriage was sealed and it was very rare for such a marriage to be broken. This clearly shows that children ensured family cohesion and without children family stability could not be realized.

2.3.4 Children and the Family's Social Status.

In the traditional Akamba society, childless women were not only ridiculed but were referred to as witches, who could not be trusted with children as it was believed that they could cause misfortune to them. In this sense, they were treated as outcasts ⁴⁴ On the other hand, women who bore many children were respected in the community while their

⁴⁰ Magesa op. cit p 129

⁴¹ Kyalo P. M. (2011): Quaran and Cultural and Legal Challenges Analysis of the Practice of Islamic Law Marriage and Divorce among the Akamba Muslims in Kitui, Kenya.

⁴² Mugambi op cit P.96

⁽¹⁾ Nasimiyu op cit. 153

⁴⁴ Interview with a community member named Mbaika Nzalu on 7th August 2012.

husbands were honored. However, if one wife was incapable of procreating, the husband was permitted to marry another wife who could bear children for him. Kyalo (2011), noted that girls who gave birth out of wedlock among the Akamba were married to men who already had wives. Although this rarely happened, the major concern was to secure a guardian and a home for the children. The man who married such a girl was very fortunate because this enhanced his social status and prestige.⁴⁵ This indicated the value of children in the society. For the higher number of children the more the status of such a man in the society.

2.4 CHILDREN IN THE BIBLICAL CONTEXT

The Bible portrays children as important Beings who were recognized both in the Old and New Testaments. In the Jewish culture, children were taught to honour their parents because the happiness of parents and children was bound up with one another, and reverence to God was the starting point for everyone. A child was cared, loved and provided for in accordance with God's laws.⁴⁶

In the Jewish culture, distinct rituals were performed on children as from birth. For example, a baby boy was circumcised eight days after birth. An example is Isaac (Gen 21:4) who was later taken to the Temple in obedience to the covenant given by God to Abraham in Genesis chapter 17 and verse 11. Circumcision symbolized that the child was part of the nation of Israel, God's chosen people. It identified children who were subjected to the conditions of covenant obedience by their parents.

The naming ceremony which was observed after circumcision dedicated the child to God. The accorded name was usually connected to God in some way, either by his actions, for example, Moses meaning drawn from water (Exodus 2:10) or as a statement of his character like Daniel meaning God is judge. The name also expressed the parents' hope for the child, or the prophetic outworking of God's plans in the child. In Genesis 4:25 Eve names his son Seth, which means 'replacement'.

⁴⁵ Kyalo op. cit. P

⁴⁶ Gidney op. cit P. 103

In addition, children were also redeemed from God by performing a ritual on the first born son when he was one month old. Through this ritual, the Israelites believed that all the first born children belonged to God. This explains the original meaning that God spared the first born sons of Israel during the plagues in Egypt. Weaning was another event that was marked with celebration by Israelites. An example in the Old Testament in Gen 21:8, explains that Abraham made a great feast when Isaac was weaned emphasizing the place of children in the society.

The above rituals observed by Jews for their children emphasized the importance of children in the society. It was only after these introductory stages in life that the child could now be educated by the parents on religious matters.

In addition to teachings about God, parents also prayed for children. In Old Testament, Manoah prayed God to teach him how to bring up his child, even before he was born (Judges 13:8). Hannah prayed God to bless her with a child. 'O Lord Almighty, if you will only look upon your servant's misery and remember me, and not forget your servant but give her a son, then I will give him to the Lord for all the days of his life, and no razor will ever be used on his head.' (1 Sam 1:11). Hannah not only prays for a child but also vows before the Lord on how to bring up the child in the way of the Lord. Job is said to have been praying for his children and even offering sacrifices for each child saying that 'perhaps my children have sinned and cursed God in their hearts' (Job 1:5). Job who was so concerned about his children wanted them to be holy before God. This is the reason why he offered sacrifices for each child requesting for their cleansing in order to make them acceptable before God. Parents prayed for their children in order to obtain favour from God because they cared about their children and understood their responsibilities upon their children.

In the New Testament, Jesus Christ is revealed as a son and God as his father. In his teachings, the characteristic name of God is Father. Paul has also written and referred to Christians as 'Children of God' in Roman 8:16 and calls them heirs of God.

Jesus valued children in his teachings and protected them recognizing that they were innocent and humble and required protection. In the epistles children are commanded to obey and honor their parents, who are also commanded not to provoke their children (Col 3:21) but to bring them up in the way of the Lord with discipline. The New Testament portrays children as humble, tender and simple beings who also express God's love, providence, authority and protection to His people.

2.4.1 Children as Blessings from God

The Psalmist said that 'sons are a heritage from the Lord, Children a reward from Him.' (Psalms 127:3). Children are thus recognized as blessings from God to parents. They were essential for the fulfillment of the creation mandate (Genesis 1:28). Parents celebrated birth of a child as it was received as a blessing from God. In addition, children were essential for the continuance of the covenant with God who made a covenant with his people. And, if his people were to be faithful to his covenant, they were to become a Great nation, as many as the stars in the sky (Genesis 15:5). Children were thus important in the growth and development of Israel. Child bearing thus became one of the Blessings associated with covenant obedience (Deuteronomy 28:1-4).

2.4.2 Children as Gifts from God

Having children was not something that Israel considered an automatic right, children were the future, and continuation of the families' inheritance. A wife that could bear children was an important asset for her family, especially one that could bear sons.⁴⁷ The birth of a child was a very important event and it was greatly celebrated. For instance, the birth of Samuel was very much celebrated. (1 Samuel 1: 24-28).

2.4.3 Children and God's message

In Old Testament, God used children to communicate important message to adults. For instance, in 1 Sam 3: 1-17, God spoke to Eli through Samuel the boy servant. Children could be used to bring words of judgment upon adults. For instance, as the psalmist puts it, 'from the lips of children and infants you have ordained praise because of your enemies, to silence the foe and the avenger' (Psalms 8: 2). In 2 Kings 5:1ff, a little Israelite girl who was living with Naaman the Commander in Chief of Army in Syria,

Gidney op. cit. P. 109

who was a leper informed him of a prophet in Israel who would heal his leprosy and following her message, Naaman visited prophet Elisha and was healed

2.4.4 Children and Family Line

Children prolonged family line. Mothers grew in status in the community when they gave birth to sons as this helped perpetrate the family line, something of immense significance to the Israelites.⁴⁸ In the Old Testament, Abraham battled with childlessness for a long time. He wanted to have an heir and therefore had to wait and trust God for many years. Ruth also struggled to have a son to continue family line. She married Boaz in an attempt to maintain the name of her dead husband so that his name could not disappear from among his family lineage or from the records of his people (Ruth 4:10).

2.4.5 Children and God's Care

In the Old Testament, God takes the part of the weak and defenseless, the widow and the orphan. The Bible protects children from destructive cultural practices (Lev 18:21). The Bible also commands that the orphans be given care and favour (Deut 24:19-21).

2.4.6 Barrenness as a curse

Barrenness was considered to be a judgment. Women who could not bear children were despised and underwent emotional suffering. The prayer of Annah shows the misery of infertility and thankfulness for the gift of a child because God had closed her womb so that she could not get a child (1 Sam 11ff). She became miserable, down hearted and prayed the Lord to give her a child in order to remove her sufferings.

2.4.7 Jesus and Children's Healing

In his ministry, Jesus used children to show their importance and pass important information to people. For instance, in Matthew 18:3-5, Jesus refers to the children as the greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven. He calls a little child to stand amongst his disciples in order to let them understand his message that unless they change and become like little children they will never enter the kingdom of heaven. Here, the little child portrays humility an expression of Christ himself. Jesus also warns of dangers of leading astray

⁴⁸ ibid p 109

the little children who believe in him. He further protects them as his disciples were trying to deny them access to him for blessings.

Jesus also healed many children as a sign that he valued them and did not want to let them suffer. For instance, Jesus raised the twelve years old Jairus' daughter, who was a synagogue ruler, from death. The girl was reported to have died but Jesus held her hand and told her to get up (Mark 5: 41-42). Again, Jesus healed the son of a royal official at Capernaum who was close to death (John 4: 46-54). At Nain, Jesus showed mercy to a widow whose only son had died, he raised up the young man from death. Matthew 17:18 shows how Jesus healed a boy who was demon possessed. Jesus showed compassion on children, appreciated their company, protected them from any ill treatment and blessed them. He challenged his disciples and multitudes to be like children in order to enter the kingdom of heaven (Mark 10:16).

2.5 SUMMARY

The traditional society valued children even before they were born. They were treasured as evidenced by the special treatment and respect accorded to expectant mothers by the society. The birth of a child was appreciated and celebrated by the community as they welcomed the new born to the community. The community continued to participate in the upbringing of the children until they were initiated into adulthood. The different rituals performed on children as they grew up are an indication that they valued and attached great importance on children as part and parcel of the community. The community treasured children who were said to prolong the family lineage, raise both economic and social status of the community and also to enhance family cohesion. Moreover, the place of children in traditional societies was paramount because they were protected from abuse and neglect.

In the Jewish culture, children were valued as portrayed in the Bible. A child's birth was celebrated and in addition the child underwent other rituals such as circumcision for boys, naming, redeeming and weaning. The above rituals were marked with celebrations because Jews appreciated God for granting favour to the children and allowing them to live. As the children grew up, their parents taught them the way of the Lord. In the New

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Testament children are valued as important members in the Kingdom of God. They are considered innocent, humble, simple and therefore worthy of the Kingdom of Heaven. Jesus valued and recognized children in his ministry and he allowed them to accompany him. He blessed them, healed the sick children and raised some from death. The Bible therefore portrays children as very important and innocent beings who can not decide what to happen to their lives but must depend on others to decide for them and therefore need to be protected.

Children in both African Traditional society and in the Jewish culture were valued and protected by the community. It seems the communities needed these children because of the crucial role they played. However, it cannot be ruled out that no cases of abuse for children existed in these societies. Although they rarely happened the culprits in the community underwent corrective measures. The contemporary society on other hand seems not to care about children as many of them are neglected and abused in the hands of their caregivers. The next chapter analyses the difficult situations children are facing in the contemporary society.

CHAPTER THREE

CHILDREN IN THE CONTEMPORARY SOCIETY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The Akamba family has experienced change over the years. Wealth and prestige which were measured according to the number of wives and children one possessed as well as the herd of cattle one had is no longer the ideal. This is due to changes and demands of modernity where families have been shaken. For example, the role the clan in ensuring social stability has been replaced by formal judicial processes. Traditional education has also changed from community training to classroom teaching which demands payments for services rendered.

The changes in the society have therefore brought about demands in education, health, shelter, and nutrition leading to high burdens to parents and guardians who are expected to provide the basic needs to their children. Many have migrated to towns in search of salaried or wage earning jobs to support the needs of their families. But, the failure to secure gainful employment has led some parents and guardians into drug usage and abuse to end their frustrations. Others earn minimal wages and fail to meet the expectations of their families. They severe communications with their families up country hence neglect their parental roles. This in turn worsens the situation because children are left unattended and lack their basic needs. Consequently, some children drop out of school and join street life in towns in an attempt to address their needs. Others engage in drug usage and abuse to counteract their frustrations. If the cycle is not checked, it could continue to next generations.

Given these problems facing families, child survival is a concern for many. Various measures have been enacted by the Government to address the problems facing children today. For instance, through the Department of Children Services in the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Development, the government ensures child protection by legally addressing all forms of child abuse and neglect in the country. This is facilitated by use of the Children Act 2001. In addition, the government introduced Free Primary Education in the year 2003 in order to ensure all children in Kenya access the basic

education. Further more, children aged below five who are most vulnerable to diseases are offered free medical service in government health facilities.

Apart from the government, some non-governmental organizations are involved in child protection in Kitui. These include, World Vision, AMREF, Child Welfare Society of Kenya, Kitui Development Centre, International Labour Organization, Child Fund, Aphia Plus Kamili (a consortium) and the Catholic Diocese of Kitui. These organizations are involved in ensuring child survival, development, participation and protection, the four pillars of rights of children addressed in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC).

Despite the effort by the government and other stakeholders in addressing the plight of children, there exist different forms of abuse and neglect in Kitui.

3.2 FORMS OF CHILD ABUSE IN KITUI

3.2.1 Physical Abuse

This visible nature of abuse comprises intentional infliction of physical harm on the child's body in form of; corporal punishment both at home and in learning institutions, shaking of small babies; burning children's limbs with paraffin, scalding with cigarettes, hot knives and other implements. Some children are confined in doors, pinched or even bitten.⁴⁹

The conducted Focused Group Discussions revealed the meting of excessive punishment to children by caregivers who included parents, guardians, and teachers. A children's officer reported receiving at least five cases of assault every month. These ordeals were inflicted by step parents, relatives and also by their biological parents. A case was reported of a one year old baby boy who had been beaten by his father breaking his two hands, just because he had been found licking soil.⁵⁰ The case had been forwarded to the police station for further action while the child was taken to hospital.

Physical abuse meted through burning was rare in Kitui. One case was cited from the judiciary of a woman who tied and burnt both hands of her seven years old nephew on

⁴⁹ Good Practice in Child Care: A Manual for Children Caregivers-2011 P. 88

⁵⁰ Report from focus group discussion with stakeholders in children affairs in Kitui held on 5th September 2012

suspicion that he had stolen some money. The boy was staying with his aunt when this happened. The case was already in court and the perpetrator was in remand awaiting sentence.⁵¹

Other reported forms of physical abuse included, beating, choking, hitting, pinching, kicking, and beating.

It was however evident that majority of the cases of physical abuses on children are never reported. This is because the community looked at it as a way of instilling discipline in children. The department of children services and non-governmental organizations in Kitui have created awareness on the rights of children and encouraged community members to report any form of physical abuse meted to children.

3.2.2 Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse occurs when adults or older children exploit their power, authority or position and use children to gratify their own sexual needs. Sexual abuse, assault and exploitation include; sexual contact with a child through deceit, force or threat. The most common are; defilement (unlawful sexual intercourse with a minor), sodomy, child sexual exploitation (such as commercial sexual exploitation), exposure to pornographic materials, indecent exposure or assault and sexual harassment.⁵²

The Children and the Sexual Offences Acts outlaw any form of sexual activity with a child who is considered a minor.

The reported cases in Kitui include; defilement, incest, sodomy, observing inappropriate sexual behaviors and touching of child's genitals. Defilement was rated high with most respondents reporting that they were aware of cases that took place in their neighborhood. Interviews with some respondents revealed that most cases of sexual abuses were perpetrated by people known to the child especially family members, close relatives, family friends, neighbours and friends. Community members confirmed most cases of sexual abuses were of sexual abuses went unreported. Further investigation revealed that lack of forensic and medical evidence made some cases not to be reported as they required admission of the

⁵¹ Interview with Janet, a judiciary officer on 30th August 2012.

⁵² Good Practice in Child Care: A Manual for Children Caregivers P. 89

abuser without which no evidence could support the case at hand.⁵³ Lack of authenticity of a child's communication was a great challenge whereby a child could report to the mother or other family members or friends only to be called liars and even punished for their disclosure. In other cases, children were threatened by their culprits not to report and were aware of the consequences of disclosure resulting into silent suffering.

In the contemporary society, children are being sensitized of their rights and are aware of the different offices where they can refer their cases without fear or intimidation.⁵⁴ However, reports from the Children's Department indicated a rising phenomenon of young boys below eighteen years abusing children of below the age of ten. Most culprits were either in school or drop outs.⁵⁵

3.2.3 Emotional Abuse

According to Turney (2005), emotional abuse is the least understood of all forms of child abuse yet it is the most prevalent, and perhaps the most cruel and destructive.⁵⁶ This form of abuse also referred to as psychological abuse includes; insults, threats, name calling, or acts of intimidation. It is evident in the persistent or severe emotional ill treatment or rejection that could have a serious effect on the child's development. An emotionally abused child will show signs of having trouble in talking, eating, behaving in extreme ways, and delays in overall development in young children.⁵⁷

Discussions with Focus Groups revealed cases of constant shouting at children by their caregivers, threatening to kill or hurt children, and discrimination. The children interviewed revealed that parents, guardians and even teachers shouted at them, and told them hurting words; some threaten to kill the children or even to hurt them, an experience that made some children run away from homes.⁵⁸

⁵³ Report from focus group discussion with stakeholders in children affairs in Kitui held on 5th September 2012 ⁵⁴ ibid

⁵⁵ Interview with the district children officer named Jacinta Mwinzi ON 20^{1H} September 2012.

⁵⁶Turney D. (2005): Working with neglected children and their families. Journal of social work practice. Vol. 15 issue 2.

⁵⁷ Good Practice in Child Care: A Manual for Children Caregiver. P.90

⁵⁸ interview with children from St. John Eudes and Mama Upendo Children's Home.

A children officer reported that several children were running away from home because of the abusive nature of their caregivers and sought refuge in towns where they end up engaging in child labour after dropping out of school.⁵⁹ Some girls get married at a very tender age, while others are employed as house helps in the towns. Boys are involved in collecting scrap metal for sale and end up in criminal activities. Their arrest leads them to rehabilitation schools and others in borstal institutions, places where they do not belong. Emotional abuse happens mostly in the family setting where children spend most of their time. Whenever it happens in schools, the children end up dropping out of school. This type of abuse causes an emotional and psychological harm to the children.

3.2.4 Neglect

According to Bagley (2005), neglect can be physical, educational or emotional. Physical neglect involves parents or caregivers not providing the child with basic necessities. For example; adequate food, clothing and shelter. Failure to provide these necessities endangers the child's physical health, wellbeing, psychological growth and development. He further adds that physical neglect also includes child abandonment, inadequate supervision, rejection of a child leading to expulsion from home, and failure to adequately provide for the child's safety and physical and emotional needs.⁶⁰ Coohey (2003) refers to this as supervisory neglect.⁶¹

This type of neglect in Kitui is reported among fathers who are not only sole breadwinners but also abandon their families and take up second wives forgetting the first one and their children. Some men were reported to settle in towns with their new wives while others became violent to the first wife and their children making them to run away to their maternal homes. This indicates that polygamy as practiced in the traditional African society has lost its importance. Children in this case remain neglected as the mother searches for ways of catering for the family's basic needs. They were reported to

⁵⁹ Interview with the district children officer named Jacinta Mwinzi on 20th September 2012.

⁶⁰ Bagley C, et al (2005): Victim to abuser: Mental health and behavior sequels of child sexual abuse in a community survey

of young adult males, Child abuse and Neglect.

⁶¹ Cooley C. (2003): Making Judgment about risk in substantiated cases of supervisory neglect. Child Abuse and Neglect 27 (7).

take one meal a day and sometimes went without food for a whole day ⁶² This made some children to indulge in child labour because of lack of basic needs back at home. The situation was also common among the single mothers' families who were reported to stay in town with their children and engaged in casual labour. Some of these mothers struggle to earn a living and when they are not able to provide for their children, they run away and leave them on their own. Such children suffer and end up on the streets.⁶³

Educational neglect involves the failure by a parent or caregiver to enroll a child of mandatory age in school or provide appropriate home schooling or special educational training. This leads to cases of chronic truancy. Educational neglect can lead a child to fail to acquire basic life skills, drop out of school, or continually display disruptive behavior. It can also pose a serious threat to the child's emotional wellbeing, physical health, normal psychological growth and development, particularly when the child has special educational needs that are not met.⁶⁴ The educational neglect reported in Kitui involves parents failing to pay school levies for their children leading to school drop out as evident in the numerous reports by the police. This could be due to ignorance and poverty. In addition, children with disabilities are confined at home and not taken to appropriate institutions. The society seemed to have a negative attitude towards children with disabilities and therefore leading to the abuse of their rights to education. A lot of sensitization is being conducted by organizations engaged in children welfare services making the community to understand the rights of children with disabilities hence change their attitudes.

Emotional neglect includes engagement in chronic or extreme spousal abuse in the child's presence, allowing a child to use drugs or alcohol, refusing or failing to provide psychological care, constant belittling of the child, and withholding affection.⁶⁵ Parental behaviors considered as emotional neglect include ignoring the child which is consistent failure to respond to the child's need for stimulation, nurturance, encouragement, and

⁶² Interviews with community members and reports from focus group discussion

⁶³ Interviews with community members and reports from focus group discussion

⁶⁴ Good Practice in Child Care: A Manual for Children Caregivers. P.89

⁶⁵ Turney D. (2005): Working with neglected children and their families. Journal of social work practice. Vol. 15 issue 2.

protection or failure to acknowledge the child's presence.⁶⁶ This type of neglect is experienced in families facing violence Many cases of violence were reported in police stations and the children involved suffered emotional neglect with no one to listen to them and share their problems.

The Children Department reported to receive more than one hundred and twenty cases of child neglect monthly.⁶⁷ Common cases were reported of men in Kitui who deserted their families and opted to stay in towns. Other men were reported staying with their families but could not support them adequately. And, the few men who were in permanent employment but could not care for their children.

Further investigations indicated that most families where children are neglected face separation between the parents. This results in children being left with their mothers and often drop out of school due to lack of school fees. In some families where children are partial orphans, the surviving parent could neglect his/her children and get involved in other relationships.⁶⁸

Increased cases of neglect were recorded during the drought season when food was also scarce. Many children are neglected and end up in towns. In addition, cases of destitute children, early marriages, and early pregnancies are also reported due to lack of support from the family.

⁶⁶ Turney D. (2005): Working with neglected children and their families. Journal of social work practice. Vol. 15 issue 2.

¹⁷ Interview with the district children officer named Jacinta Mwinzi on 20th September 2012

⁶⁸ From interviews with community members,

3.3 FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

This section explains some of the causes of child abuse and neglect in Kitui. The four broad factors that lead to child abuse and neglect according to Freydis (2004) include, individual, family, social and cultural factors as discussed below;

3.3.1 Individual Factors

These factors include both parental problems and child vulnerability leading into abuse and neglect. Parental Problems could be physical or psychological. These include, Drug and Substance Abuse whereby parents who engage in drug and substance abuse are more likely to abuse their children than those who do not. Substance abuse could interfere with a parent's mental functioning, judgment, inhibitions and protective capacity. Parents may neglect the needs of their children and get involved in drugs usage and abuse, and criminal activities that jeopardize their children's health and safety.

An interview with the District Children Officer (DCO) Kitui revealed that many parents who were summoned in the office for child neglect were found to be under influence of drugs. Most of them who were in permanent employment misused their income and went back home with nothing to meet the basic needs of the children. Some were reported to physically abuse their children often because of drugs influence.

A probation officer reported cases of parents serving community sentence because of physically assaulting their children and causing physical injuries to them.⁶⁹ Such parents are referred to the probation department by the court for a non custodial sentence considering they are the breadwinners for their families. Most of them confess abusing children out of influence of drugs.

Another parental problem associated with child abuse and neglect is poor parenting practices. Parenting is the process of rearing children from conception till they become adults. It involves providing for and promoting the child's physiological, emotional, social and intellectual needs till they are fully grown.⁷⁰ Parenting could be affected by several issues such as; dysfunctional families, single parenthood, child headed

⁶⁹ Interview with a probation officer- Kitui, Veronica Nyingi on 4th September 2012.

⁷⁶ Good practice in child care: A manual for children caregivers, 2011. p. 19

households, children raised under institutional care, and the role of each parent in the child's growth.

Information from focus group discussions revealed that parents who abuse and neglect their children interact less with them and use harsh disciplinary techniques on them whenever they are wrong. These parents were said not to give their children time to express their concerns and do not care where the children go or their safety. An interview with the District Children Officer (DCO) also indicated that children who were in conflict with the law lacked parental care and affection because the parents were very busy for them.

A third factor that contributed to child abuse and neglect is maternal mental retardation. A condition which exposed children to abuse and neglect among parents who were undergoing mental disconnect. A police officer in charge of the gender desk in Kitui police station reported a case of a woman who wanted to murder her son of two years. The child was rescued by a neighbour when his mother was strangling him and ready to stab. The mother was arrested and diagnosed to be mentally deranged.

In addition to parental problems, Child Vulnerability increased chances of abuse and neglect. These include, the physical, biological and psychological traits of a child that makes him/ her vulnerable to abuse and neglect. Although children of all ages are affected by abuse and neglect, the young are more likely to be affected by neglect and abuse. The District Children Officer gave reports of babies who were abandoned by their mothers. The babies were abandoned by the road side or in a bush wrapped well in shawls. Their chances of survival depend on timely rescue and admission to charitable children institutions for care and protection. Failure to be rescued in time often resulted into death.

The gender of a child is another factor of vulnerability whereby girls are more likely to be abused and neglected than boys. The DCO revealed that the rate of defilement is on the increase. In Judiciary records, defilement cases ranged from 5-10 per month,⁷¹ These are the cases that are reported and culprits arrested and it is likely that there exist more

¹¹ Sexual Offences Case register, Kitui Law Courts 2012

unreported incidents. It was further revealed that the mothers who had given birth only to baby girls were more likely to experience domestic violence and separation than those who procreated both boys and girls or boys alone.⁷²

The physical and mental conditions of a Child raise the likelihood for abuse and neglect. The information gathered from the focus group discussions, revealed that children with various forms of disabilities were often neglected by their parents, left alone and did not go to schools. A case was given of some physically challenged children in wheel chairs who were kept in the streets to solicit funds for the family. Such children were exposed the whole day to harsh weather conditions to fend for their families. Is it the condition of disability that makes them prone to abuse by their parents or relatives? The DCO reported cases of children with special needs who were neglected by their parents. It was revealed that in some cases, families had broken down because such a child was in the traditional set up believed to bring a bad omen to the family. This often resulted into separation. A case was given by the DCO of a paralyzed boy whose mother was forced out of her matrimonial home by in-laws because of the disabled child. The disabled children face abuse even in the hands of their relatives. Another case was given of a 12 year old dumb girl, born of a single mother who was staying with her grandmother, who was sexually abused by her uncle. These are some of the challenges faced by children with disabilities.

The focused group discussions revealed that orphans under the care of their relatives were abused instead of being taken care of. The major cause of such abuse was land inheritance.

3.3.2 Family Factors

Family issues, for instance, family structure, make children vulnerable to abuse and neglect. The report from the Catholic Diocese of Kitui Coordinator of Child Labour Programme and the District Children Officer indicated that most children who were engaged in child labour, delinquent, truant, and were committed to rehabilitation schools

⁷² Interview with the district children officer named Jacinta Mwinzi on 20th September 2012.

came from single parents who engaged in casual work within the town. Such single parents' income which is below the poverty line makes them live a stressful life Various reports indicated that children were also sexually abused within the family by their step parents

Family Size is another factor contributing to child abuse and neglect. Information from focus group opined that families with many children were likely to experience cases of child maltreatment. The more the children, the more the resources required to meet their needs. In families where parents are not able to meet the basic needs of their children. they are likely to run away from home and seek for alternative means to satisfy their needs making them prone to abuse.

Children who are closely spaced at birth were likely to suffer neglect than those with wide intervals because parents are challenged to provide for many young children. Indeed, these children are more likely to be abused especially if parents spend most of their time with them at home and are also faced with challenges of unemployment or low income that increases their stress level.

History of Domestic Violence in a family makes the children vulnerable to abuse and neglect. Domestic or family violence is aggression or repugnant behavior in which the threat or use of violence initiates conflict or destruction. It could be verbal or physical abuse which takes place at home in a family atmosphere.⁷³ For example, in cases, where family violence between the spouses occurs, child abuse is also experienced. Nasimiyu reported that children in violent household are also victims as they are physically abused; some are sexually abused by their very fathers or other relatives and are emotionally abused. In some households, husbands even beat their wives in the presence of their children just to humiliate them. This affects the children emotionally,74 One police officer revealed that spouses who experienced marital assault also reported cases of children maltreatment. The fathers threatened their children and forced them to accompany their separated mothers. The children department reported that some of the cases of neglect

¹³ As quoted by Anne Wasike in : Domestic Violence Against women: A cry for life in wholeness, in: Pastoral Care In African Christianity: Challenging essays in Pastoral Theology by D.W. Waruta and H. W. Kinoti (2000) P.121 ⁷⁴ ibid P. 131

were accompanied by violence. The mothers who reported incidents of assault were often sent away with their children.

Moreover, some children interviewed from St. John Eudes Rehabilitation Centre, revealed they experienced violence in their families.⁷⁵ And, when they could not take it anymore, they ended up in the streets from where they were collected and taken to rehabilitation centre. Here, they were more accommodated and offered education to reform their lives. Again, information from the community members revealed that women who are victims of violence in marriage abuse their children physically by meting harsh punishment on them.

3.3.3. Social Factors

Extreme poverty and economic hardship have been regarded a great threat to adequate family functioning. These prevailing circumstances make children vulnerable to abuse and neglect. Families which are Socio-economically distressed are at the highest risk of child maltreatment (Rogosh et al, 1995). The African Network for Protection and Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect (ANPPCAN) 2008 report states that poverty is rampant in Kenya..., with majority of those affected being women and children who comprise more than half of the population. The manifestation of poverty generally results into neglect, with children going without basic needs like food, shelter, clothing and education. The Kitui County which is basically a semi arid area receives scanty rainfall making the area to be prone to drought. Given that most people in the area have low incomes, this creates greater stress. Despite good intentions of parents, they may not be able to provide adequate care for their children. This stressful condition presents risk for child abuse and neglect.

Low education makes the parents to only engage in the low paying casual labour. This results into low income or none at all, a situation that causes parents to neglect their children.

¹⁵ Interview with children from st. John Eudes on 21st August 2012

Unsatisfactory living conditions contributed to child abuse and neglect. The information from focus group discussions indicated that children living in crowded areas within the town were vulnerable to abuse and neglect. Crowded living areas like, Kalundu, Kunda Kindu and Majengo were associated with child abuse and neglect. Most of the cases of neglect at the children's office were associated with these three areas.

From interviews with children at St. John Eudes Rehabilitation Centre and Mama Upendo Children's Home in Kitui, it was discovered that most of them lived in crowded areas and lacked basic needs prompting them to run away from home.

Social Isolation in society as a result of modernization, has seen the extended family replaced with more socially isolated self contained family set ups. The communal life in which children belonged to the community no longer exists. Instead, they are isolated from their relatives and live in their own world where they prone to neglect.

3.3.4 Cultural Factors

Some forms of abuse are related to cultural traditions whereby communities believe they are appropriate since they have been practiced for a long period. Adults sometimes justify these types of abuse on grounds that the same happened to them as children. The cultural abuses reported in Kitui included; child marriages, female genital mutilation, child labour at home, denial of food as a form of punishment, child battering as a way of discipline, and disinheritance of children especially girls.

Culture not only shapes the way parents interact with their children but also makes them react in a certain manner which could be abusive to their children.

Although Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) was an accepted practice among the traditional Akamba, the changes in contemporary society have rendered this ritual a retrogressive. This is because education has made people aware of the challenges posed by the practice. Moreover, this practice could lead to excess bleeding, or contracting contagious diseases and HIV/AIDs infections.

Some respondents conceded that female genital mutilation was mentioned practiced in secrecy where the targeted girls were sent to live with their aunts or relatives in other parts of the County. For instance, those who lived in Kitui were taken to Mwingi and vice

versa, where they underwent the operation and only returned home upon healing. However, this practice was not common in the central parts of Kitui

The focus group discussions revealed that cases of young girls getting married were increasing. This negative cultural practice is a form of child abuse where some parents married off their daughters while they were very young. The practice was common among girls who had dropped out of school and posed future challenges to them during child delivery because they risked losing their lives.

Orphaned children especially girls rarely inherited their parent's properties, instead they were sent to their maternal grandparents. The relatives who were to take care of these children neglected them and sent them away and took over their inheritance.

3.4 EFFECTS OF CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

Child abuse affects children physically, emotionally and behaviorally. Children who have experienced child abuse are likely to have some emotional and psychological problems whether they display them or not, and in worse cases, a child might have suicidal tendencies. The effects of child abuse on a child depend on the magnitude of the abuse.

According to Nasimiyu, children who experienced domestic violence display nervousness and withdrawal, anxiety, bedwetting, restlessness, low school performance, illness such as headaches, stomach complaints, asthma, stuttering, cruelty to animals, copying aggressive language and behavior in their play, running away from home, teenage boys beating girl friends.⁷⁶ In addition, children from violent homes come to accept violence as a way of coping with stress and pressure. Boys could develop disrespect for women and girls inferiority complex.⁷⁷ The District Children Officer reported receiving many complaints of mothers who had been battered by their husbands and chased away with their children.⁷⁸Some of them reported to the children's office accompanied by children. And as they narrate their ordeals, children's reactions could even be seen as they shed tears in silence as evidence of emotional torture they underwent in their home. Some

⁷⁶ ihid P_131

⁷⁷ ibid

¹⁸ Interview with District Children Officer, Jacinta Mwinzi on 20th September 2012.

children also reported to have been assaulted as they were chased to follow their estranged mothers.

Children who experience abuse and neglect are likely to undergo depression, stress and trauma. They also exhibit conditions like difficulty in building up relationships, low self image, eating disorders, as well as physical disabilities. The District Children Officer disclosed receiving lost children who are taken to the children's office to have their background traced. Most of these children were said to lie about their homes in fear that they could be taken back where they could experience abuse and neglect.⁷⁹

The physical effects of child abuse and neglect could include; body injury inform of bruises, or broken limbs. Children also undergo emotional suffering as they try to understand why abuses are hurled at them.

The psychological effects of child abuse and neglect may include feeling of isolation, fear, and untrusting. The immediate emotional effects could be transformed into lifelong consequences such as low self esteem, depression, panic disorder, and relationship difficulties. From the study, the abused and neglected children were reported to suffer low self esteem. This was rated the highest effect of abuse and neglect to children. Evidence from focus group discussions revealed that children who were sexually abused, lived in solitude and rarely talked to adults because they no longer trusted them.

The behavioural effects of child abuse and neglect may include; delinquency, drug abuse and teen pregnancy. In the long run, grown up victims of abuse are likely to mistreat their children. Juvenile delinquency, poor mental and emotional health, stunted growth, depression and anxiety, drugs and substance abuse and injuries are some of the behavioural effects that were reported in Kitui.

3.5 SUMMARY

The different types of abuse experienced in Kitui were identified to be physical, emotional, sexual and neglect. It was noted that some factors were contributing to child abuse and neglect. These included; poor parental skills, drug and substance abuse,

79 ibid

maternal mental retardation, family structure, family size, history of domestic violence, low support in the relationship, socio-economic characteristics, living conditions, social isolation, and cultural beliefs and practices. Some characteristics of children were found to increase the vulnerability of children to abuse and neglect. These included the age of a child, sex of a child, physical and mental disabilities of a child and orphan hood.

The effects of child abuse and neglect were reported to be physical, psychological and behavioral in nature. It was noted that in Kitui, children face abuse and neglect even in the hands of their parents. Many organizations were reported to collaborate in safeguarding the rights of children in Kitui. Despite all these efforts, children undergo stressful situations due to abuse meted on them by their caregivers. This calls for a lot of campaign and networking in order to realize a society devoid of child abuse and neglect.

Child abuse and neglect contributes to physical, psychological and behavioural effects that adversely affect the growth and development of children involved. These effects may be both short term and lifelong and could interfere with the normal functioning of a child. Having looked at the causes and the effects of child abuse and neglect, the chapter that follows presents the participation of the Catholic Diocese of Kitui in addressing the vice.

CHAPTER FOUR

CHURCH PARTICIPATION IN ADDRESSING CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT 4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter assesses various activities carried out by the Catholic Diocese of Kitui in addressing child abuse and neglect, the impact of the activities to the community and challenges experienced in conducting these activities. The chapter begins with the historical background of the Catholic Diocese of Kitui.

4.2 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF THE CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF KITUI

The first missionaries to evangelize Kitui Central were the Holy Ghost Fathers who arrived in Kitui from Kabaa (Machakos) in the early 1930s. The Consolata Missionaries from Meru were evangelizing in the northern side of Kitui when the Holy Ghost Fathers arrived in Kitui Central. The first mission house in Kitui Central was built in 1945 at Mutune by the Holy Ghost Fathers.⁸⁰

Kitui Apostolic Prefecture was curved from the Archdiocese of Nairobi in 1956 and was placed under St. Patrick's Kiltegan Missionaries, before becoming a Diocese in 1964 with His Lordship the late Most Rev. William Dunne as the first Bishop. Following his retirement in 1996, the Most Rev Bishop Boniface Lele succeeded him until he was appointed archbishop of Mombasa Diocese in 2005. Rev. Fr. Paul Healy was then elected as the Diocesan administrator, until May 2007, when Rt. Rev Bishop Martin Kivuva was appointed the Apostolic Administrator. Currently Bishop Antony Muheria is in charge of the Diocese.⁸¹

The Catholic Diocese of Kitui covers the four former administrative districts of Kyuso, Mwingi, Kitui and Mutomo. This arid and semi-arid covers an area of approximately 30,142 km2 in the Eastern Province of Kenya.⁸²

The Diocese is involved in many development projects in the area which address the challenge of hunger and poverty experienced in the area. Some of the projects include,

http://www.diocescofkitui.org/index.php

^{B1} ibid

provision of clean water, economic empowerment, and access to education. However, this study targeted programmes associated with children welfare.

4.3 THE CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF KITUI PROGRAMMES FOR CHILDREN WELFARE

The Catholic Diocese of Kitui has a Welfare officer in charge of the Child Welfare Department in addition to programme coordinators who are in charge of different programmes. The following are the programmes found in the Child Welfare Department in the Catholic Diocese of Kitui

4.3.1 CHILD LABOUR PROGRAMME

The Child Labour programme is a holistic approach towards combating child labour which is sponsored by the International Labour Organization (ILO) under International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC). The IPEC was created in 1992 with the overall goal of the progressive elimination of child labour, which was to be achieved through strengthening the capacity of countries to deal with the problem and promote a worldwide movement to combat child labour. IPEC's work to eliminate child labour is an important facet of the ILO's Decent Work Agenda.⁴³

Child Labour not only prevents children from acquiring the skills and education they need for a better future, but also perpetuates poverty and affects national economies through losses in competitiveness, productivity and potential income. Thus, withdrawing children from child labour, providing them with education and assisting their families with training and employment opportunities contribute to a better future for them.⁸⁴

The Catholic Diocese of Kitui is a local implementing partner for the Child Labour Programme which started in Kitui in February 2011. Other Partners involved in the programme in Kitui include; Child Welfare Society of Kenya, Kitui Development Centre and Kenya Union of Domestic, Hospitals, Hotels and its affiliates (KUDHEIHA). The Catholic Diocese of Kitui which is the interest of this study operates in Kyangwithya

http://www.ilo.org/ipec/programme/lang--en/index.htm http://www.ilo.org/ipec/programme/lang--en/index.htm

West in Kitui Central district of Kitui County. The Location comprises of four sublocations; and ten primary schools from the four sub-locations have been identified.

4.3.1.1 Programme Strategies

The Child Labour programme adopted different strategies to address the challenges of child labour in Kitui. These strategies aim at withdrawing and preventing children from child labour. They are as discussed below;

a) Withdrawal and Prevention of Children from Child Labour

This strategy aims at withdrawing children from child labour and enrolling them back into school. It also targets children at the risk of joining child labour who are supported in order to retain them in school. Catholic Diocese of Kitui has withdrawn children who were engaged in domestic work, quarrying, sand harvesting, collection of scrap metal, and selling of local brew and taken them back to school. The average age of these children is reported to be 12-17 years. Children who are enrolled in both primary and secondary schools are provided with school uniform, stationery and have their school fees/levies paid⁸⁵. In some cases, children who have stayed out of school for many years find it difficult to catch up in formal schools and are thus enrolled in vocational training institutions. In these institutions, as reported by the programme officer, they are facilitated to join vocational training where they take courses in dress making, hair dressing, carpentry, and masonry.

In order to curb against child labour, the programme has trained teachers from selected schools in the location on child participation and child labour issues, who facilitate formation and strengthening of children rights clubs. Here, issues of child labour are unveiled and the involved children are withdrawn. The dangers of child labour are revealed hence preventing those who are at risk from joining. In addition, parents and guardians are encouraged to form informal groups where they meet and operate some income generating activities such as, bee and poultry keeping, stone crushing, among

²⁵ Interview with the programme coordinator, Josephine Paul. On 5th September 2012.

others, in order to earn some income to ensure children have food at home to prevent them from running to the streets and engaging in child labour.³⁶

The Catholic Diocese of Kitui conducts community sensitization on child labour issues, the effects of worst forms of child labour on children and the community. The community is encouraged to participate in the fight against child labour. The children who are supported by the programme are monitored by the CDK staff, ILO coordinator and members of District Child Labour Committee (DCLC) to ensure they remain in school and are not engaged in any form of child labour.

The number of children who had been withdrawn from child labour and others who were at risk of joining child labour, as at the time of this study, are as shown in the table 4.3;

Strategy	Boys	Girls	Total	Percentage
Prevention from Child Labour	211	271	482	63
Withdrawal from Child Labour	148	140	288	37
Total	359	411	770	100

Table No. 4.1 Withdrawal and Prevention of Child Labour

Source: CDK Records (2012)

From the above information, it is evident that more girls were being prevented from joining child labour than boys, while more boys were withdrawn from child labour than girls. The information further shows that 63% of the targeted children in the programme were at risk of joining child labour. On the other hand, 37% of the targeted children were withdrawn from child labour. The above information indicates that, apart from the few children who are engaged in child labour, There are many children who are risk of joining child labour the protected.

b) Capacity Building

The Catholic Diocese of Kitui has ensured capacity building for their staff, local partners, duty bearers and caregivers to fight child labour in the district. For example, there exists a District Child Labour Committee (DCLC) that oversees the activities of the programme in the district. The Locational Child Labour Committee (LCLC) is tasked with ensuring children are in school and not engaged in child labour in the location. CDK facilitated training for both DCLC and LCLC on issues of child labour and their role in fighting against child labour. Both the Location and District Child Labour Commitees have membership drawn from different government departments and development agencies. This gives the committees a multi-sectoral approach to child labour issues.¹⁷

The Project Coordinator reported that 16 teachers from the location were trained on child participation and child labour issues. These have engaged children in preparing presentations in music, oral narrations, plays, drama among others, on child labour which are performed during educational gatherings thus promoting child participation and awareness. Teachers in targeted schools are actively involved in monitoring child labour cases in schools.

The stakeholders have also been trained by CDK on resource mobilization as a strategy to ensure sustainability at the expiry of the programme which targets the area for a period of two years. The referral systems have been strengthened to enable the community to report children cases to the concerned authorities whenever they arise.

Five support groups have been trained on group dynamics and resource mobilization. The capacity building sessions are undertaken for economic support on income generating activities. And, groups are now engaged in Income Generating Activities (IGA) and they are independent.

CDK is working very closely with the technical departments of the government line ministries such as; ministry of youth affairs and sports, agriculture, livestock, education and children department for capacity building of the self help groups on IGA as well as offering skills to the youths.⁸⁸

Dibid.

^{**} Action Programme Technical Progress Report 1st February to 31st May 2012.

c) Community Mobilization and Awareness

The Catholic Diocese of Kitui has been conducting awareness on child labour through interventions such as; Child labour mainstreaming in other projects within CDK. During programmes' open days and community meetings, issues of child labour are brought on board and shared within the community. This has increased awareness on child labour issues and the visibility of the project. Continuous sensitization has been done in the community through holding community sensitization *barazas*, led by the project coordinator, in the four sub-locations of Kyangwithya West Location where the project targets. Community members are sensitized on child labour issues, the effects of the worst forms of child labour (WFCL) to the children and the community at large. They are also informed about their role in fighting child labour in the area.⁸⁹

The project coordinator reported positive cooperation by various stakeholders like, the teachers, provincial administration, and District heads of departments in the government which ensured easy mobilization of participants during meetings and trainings.

The Child Labour Committees and the community facilitators are reported to be conducting continuous community sensitization on child labour. Therefore the community has been able to identify children involved child labour and assist them to go back to school. The LCLC holds meetings monthly under leadership of the area chief as the chairperson. This has enhanced the awareness of child labour issues in the area and the community in an effort to understand the effects of child labour on children and to the entire community.⁹⁰

d) Partnership and Collaborations

Catholic Diocese of Kitui is working with relevant Government ministries especially the Ministry of Agriculture, Gender and Children, Public Administration, Education, Youth, among others in propagating their activities. This has enabled the project to be appreciated by all stakeholders in the area and raised the awareness of child labour in the area. In addition, the CDK involves other partners in child labour issues in their activities

⁸⁹ Ibid

⁹⁰ Ibid

hence creating room for generation of new ideas on handling the minors who are involved in child labour. There is also involvement of local media in covering issues of child labour in general and the worst forms of child labour hence raising awareness.

Partnership with Government line ministries raises awareness to the community on how to access government devolved funds like Youth Fund, Women Fund, and Constituency Bursaries. Ministry of agriculture raises community awareness on proper farming methods as well as access to marketing associations.⁹¹

4.3.2 SPONSORSHIP PROGRAMME

The Sponsorship programme which is supported by the Chello Foundation aims at improving the prospects of vulnerable children including the orphaned and those affected by HIV/AIDs thus enabling them to gain access to quality education at primary, secondary and vocational and tertiary levels. The Foundation focuses on Eastern and Southern Africa where the impact of HIV/AID and poverty is most severe. It strives to help the poorest and most underprivileged children build a future for themselves. The Chello Foundation gives them access to education hence providing them with enhanced opportunities and better prospects for the future.⁹²

The Catholic Diocese of Kitui is the local implementing partner for the project in Kitui which is widespread in different parts of the County through the efforts of CDK. It started in Kitui in 2009 and currently it is supporting 275 children from different parts of Kitui among which 132 are boys while 143 are girls.⁹³

The rigour of the Chello Foundation is encouraged by the enthusiasm of the founder Shane O'Neil, who is said to had travelled in Africa and encountered many children from disadvantaged backgrounds. Most of these children had forfeited education to take care of their younger siblings and chronically ill relatives or grandparents. It was therefore his vision and desire to improve the circumstances of these vulnerable children through education which remains the core of the Chello Foundation's guiding principles. Shane

⁹¹ Ibid

⁹² http://www.chellofoundation.org/

⁹³ The Chello Foundation Termly Report August 2012

decided that providing access to education was the best way to help these children raise themselves out of poverty and build fulfilling lives for themselves, their immediate families and their communities.⁹⁴

4.3.2.1 Programme Strategies

The Catholic Diocese of Kitui undertakes sponsorship programme in two different ways; direct support to education and family support fund as discussed below.

a) Direct Support to Education

The project officer reported direct support given to 275 children, who are in secondary and primary schools, tertiary and vocational training, in Kitui. The information is as summarized in the table 4.2.

Status	No. of Children	Percentage	
Students in Colleges	7	2	
Students in secondary schools	216	79	
Pupils in primary schools	52	19	
Drop out due to pregnancy	1	-	
Drop out due to misconduct	0	-	
Deaths	1	-	
Total	277	100	

Table 4.2 Direct Support to Education

Source: The Chello Foundation Termly Report by CDK (2012).

From the above information, the percentage of students supported in colleges is a mere 2%. Most of the students supported are in secondary school and account for 79% while those in primary school are 19%. The number of students reduced by two from 277 to 275 in 2012. This is because one student who was in form two died as a result of a long illness. Another girl dropped out of school in form two due to pregnancy. The project officer reported that the girl had been given supportive counseling, and has already given birth. Plans were in place to enroll her back into school in January 2013.

⁹⁴ ibid

The meetings which are held with children during school holidays bring them together with their caregivers and the CDK staff. These meetings are geared towards discussing the academic performance and discipline of these children. In the meetings, the clergy are invited to give spiritual guidance to them. During such sessions, Biblical verses such as Prov 24:13; Matt 6:14; and Gen 2:18 are referred to. The children are guided, counseled and given time to present their progress, challenges and expectations.⁹⁵

In addition, Alumni meetings are held to enable those who have benefitted from the programme to share their experiences with the others. Such arrangements are vital in offering future support and sponsorship. The meeting was held for the second time in August 2012 and was attended by 46 participants. Another meeting is scheduled for December 2012. This was one way of keeping track on records of supported children to ensure they are engaged in productive activities so that they can give back service to the community.⁹⁶

There exists monitoring of class attendance by the CDK project management. On average, class attendance was reported at 99%.⁹⁷ And, in case of reported irregularities, follow ups are made through home and school visits to establish their causes and offer remedies accordingly.

Home visits are generally made for every child per quarterly basis as a requirement of the programme. And, with the help of volunteer community workers, all children are visited and reports on their progress compiled accordingly. The students who have problems or challenges are visited often to address their challenges.

b) Family Support Fund

The Chello Foundation disburses funds for family support in order to enhance the economic status of the families where the children are taken from. The Fund is used to buy locally bred goats for the families. A total of 171 goats were bought from 2010 up to date and they have continued to reproduce and increase in number. Some are sold to pay

³⁵ The Chello Foundation Termly Report August 2012

⁵⁶ Ibid

⁹⁷ Ibid

school fees, pay hospital bills and meet other basic family needs for the beneficiaries' siblings and caregivers.⁹⁸

The goat project was reported to be progressing well and is deemed beneficial to the vulnerable children for it does not require a lot of attention or consume much time.

This programme is enabling children attain education and be able to support themselves and their families in future. This is indeed a formidable way of fighting the problem of poverty through education. Most of the children supported were reported to show a positive progress in their studies. At the time of this study, there were 64 students in Form four awaiting the Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education (KCSE) examination who were reported to be doing well.⁹⁹

43.3 THE ORPHANS AND VULNERABLE CHILDREN (OVC) PROGRAMME

The orphans and vulnerable children are facing many challenges countrywide. This section highlights the situation of OVC in Kenya, and how the Catholic Diocese of Kitui is responding to the issue in its OVC programme.

4.3.3.1 The Orphan and Vulnerable Children Situation in Kenya

The orphans in Kenya due to HIV and AIDs are estimated at 2.4 million according to the Kenya National AIDs Strategic Plan 2009/10-2012/13. It is stated that in 2008, there were an estimated 110,000 children (0-14 years) living with HIV/AIDs and about 34,000 new child HIV infections each year.¹⁰⁰

Besides children who are orphaned, an even greater number are vulnerable due to poverty, diseases, abandonment, natural disasters, and civil unrest such as the 2007 post election violence, and other related causes. While it is estimated that between 30-45 per cent of orphans due to all possible causes end up in Charitable Children Insitutions

⁹⁸ Ibid

⁹⁹ The Chello Foundation Termly Report August 2012

¹⁰⁰ National Plan of Action for Orphans and Vulnerable Children in Kenya 2007-2010

(CCIs), between 200,000-300,000 are estimated to be on the streets of the major cities in the country.¹⁰¹

Children of parents living with HIV and AIDs become vulnerable long before the death of their parents. Girls in particular, assume caring responsibilities for the ailing parents and parenting for their siblings. They may also take on income and sustenance generating activities thus putting them to further risk of vulnerability. Deteriorating circumstances due to the family's increasing poverty levels and the impact of HIV/AIDs expose children to exploitation and abuse.¹⁰²

Escalating crime and social disorganization also contribute to the increasing vulnerability of Orphans and Vulnerable Children in Kenya. Traditionally in Kenya, Orphans are absorbed into the extended family system. However, this traditional social safety for orphans is under severe threat due to social and economic strains. Their vulnerability is further accelerated by the psycho-social trauma they suffer due to losing their parents; they often lose their inheritance rights as well.¹⁰³

A majority of Orphans and Vulnerable Children are in dire need of essential basic services and many suffer from physical and emotional distress. HIV and AIDs pandemic has created increased demand for child care and protection networks, improved strategies and sustainable interventions. This calls for appropriate OVC programming and skills transfer training approaches to improve the wellbeing of OVC hence increasing their access to essential services, while also supporting the social and economic empowerment of affected families and house holds¹⁰⁴

It is in response to the above situation that the government and different stakeholders have adopted strategies to address the situation of OVC in the Country. Among the stakeholders is APHIAPLUSKAMILI, a partnership comprising: JHPIEGO; the National Organization of Peer Educators (NOPE); African Medical and Research Foundation

bidl ¹⁰¹

¹⁰² Orphans and Vulnerable Children Programming in Global Fund HIV/AIDs Grants in Kenya- 2009

¹⁰⁸ Ibid 104 Ibid

(AMREF); the Kenya Red Cross (KRC); Liverpool VCT, Land O' Lakes; PATH, CHAK and ICAP. The project is funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and works with the local implementing partners that include government ministries, non governmental, faith based and community organizations. The programme offers seven core services to the beneficiaries: These include; psychosocial support, education, health care, food and nutrition, shelter provision, protection and economic empowerment. At the caregiver's level, the programme trains and provides direct support to caregivers to improve their ability to care for the vulnerable children. At the system level, the programme works with the government and the community to strengthen the structures and networks that support healthy child development responses that lead to comprehensive and effective care for OVC.¹⁰⁵

The Catholic Diocese of Kitui is the implementing partner in Kitui. It offers the seven core services; education, health care, food and nutrition, shelter, psychosocial support, protection, and economic empowerment to the selected children in Kitui. The Diocese supports 10,900 OVC. Among these children, a third is boys while two thirds are boys.¹⁰⁶

4.3.3.2 Orphans and Vulnerable Children Recruitment Assessment

Recruitment assessment is a process of identifying children who qualify to join the OVC programme. Orphan here means a child who has lost one or both parents due to HIV/AIDs and a vulnerable child means one who is affected or infected with HIV/AIDs. The assessment involves comparing different households' livelihood factors which are analyzed and using a factor indicator scale, scores are awarded for each factor. This information is as contained in table 4.3.

http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/PNADX942.pdf

Report from the project officer, Damaris Mwanzia

Household	Factor Indicator Scale					
Livelihood						
Factors	1	2	3	4		
11	1.0		210			
Household	1-3 members	4-6 members	7-10 members	Above 10		
No. of OVC in the household	1-2 OVC in household	3-4 OVC	5-6 OVC	7 and above OVC		
Ages of household members	1-3hh members below 18	4-6hh members below 18	7-9hh members below 18	10 and above hh members below 18		
Ages of guardian	Guardian aged 25-34	Guardian aged 35-44	Guardian aged 45-54	Guardian aged over55 or less than24		
Gender	1-2 females in the hh.	3-4 females in the hh	4-6 females m the hh	7 and above females in hh		
Guardian relationship to OVC	Mother/ father, step parents	Aunt/ uncle, siblings	Old grandparents/ distant relatives	No relations/ sympathizers		
Guardian marital status	Married guardian	Single/divorced/s eparated guardian	Widowed guardian	Child headed household		
Occupation	At least1 hh member in salaried job	At least 1 hh member in business	Atleast I hh member involved in	No hh member involved in productive activity		
Property	Developed plot/vehicle/cash crops	Land/herd of livestock	Bicycle/radio/po altry	No property		
Shelter	Permanent house	Semi-permanent house	Temporary structure	Dilapidated or no house		
Source of food	Farm	Markets	Relatives/friends	No reliable source		
Nutrition	3 times a day	2 times a day	Only once a day	Sometimes go without food		
Health status	All hh members are well	Rarely fall sick	Frequently sick	Sicking		
Health seeking behavior	Go to hospital	Buy drugs over the counter	Visit herbalist/prayer men	Always wait to heal		
Water source	Treated tap water	Protected spring	Lake/ river/stream	Open pond		
Sanitation	Have latrine, rubbish pit/ dish rack	Have at least 2 of the facilities	Have 1 of the facilities	Do not have any of the facilities		
Prioritized needs	Psychosocial care/health	Protection/health	Education/health	Clothing and shelter		
Special needs	No special needs	OVC/Caregiver with physical/mental disabilities	Sickling OVC/ Caregiver very old/young	OVC without any guardian		

Table 4.3 Orphans and Vulnerable Children Recruitment Assessment

SOURCE: APHIA PLUS KAMILI OVC RECRUITMENT ASSESSMENT FORM

From the above table, it is evident that, in household size, those with more than ten members are awarded the highest score while the ones with 1-3 members are awarded the lowest scores. Again, the number of OVC in the household is also assessed and if a household has more than seven OVC it is awarded the highest scores but the one with 1-2 OVC is awarded the lowest scores.

In addition, the ages of household members are assessed and the household with many members aged below 18 years earn the highest scores. For the guardians, the households with guardians aged above 55 years and below 24 years are awarded the highest scores.

The gender is another factor that is assessed. Females are considered more vulnerable to men and therefore the households with seven and above females are awarded the highest scores but those with fewer females are awarded the lowest scores.

Guardian relationship to OVC is considered. Those guardians with no blood relations with OVC they support attract the highest scores for the household. This is because; it is assumed that appropriate care is likely to be provided by closest relatives and active grandparents.

Guardian marital status is another factor considered whereby; the household headed by children are accorded the highest scores followed by widowed guardians. It is assumed that marriage determines resource base, security and stability.

Occupation focuses on household members who are above 18 years and not in school. Any household without a member involved in productive activity is awarded the highest scores while household with a member or several members in permanent employment is awarded the lowest scores.

Household's property is also considered. Here, the resource base potentials of the household are considered. And a household with no property is awarded more scores while a household with some properties are awarded the lowest scores.

Shelter reflects on the vulnerability to insecurity and infections. A household with permanent houses is awarded the lowest scores, while the ones with dilapidated or no house are awarded the highest scores.

Food and nutrition determines the levels of body immunity to infection. The household with food from the farm is awarded the lowest score while the one without any reliable source of food is awarded the highest score. The number of times a household accesses food determines their vulnerability. The household that accesses food three times a day is accorded the lowest score while the ones which sometimes go without food are awarded the highest scores.

The health status and health seeking behavior determines the quality of care. The household with all members well is awarded the lowest score while the one with sick ling members is awarded the highest score.

Water source determines the degree of vulnerability to waterborne diseases and other infections. The household with tap water is awarded the lowest score while the one with open pond/run offs is awarded the highest scores. Sanitation is caused by environmental hazards. The household with latrine and rubbish pit is awarded lowest scores while the one without any of these facilities is awarded the highest scores.

There are crucial needs grouped according to their priority as; clothing and shelter, education and health, protection and health, and finally psychosocial care and health. Hence, a household in need of clothing and shelter will be prioritized and therefore awarded more scores. OVC with special needs or without any guardian or with caregivers who have special needs or are very old or very young are awarded the highest scores.

The scores awarded are analyzed and the highest scores are given priority as the neediest cases. This is the criteria followed in order to come up with the required number of OVC to be supported. The remaining number is kept at bay and every time children are exited

¹⁰⁷ APHIAPLUSKAMILI, OVC Recruitment Assesement Form

from the programme, either after attaining the age 18 or becoming self reliant or if found to be receiving another support, a replacement is done from the waiting list ¹⁰¹

4.3.3.3 Services offered to Orphans and Vulnerable Children (OVC)

The recruited OVC benefit from the seven services offered by the Catholic Diocese of Kitui which include; health care, education and vocational training, food and nutrition, shelter and care, protection and legal services, psychosocial support and household economic strengthening. Each of these services is offered as follows,

a) Health Care

The children undergo for medical check up procedures to ensure they are in good health. In case of sickness, they are referred to a hospital with OVC medical referral forms from CDK. This allows them access to medical care without being charged and the bill is paid by the CDK. Where sickness requires further medical attention, the programme officer ensures the child gets proper medical attention by the referred health institution.¹⁰⁹

Deworming services are offered to children after every three months in addition to provision of vitamins and mineral supplements. Children who are under one year receive immunization as required. HIV Counseling and testing is given to establish children who are HIV positive and who are not on drugs. This ensures all infected children are enrolled for Ant-Retroviral Treatment (ART) in good time. Such children are provided with treated nets to protect them from malaria mosquito bites.¹¹⁰

The caregivers are sensitized on sanitation and hygiene. They are encouraged to dig pit latrines and rubbish disposal pits. They are also sensitized to wash their hands in running water using soap after visiting the toilet and before eating. A leaky tin method was introduced to the community to ensure they have ready water for washing their hands. In

Report form project officer, Damaris Mwanzia

¹⁰⁹ Catholic Diocese of Kitui quarterly reports on Orphans and Vulnerable Children Programme ¹¹⁰ Ibid

addition, the caregivers are provided with water guard for treating their drinking water to ensure it is safe for drinking¹¹¹

b) Education and Vocational Training

In this domain, children who were not in school at recruitment were enrolled in school and provided with uniform and stationery. The supplies include, reading lamps, textbooks, geometrical sets or prerequisite school items based on needs assessment.¹¹²

The Catholic Diocese of Kitui fills a school levies/fees form and sends it to the school to be signed by the head teacher or principal upon payment and maintained for record purposes. Follow up in education is regularly monitored through attendance, while irregularities are checked by regular home and school visits. Upon meeting the teachers and guardians the problem is solved together thus enhancing pupil performance.¹¹¹ The children who drop in performance or perform dismally are counseled and allowed to share their problems with concerned persons for assistance. Those in need of school materials are supplied and monitored continuously. For instance, teenage girls were supplied with sanitary towels as a measure to retain them in school even during their menses.¹¹⁴

Children who have already attained 18 and do not make it to secondary schools after their primary education, upon attaining low entry marks are enrolled into vocational training institutions where they enroll into carpentry, hairdressing, dress making and masonry courses. Upon completion, they are supplied with start up kits to begin their own businesses.¹¹⁵

c) Food and Nutrition

Children and their caregivers are educated on the importance of eating a balanced diet. The caregivers are encouraged and guided to start kitchen gardens to provide vegetables

¹¹¹ Ibid

¹¹² Interview with the programme officer, Damaris Mwanzia.

¹¹³ Catholic Diocese of Kitui guarterly reports on Orphans and Vulnerable Children Programme

¹¹⁴ Report by the programme officer, Damaris Mwanzia

¹¹⁵ Focus group discussion with CDK staff and community health workers

for the family. The households are provided with poultry to supply them with meat and eggs.¹¹⁶

The HIV/AIDs positive children are supplied with nutritious porridge flour which contains body energy nutrients to keep them strong and health.¹¹⁷

d) Shelter and Care

The Catholic Diocese of Kitui assesses the structures in which children live to establish if they are lacking or dilapidated and assist accordingly.

In situations where children lack beddings, the programme officer reported to have supplied several families with mattresses, blankets and bed sheets.

Where necessary, the concerned children are provided with home clothing if found to be inappropriately or inadequately dressed.

e) Protection and Legal Services

The Catholic Diocese of Kitui ensures that all children in their programme have birth certificate while death certificates are processed for the deceased parents. The teenagers who have attained eighteen are encouraged to apply for national identification cards.¹¹⁸

The CDK organizes for Child Rights Education sessions where children are enlightened on their rights and further sensitized on different places of authority and areas of assistance when in need.¹¹⁹

f) Psycho-social Support

Volunteer community workers in every village make monthly home visits to ensure all children are protected, attend school regularly and that the home condition is conducive for their stay. They report to the diocese by filling in monthly Community Health Worker (CHW) Summary Sheet for every child. This report is updated to the OVC Record

¹¹⁶Catholic Diocese of Kitui quarterly reports on Orphans and Vulnerable Children Programme

¹¹⁷ Report by the programme officer, Damaris Mwanzia

¹¹⁸ Catholic Diocese of Kitui quarterly reports on Orphans and Vulnerable Children Programme ¹¹⁹ Ibid

Summary Sheet which is then kept to indicate the records of every child in a given year. In case a child has challenges at home, home visits are made frequently until the problem is solved.¹²⁰

In addition, individual and group therapies are conducted during school holidays when Children are brought together and undergo spiritual counseling, guidance and are encouraged to share their experiences. During these sessions, they are grouped according to their age, are advised to overcome challenges in life and accorded ample time to intermingle and share in their experiences.¹²¹

The OVC fun day is celebrated annually when children are brought together in an organized event. The CDK decides on when and where to hold the event. Apart from eating, drinking and playing together, they also celebrate the day by reciting poems, presenting plays, songs and dances.¹²²

g) Household Economic Strengthening (HES)

The economic status of household is strengthened to ensure they will be able to sustain themselves and support the children once the project expires

The caregivers have formed support groups which have also been trained by CDK on group dynamics and business skills for starting income generating activities. The groups are linked with financial institutions and also government departments that give loans such as Youth Fund and Women Fund.¹²³

Children who graduate from the vocational training centres are given start up kits to enable them start their own businesses and support their families. In this way, they can continue to support their families hence reducing poverty level that makes children vulnerable to abuse and neglect.¹²⁴

- 122 Ibid
- 123 Ibid

¹²⁰ Focus Group Discussion with CDK staff and community workers held on 12th September 2012

¹²¹ Ibid

¹²⁴ Ibid

The above seven domains represent the services given to Orphans and Vulnerable Children in Kitui by the Catholic Diocese of Kitui which are crucial for the proper growth and development of children. Although the supported children are provided with basic needs, the challenge is that the programme supports just a small percentage of orphans. Many other orphans suffer and have no one to assist them meet their basic needs. The government's response to the Orphan and Vulnerable Children is through the Cash Transfer programme which also supports a small percentage of orphans.¹²⁵ This indicates that more effort is required to reach more OVC in Kitui.

4.3.4 CHILD SAFETY AND PROTECTION PROGRAMME

This programme which is supported by the Kenya Episcopal Conference creates awareness on the rights of children and their protection by addressing the challenges they face in Kitui.

4.3.4.1 Strategies in Child Protection

The Child Protection programme is guided by strategies which include; child protection policy, and awareness creation and capacity building. These strategies aim at attaining child protection for those who work for the children and the caregivers in the community as discussed below;

a) Child Protection Policy

The Catholic Diocese of Kitui has a written policy in which the staff is informed on how to relate with children and how they ought to conduct themselves when dealing with children. The policy statement states that;

We are committed to safeguarding the welfare of all children and young people. All reasonable steps will be taken to promote safe practices and to protect children from harm, abuse and exploitation.¹²⁶

In an attempt to realize the above commitment, the CDK ensures that in staff recruitment, appropriate measures are taken to ensure that staff, volunteers and helpers who are

¹²⁵ In Kitui there are 2160 households supported in Cash Tranfer Programme spreading in 13 locations of the larger Kitui District as revealed in the CT-OVC records in the Children's Department.

¹²⁶ The Child Welfare Department has a written policy where the statement is found.

appointed are suitable to work with children. These measures include investigating the background of any potential candidate to ensure they are not child abusers. The programme officer reported they have turned down job offers for two candidates after investigations revealed they had been involved in child abuse.¹²⁷

The policy provides for suspension of employees on grounds of child abuse and expulsion following subsequent warnings without change of behavior_128

The policy promotes the rights of a child to be listened to and taken seriously as well as given a conducive environment to express his/her views, thought and concerns without being discriminated upon or even despised.¹²⁹ This enables children to be open and ready to report any form of abuse that they may encounter.

The policy further emphasizes adherence of code of conduct for the staff working with children. They are sensitized on their responsibilities in child protection, to understand the need to report child protection concerns, and refer them procedurally to the Diocesan Child Welfare Officer.¹³⁰

The CDK staff are reminded of the Child Protection Policy Guide whose contents include; Definition of child abuse; different types of abuse that can be meted against children and the signs and symptoms of each type of abuse; precautions to be taken when dealing with a child; what to do when one suspects or witnesses an abuse, how to record information concerning the abuse and the referral systems for any form of abuse, ¹³¹ This guide enables staff to understand child abuse and how they can help the victims of such cases.

b) Awareness Creation and Capacity Building.

The CDK is involved in awareness creation and capacity building to stakeholders involved in children matters through training teachers, local administration and community leaders on matters of child rights and protection. In the learning sessions, the

130 Ibid

¹²⁷ Interview with Child Welfare Officer, Josephine Paul on 5th September 2012.

¹²⁸ Ibid

¹²⁹ Child Protection Policy document.

bidl¹⁵¹

participants cover contents on child abuse and neglect, their causes and effects on children; the legal instruments on child protection, both national and international instruments; and how to handle an abused or neglected child.¹³²

The training sessions are beneficial in child protection because after training, the teachers are expected to take a leading role in educating children in their schools on their rights, and how they can report any case of abuse and neglect. The community leaders and the local administration on the other hand sensitize community members on child abuse and neglect and how they can address the same.¹³³

The last training session that was conducted in August 2012 involved teachers from four schools in Boma Parish. The participating schools included; Museve primary with four teachers, Kwa Ukungu primary with three teachers, Katyethoka with three teachers and Isaangwa with four teachers making a total of fourteen teachers. During the two day organized workshop, the participants gave their way forward on how to put into practice the information acquired for the benefit of the rights of children thus protecting them from further abuse and neglect.¹³⁴

4.3.5 REHABILITATION PROGRAMME

The Catholic Diocese of Kitui runs the St. John Eudes Rehabilitation Centre in Kitui which was established in 2001. It is the only registered institution in Kitui that deals with the rehabilitation of street children.¹³⁵ It assists the increasing number of children, who due to challenging financial and social circumstances are forced to live on the streets of Kitui and the surrounding districts. This centre operates with the objective of reconciling street children with their family members and rehabilitating them back to their homes ensuring they are enrolled back in the respective schools and by supporting their

¹³² Child Protection Training Report August 2012

¹³³ Ibid

¹³⁴ Ibid

¹³⁵ Reported by the District Children Officer Kitui, Jacinta Mwinzi. The Department of Children services is in charge of inspection of charitable children institutions and rehabilitation centres and recommending them for registration by the National Council of Children Services.

education¹³⁶ This has assisted in the rehabilitation of street children in Kitui where currently, 78 children are supported

The St. John Eudes Rehabilitation centre offers intensive counseling sessions in an open, caring and safe environment. This helps the children cope effectively with changes in their environment and ultimately facilitate their development and long term independence. This is done through tertiary education, vocational training and work placements. The children are provided with emotional, psychological and financial support that is necessary to allow successful reintegration into community life and ultimately provide them with an invaluable opportunity to better their lives.¹³⁷

The centre's mission statement states;

The St. John Eudes Rehabilitation Centre aims at uplifting the dignity of street children, who face moral and social challenges by providing them with shelter, helping them to rebuild their lives and allowing them to recover their worth and dignity so as to enable education, in accordance with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of a Child (UNCRC).

This Centre accommodates street children aged between 5-18 years of age. Initially each child is assessed on the street by the sisters and the matron who then conduct a home visit in order to evaluate the overall situation of the child, his/her family background and environment to establish the reasons behind the child's current status. According to the sister in charge of the centre, the investigations on history of these children frequently reveal that a child may have experienced physical or sexual abuse or suffer from drug addition problems in most cases glue sniffing; parental abandonment, and used to traffic drugs especially boys.¹³⁹ The children sleep on the streets and in the main sewerage lines

¹³⁶ Interview with Sr Jane in charge of the centre on 11th September 2012.

¹³⁷ http://www.dioceseofkitui.org/index.php

¹³⁸ St. John Eudes Rehabilitation Centre records.

¹³⁹ Interview with Sr. Jane Killu in charge of the Rehabilitation centre on 11th September 2012.

of the town where they have no access to clean water and food forcing them to scavenge in public refuge heaps and steal in order to survive.¹⁴⁰

The children are admitted to the Rehabilitation Centre once they agree to reform and are further assisted through guidance and counseling for a certain period of time before they settle at the institution and are enrolled in school. Once children are ready to join school, each child is assessed according to his/her capabilities and learning preferences whether primary, secondary or vocational training.¹⁴¹

While at the Centre, the children are taught to behave well and are encouraged to refer to their matron as mother whom they listen to and respect accordingly. Here, they are trained in different responsibilities and are encouraged to live as a family. This makes the children not only happy but also refers to the centre as their home. In fact, some of the interviewed children were not ready to leave the centre because it is the place they comfortably call home. The sister in charge reported that children who exited upon completion of school and had attained gainful employment always come back and share their experiences with the rest at the centre.

4.4 IMPACT OF CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF KITUI PROGRAMMES ON THE COMMUNITY

This section gives the response of the community members and other key informants on the impact of CDK programmes in addressing children matters in Kitui.

4.4.1 Improved Awareness on the Rights of Children

From the in depth interviews conducted with the community members, it was evident that the community was aware of the rights of the children. From the fifty community members who participated in the study, majority of them were aware of the rights of children. The responses given were varied but most respondents were aware of five rights of children as listed in

Table 4.3

http://www.dioceseofkitui.org/index.php

¹⁴¹ Ibid

Table 4.4 Rights of Children

	Rights of Children	
1.	Right of children to education	
2.	Right of children to health care	
3.	Right of children to adequate diet	_
4.	Right of children to shelter	
5.	Right of children to clothing	
-		

Source: Field Data (2012)

These rights were mostly reported by respondents with the right to education being the most commonly reported. This was associated with the CDK's enthusiasm in ensuring that children access education and are able to be retained in school. Most parents reported working hard to ensure their children remained in school. One Education officer from Kitui Central reported the decrease in school drop outs. In addition, the school enrolment was reported to be on the rise as some children who were previously not in school had been enrolled back. This was associated with the improved awareness of rights of children to education, by their caregivers. Some respondents reported to fear arrest for not taking children to school hence they encouraged them to attend school regularly.

4.4.2 Economically Empowered Households

The households that are involved in different programmes have been empowered to start income generating activities. For example, some have started their own group projects such as poultry keeping, bee keeping, and goat keeping. These projects were reported to be progressing well and were expected to expand to other areas beneficial to the group members in order to meet the basic needs of their children without many challenges.

There are some children who were reported to have gone through vocational training and issued with start up kits. They have proceeded on to start their businesses in their areas of training such as hairdressing, dress making, or mechanics. These young people have been able to support their siblings, reduce the poverty of their families and protect the children from neglect.

4.4.3 Reduced Number of Street Children

Through child labour and rehabilitation programmes, the CDK has been able to support many children who were initially in the streets with no where to call home. Most of these children have been taken back to school and have abandoned street life. And, those who had no where to call home have been provided with shelter and enrolled back into schools.

4.5 CHALLENGES EXPERIENCED BY CDK IN IMPLEMENTING ITS PROGRAMMES

4.5.1 Cultural Beliefs and Practices

In the child labour project, the project officer reported that cultural beliefs and practices are a challenge in creating awareness on issues of child labour. The community holds the opinion that children are supposed to work in whatever task they are allocated by their parents. Any form of failure is deemed disrespect. And, in an attempt to address some harmful tasks to the growth and development of the children, the community takes it as a way of 'destroying' children and making them not to respect their parents. This is a challenge in trying to harmonize the situation and ensuring that parents cooperate to curb abusive forms of activities done by their children while at the same time emphasizing that children understand their responsibilities.

Some caregivers were said to hold the opinion that they have to bring up their children in the same way in which they were brought up because they turned out to be good members of the community. This analogy justifies some harmful cultural practices and beliefs that are considered abusive to children.

4.5.2 Addressing Familial Abuses

The programme officers reported the challenge encountered in addressing abuses perpetuated within the family whenever a child is abused by a close relative. There is tendency to conceal the vice in order to protect the name of the family. It was reported that most sexual abuse cases in families are not reported because any attempt to report such cases could exercabate problems in the family.

A case was reported of a mother whose five year old daughter was defiled by her twenty years old step brother. Although the young man was arrested, the father insisted on the girl's mother to drop the charge. The mother who was reluctant to withdraw the case was forced out of her matrimonial home with her children. It was a great challenge to this mother who wanted justice prevailed on her abused daughter, but the family adamantly forced her to withdraw the case. She desperately sought assistance for her daughter's justice. This is an example on the challenge to address familial abuses which could end up severing family relations.

4.5.3 Ignorance

The programme officers reported that there was a lot of ignorance by some caregivers who had organized themselves into groups and met occasionally to review their activities. Any failure to attend thrice consecutively the stipulated meetings could result to dismissal according to the group's established rules. It was reported that some caregivers failed to attend the group meetings with no apparent reasons leading to their unwarranted dismissal. Others were said not to be cooperative and hence abandoned group activities. In as much as the groups are given good ideas that could help them develop themselves, some end up not benefiting from these projects. Some caregivers were said not to concentrate on their income generating activities, as they wanted to be given what is ready for consumption without participating in its production. Even after sensitization, they were still ignorant of their roles.

Ignorance was also revealed in reporting abusive cases. Despite the awareness among the community members, some preferred to 'talk' at home and end the case without reporting to the concerned authorities. This made many cases of child abuse not to be brought into limelight and therefore children suffer for not getting justice for the abuses meted against them.

4.5.4 Poverty

This was reported to be a big challenge in addressing child abuse and neglect because some parents whose children were abused are compromised to accept some form of bribe and avoid reporting the vices. This has resulted into many girls being abused sexually, resulting into early pregnancies yet no justice is meted.

4.5.5 Aged and Illiterate Caregivers

This challenge was reported by the OVC programme officer as affecting a great number of households where the children had been left under care of their aged grandparents. This could be a challenge especially where the children are put on antiretroviral drugs and the caregivers are not able to administer the drugs to the children as required. Some end up not taking the drugs, or taking inappropriate measurements. In addition, the same challenge affects education because the grandparents are not able to monitor the children's progress in school given their age and illiteracy. This makes whole household becomes vulnerable to many problems and in need of consistent assistance and monitoring.

4.6 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The Catholic Diocese of Kitui is in the fore front in addressing child abuse and neglect. The available programmes indicate that the CDK is committed to addressing children related issues. From the information gathered, the different types of abuse experienced by children in Kitui are addressed through; child labour, sponsorship, child protection, OVC and rehabilitation programmes. The orphans and street children are the key beneficiaries of the CDK activities. However the programmes also benefit all children generally through stakeholder's capacity building endeavours who in turn provide quality services to the children, awareness raising in child rights, and family economic empowerment.

Through the efforts of CDK, many children have been able to access education. Street children have been enrolled back into school and are now looking forward to a bright future. Some families which had no hope in life have been assisted and encouraged to start income generating activities.

However, there exist challenges facing the above responses by CDK which include; cultural beliefs and practices, poverty, ignorance, aged and illiterate caregivers and familial abuses. These challenges hamper efforts by CDK in addressing child abuse and neglect. In addition, the direct support given to children and caregivers is limited to a small number of children who are neglected. This implies there is need to reach more children who are suffering. But, the programmes can not handle all the children in Kitui. Therefore, more children are still suffering in neglect and abuse. The next chapter presents the data collected from the field in a descriptive manner.

CHAPTER FIVE

DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION 5.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter analyses, interprets the findings of the study and presents the data using tables and graphs. This is vital in testing hypotheses and meeting the objectives of the study. The chapter contains both quantitative and qualitative analysis of data collected from the field work.

5.2 RESPONSE RATE

The researcher distributed 85 questionnaires and the responses were as shown in Table 5.1.

Table 5.1 Response Rate

Responses	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Responded	80	94
No Response	5	6
Total	85	100

Source: Field Data 2012

A graph displaying the above response rate is as shown in figure 5.1.

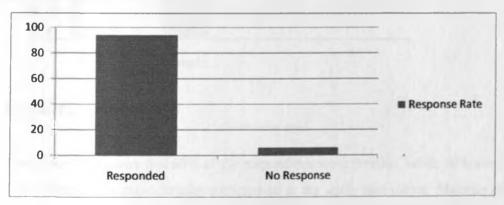


Figure 5.1 Response Rate

Source: Field Data (2012)

The data indicates that out of 85 questionnaires distributed, 80 were well filled and returned. This shows that 94% of targeted respondents participated in the study, while 6% did not participate.

5.3 GENDER CATEGORIZATION OF PARTICIPANTS

The researcher sought to analyze the respondents by their gender in order to establish the gender level of participation in the study. The responses were as shown in Table 5.2.

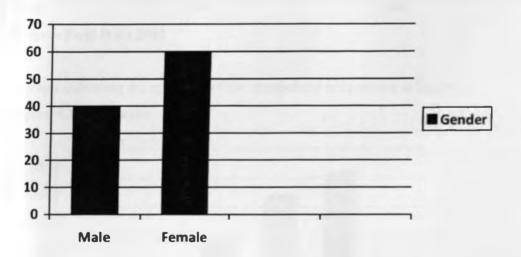
Table 5.2 Gender

Gender	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Male	32	40
Female	48	60
Total	80	100

Source: Field Data 2012

A graph displaying the participants by gender is as shown in figure 5.2.

Figure 5.2 Gender





The above data shows that 60% of the respondents were females, while 40% were males. This indicates that more females participated in the study than males. Majority of whom are not only caregivers but are also found in the community. They comprised women some of whom are grandmothers who were left with children as the rest of the family members attended to their daily chores.

5.4 AGE

The researcher sought to establish the age of the participants whose responses are shown in Table 5.3

Table	5.3	Ages
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Age Range	No. of Participants	Percentage	
Below 20	-	•	
21-29	4	5	
30-39	16	20	
40-49	22	28	
50-59	26	32	
Above 60	12	15	
Total	80	100	

Source: Field Data 2012

A graph indicating the age range of the respondents is as shown in figure 5.3.

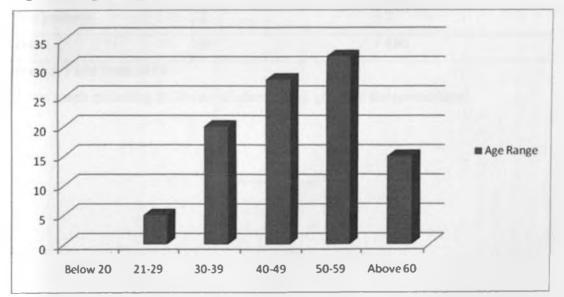


Figure 5.3 Age Range

From the above data, there were no participants aged below 20 years. The participants aged between 21-29 were 5%, while 20% were between 30-39. Those aged between 40-

Source: Field Data (2012)

49 were 28%, 32% were aged between 50-59 and 15% were aged above 60 years. This data indicates that majority of the participants were aged between 50-59 while the least number of participants were aged 21-29. This indicates that majority of the participants were mature and old people who were also knowledgeable of the traditional African society's ways of bringing up children. These people were resourceful and understood the importance of children in the traditional African society.

5.5 HIGHEST EDUCATIONAL LEVEL

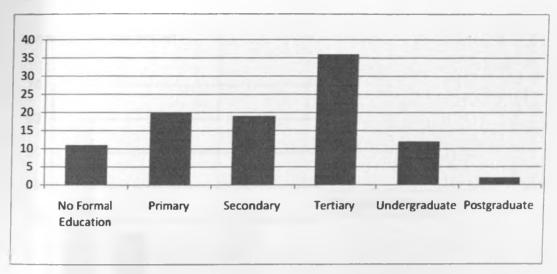
Education Level	Frequency	Percentage	
No Formal Education	9	11	
Primary	16	20	
Secondary	15	19	
Tertiary	28	36	
Undergraduate	11	12	
Post graduate	2	2	
Total	80	100	

Table 5.4 Education Level

Source: Field Data 2012

Below graph indicating the levels of education as given by the respondents,





Source: Field Data (2012)

The above data indicates that 11% of participants had not received formal education. This group comprises senior members of the community members. Those who had attained the primary level of education represented 20% of the participants. Nineteen (19%) of participants had attained secondary level education, 36% had attained tertiary level of education, 12% had studied up to undergraduate degree level while 2% had reached the post graduate level. The data indicates that majority of the participants, were literate.

5.6 MARITAL STATUS

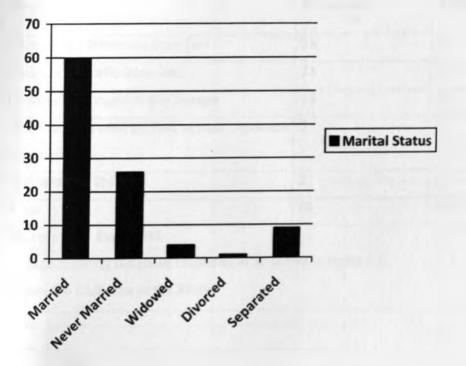
Table 5.5 Marital Status

Marital Status	Frequency	Percentage
Married	48	60
Never married	21	26
Widowed	3	4
Divorced	1	1
Separated	7	9
Others	-	•
Total	80	100

Source: Field Data (2012)

A graph indicating the marital status above is shown in figure 5.5.

Figure 5.5 Marital Status



Source: Field Data (2012)

The above data indicates that 60% of the participants were married, 26% were never married, 4% were widowed, 1% divorced, and 9% were separated. This means that majority of the participants were married. The data also indicates there is a higher number of single parent headed house holds as a result of widow hood, separation, divorce and from those who have never gotten married. Separation was on the increase in the community as evidenced by the number of separated participants.

5.7 CHILDREN IN THE BIBLE

The researcher investigated what the Bible says about children in both the Old Testament and in the New Testament as shown in Table 5.6.

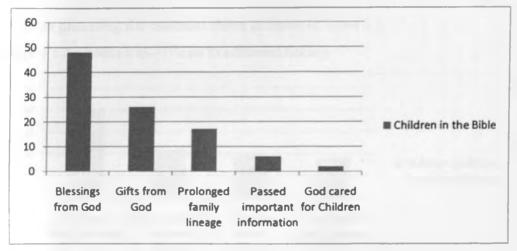
Table 5.6 Children in the Bible

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Children are Blessings from God	38	48
Children are Gifts from God	21	26
Children Prolonged family lineage	14	17
Children were used by God to pass important information	5	6
God cared for children	2	2
Total	80	100

Source: Field Data 2012

A graph showing the above responses is as shown in figure 5.6





Source: Field Data (2012)

The above results indicate that 48% of participants perceived children as blessings from God, 26% as gifts from God and 17% reported children to have prolonged the family's lineage. Further, 6% said children were used by God to pass important information to adults and 2% reported that God cared for them. This data indicates that majority of people refer to children as blessings and gifts from God.

5.8 CHILDREN IN AFRICAN TRADITIONAL SOCIETY

The researcher sought to establish the importance of children in African Traditional Society and the responses are represented in Table 5.7.

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Children Prolonged the family lineage	33	41
Children raised economic status of the family	18	22
Children enhanced family cohesion	15	19
Children Raised Family's Social Status	14	18
Total	80	100

Source: Field Data 2012

A graph presenting the responses above is shown in figure 5.7.

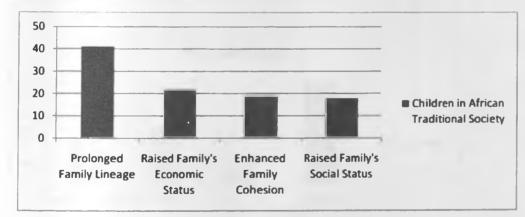


Figure 5.7 Children in African Traditional Society

Source: Field Data (2012)

The responses given indicated that 41% of respondents perceived children to have prolonged the family lineage among the Akamba traditional society_22% of respondents who reported that children raised the economic status of the family, while 19% held the opinion that children enhanced family cohesion and 18% reported children had raised family's social status. These responses indicate the community understands the importance of children in the traditional society and how and why they were protected from abuse and neglect by the whole community.

5.9 FORMS OF CHILD ABUSE IN KITUI

The researcher investigated the different forms of abuse experienced in Kitui and the responses are shown in Table 5.8.

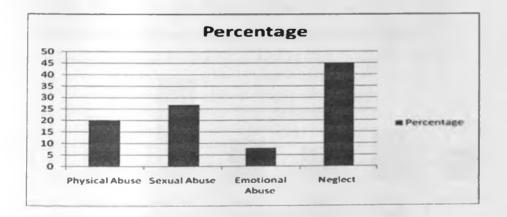
Table 5.8 Forms of Abuse

Response	Frequency	Percentage	
Physical Abuse	16	20	
Sexual Abuse	22	27	
Emotional Abuse	6	8	
Neglect	36	45	
Total	80	100	-

Source: Field Data (2012)

A graph showing the responses above is shown in figure 5.8.

Figure 5.8 Forms of Child Abuse



Source: Field Data (2012)

The data gathered indicated that 45% of respondents reported cases of neglect which was the leading case facing children in the area. The participants who reported sexual abuse were 27% while 20% reported physical abuse and 8% emotional abuse. Emotional abuse was the least reported form of abuse for it was assumed that this form of abuse is not prevalent in the area.

5.10 FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

The researcher examined the factors which contribute to child abuse and neglect in Kitui and the responses are shown in Table 5.9.

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Poverty	15	19
Drugs and Substance Abuse	24	30
Family violence	10	12
Poor parenting skills	8	10
Family structure	11	14
Family size	7	9
Cultural Practices	5	6
Total	80	100

Table 5.9 Factors Contributing to Child Abuse and Neglect

Source: Field Data (2012)

A graph showing the above factors is shown in figure 5.9

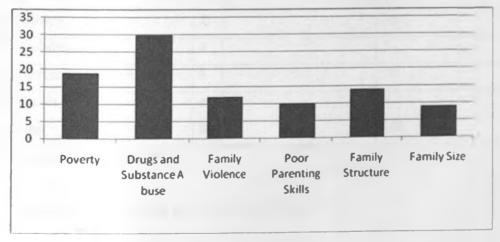


Figure 5.9 Factors Contributing to Child Abuse and Neglect

Source: Field Data (2012)

The above data indicates that 19% of respondents reported poverty as a factor contributing to child abuse and neglect. Those who associated child abuse and neglect to drug and substance abuse were 30%, while 12% of respondents reported family violence and 10% reported poor parenting skills. 9% reported family size, an indication that a

family with many children is likely to suffer child abuse and neglect as compared to families with few children. The family structure attracted 14% of the participants which implied that the family could comprise of a single male parent or female or step parents. Finally, 6% of participants reported cultural practices as contributing to child abuse and neglect. The data presented indicates that majority of participants associated child abuse and neglect to drug and substance abuse and the least number reported cultural practices.

5.11 EFFECTS OF CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

The researcher investigated how child abuse and neglect affected children in Kitui and the responses are tabulated in table 5.10.

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Low self esteem	18	23
Juvenile delinquency	8	10
Poor mental & emotional health	10	12
Stunted growth	10	12
Тгиапсу	16	20
Disability	4	5
Depression and Anxiety	8	10
Injuries	6	8
Total	80	100

Table 5.10 Effects of Child Abuse and Neglect

Source: Field Data (2012)

A graph showing the data above is shown in figure 5.10

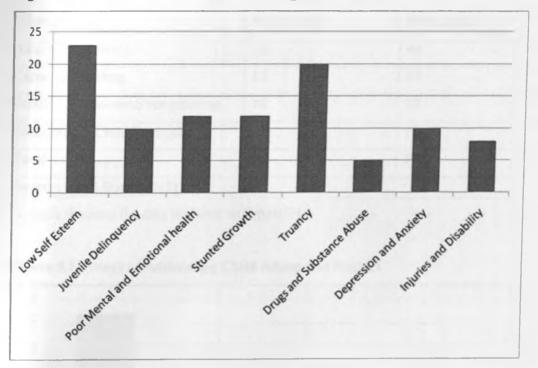


Figure 5.10 Effects of Child Abuse and Neglect

Source: Field Data (2012)

The data in table 5.10 indicates that 23% of respondents opined that child abuse and neglect resulted to low self esteem for most victims 10% reported juvenile delinquency, while 12% reported poor mental and emotional health. A further 12% reported stunted growth, while 20% reported truancy and 5% drug and substance abuse. Another 10% reported depression and anxiety and 8% reported injuries and disability. This data implies that majority of participants held the opinion that child abuse and neglect results to low self esteem to the victims and contributes to truancy.

5.12 WAYS OF ADDRESSING CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT BY THE CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF KITUI

The researcher sought to examine the different ways used by the CDK to address the issue of child abuse and neglect in Kitui.

The responses given are shown in table 5.11.

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Awareness Raising	35	44
Capacity Building	15	19
Families Economic Strengthening	18	22
Encouraging Child Participation	12	15
Total	80	100

Table 5.11 Ways of Addressing Child Abuse and Neglect

Source: Field Data (2012)

A graph showing the data is shown in figure 5.11

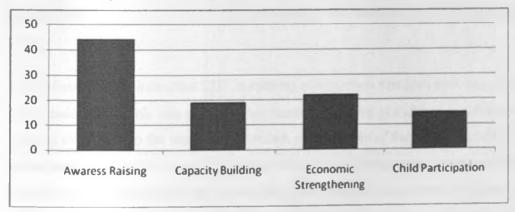


Figure 5.11 Ways of Addressing Child Abuse and Neglect

Source: Field Data (2012)

The above information indicates that 44% of respondents reported awareness creation and raising to community members by the CDK. 19% reported capacity building. Further, 22% reported that CDK is involved in economic strengthening of families, while 15% reported that CDK is encouraging child participation in matters that affect them. The available data indicates that majority of the respondents were aware of participation of CDK in raising awareness on child abuse, neglect and protection.

5.13 THE CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF KITUI PROGRAMMES

The researcher examined the different programmes conducted by CDK to address child abuse and neglect. And responses given indicated that the CDK is engaged in different programmes that are geared towards child protection. These programmes include, Child labour, Sponsorship, Child safety and protection, Orphans and Vulnerable Children programme and rehabilitation programmes. The respondents mentioned two or three different programmes. From the analysis of all the responses, the researcher was able to identify and clarify the five programmes run by CDK which protect children from abuse and neglect.

5.14 IMPACT OF THE CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF KITUI PROGRAMMES

The researcher sought to establish the impact of the CDK programmes in addressing child abuse and neglect and the responses given indicated that various programmes have led to; improved awareness on the rights of children; improved access to education; economically empowered households; and reduced the number of street children in Kitui town.

This information indicates that CDK is running programmes that are impacting positively to the community. This was evident in increased enrollment of children in schools and in creating awareness to the community through enhancement of the rights of children. The participants reported that some caregivers were engaged in economic activities that were generating some income for the households. This reduced the poverty level that made children vulnerable to abuse and neglect. The reported reduction in number of street children was due to the child labour programme and the rehabilitation efforts by the CDK.

5.15 ORGANIZATIONS ADDRESSING CHILD WELFARE IN KITUI

The author investigated the different organizations addressing the welfare of children in Kitui. The responses indicated the existence of several organization which include; Child Welfare Society of Kenya, International Labour Organization, Kitui Development Centre, World Vision, AMREF, Compassion International, and Child Fund. This indicates there are other organizations concerned with the welfare of children in Kitui which the participants were aware of. These organizations focus on children's welfare an indication that child abuse and neglect is prevalent in this area.

5.16 CHALLENGES FACED IN PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION

The author sought to establish the different challenges that CDK face when conducting their programmes. The responses included, Cultural beliefs and practices, Poverty. Addressing Familial abuses; ignorance, Community attitude, aged and illiterate caregivers; and Increased number of abused and neglected children. This indicated that the CDK encounters challenges in an attempt to address child abuse and neglect in Kitui. Some of them were associated with family, socio- economic and cultural factors.

CHAPTER SIX

6.0 SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATION 6.1 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The research investigated the role of the church in addressing child abuse and neglect in Kitui. The study was set to meet three objectives and approve or disapprove the set hypotheses. The first objective of the study focused on the Biblical teachings and African Traditional understanding of the importance of children.

It was established that children in both the Old Testament and New Testament were recognized and highly regarded. In the Jewish culture, a child's birth was celebrated by the family and the entire community. Children underwent rituals such as, naming, circumcision for boys, redeeming and weaning. These rituals were marked with celebrations because Jews appreciated God for granting them the favour to bear children. The study established that children were perceived to be God's blessings, gifts from God, and also prolonged family lineage. They were also used by God to pass important information. Some attributes of children as portrayed in the New Testament attest that children are; innocent, humble and simple and therefore worth entry into the Kingdom of God in Heaven. It was therefore established that children were not only important but were also protected by God and the community.

In the African Traditional society, children were valued and protected. Even before birth they are a reminiscent of the special treatment accorded to an expectant mother by the community. The birth of a child was celebrated by the community who also participated in bringing up the child. Hence, children belonged to the community, were highly treasured because they prolonged the family lineage, and enhanced economic status, family cohesion and social status of a family. It was the responsibility of the community to protect children in all ways. Hence, there were rare cases of child abuse and neglect.

The second objective of the study was an investigation into the various factors that contribute to child abuse and neglect in Kitui and their effect to these children. The different forms of child abuse experienced here were identified as, physical, sexual, and emotional and neglect. Physical abuse was reported and perpetrated through excessive punishment by their caregivers. Sexual abuse was experienced through defilement, while emotional abuse was propagated by constant shouting and threatening of children by their caregivers. Neglect was evident in the educational sector and was perpetrated through failure to enroll a child into school, physical neglect involved a caregiver not providing basic necessities required by a child such as adequate food, clothing and shelter, and emotional neglect involved failure to address psychological needs of a child.

The factors contributing to child abuse and neglect in Kitui were identified to include, poverty, drug abuse, family violence, poor parenting skills, family structure, family size, ethnic violence and cultural practices. These were grouped into, individual, family, social, and cultural factors. The effects of child abuse and neglect among children in Kitui were examined and responses indicated; low self esteem, juvenile delinquency, poor mental and emotional health, stunted growth, truancy, drug and substance abuse, depression and anxiety, and disability and injuries.

The third objective was to analyze the participation of the church in the protection of children from abuse and neglect. The activities of Catholic Diocese of Kitui in the Department of Child Welfare were analyzed. Programmes that were in place in addressing child abuse and neglect included; child labour programme that dealt with withdrawal of children involved in child labour, prevention of children who were at the risk of joining child labour and enrolling and retaining them in school. It was evident that household economic strengthening empowers caregivers to provide children with basic needs hence preventing them from joining child labour. The sponsorship programme was involved in supporting children lacking school fees both in the primary, secondary and tertiary level. This enabled children who are at the risk of missing education to access it. The programme also included household economic strengthening to ensure that a family continues to support children and provides access to education in future.

The Orphans and Vulnerable Children programme ensured holistic support to children who are affected and infected with HIV/AIDs. This programme enabled children to have access to education, health services, food and nutrition, shelter, psychosocial support, protection, and strengthening of their households economically. This has facilitated many children to access basic needs of life and protection from abuse and neglect.

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The child safety and protection programme which exists in this area targets the creation of awareness to the community on children rights and protection. This programme not only fosters awareness to the community on how to protect children from abuse and neglect but also informs them on where and how to report cases of child abuse in case they happen. The last programme focuses on the rehabilitation of street children at a designation where street children are rehabilitated and enrolled in learning institutions. These programmes indicate that CDK is actively involved in addressing child abuse and neglect.

The CDK response to child abuse and neglect, has improved awareness on the rights of children by the community, economically empowered households and reduced the number of street children. However, the CDK encounters some challenges in their activities which include; cultural beliefs, and practices, addressing familial abuses whereby family members are against the exposure of the entire family to the public and therefore prefer not to disclose the cases at stake. They instead handle them within the family circle against the best interest of the child. There also exist reported cases of ignorance by community members in reporting cases of child abuse even with the awareness on the same. In addition, aged and illiterate caregivers pose a challenge to the programme officers as it becomes demanding to ensure frequent monitoring of households to ensure children are well attended. Finally, poverty makes some parents to be compromised or bribed to conceal the abuses against their children. It is such challenges that sometimes hinder the efforts of CDK in addressing child abuse and neglect.

The study was based on three hypotheses that the researcher sought to approve or disapprove. The first hypothesis was: "in African traditional societies and in Biblical world, children were protected from abuse and neglect." This hypothesis was not only confirmed but it was evident that in the Biblical context children were treasured and protected as they were perceived to be gifts and blessings from God. And, in the African traditional society, children belonged to the community and were protected from both abuse and neglect.

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The second hypothesis was; "irresponsible behavior of parents and guardians accelerates the problem of child abuse and neglect." Several factors pointed to the fact that child abuse and neglect was evident. These factors were categorized into, individual, family, social and cultural factors. Among all the factors, drugs and substance abuse, which is an individual factor, was the most reported factor that contributes to child abuse and neglect. Other reported factors are poor parenting skills and family violence. This therefore confirms that irresponsible behaviors of parents and guardians accelerate the problem of child abuse and neglect.

The last hypothesis was, "the church actively participates in addressing child abuse and neglect in Kitui." This was confirmed given the different programmes that CDK is engaged in that are geared towards child protection. It could be concluded that the church is actively involved in addressing child abuse and neglect in Kitui.

6.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

In order to strengthen the role of the church in addressing child abuse and neglect, the researcher recommends the following based on the findings of the study:

1. Strengthening of the Referral Systems and Networking

The study established that there are other organizations working in Kitui for the welfare of children. It is therefore recommended that the CDK may network with them in order to locate and call upon them for any assistance especially in reference to cases that can not be addressed at their centre. Networking with government departments in different capacities is also recommended in order to ensure technical support for the smooth running of the programmes.

2. Improved ways of Creating Awareness

The CDK is creating awareness on the rights of children and the need to protect them from abuse and neglect. This is done mainly through *barazas* and school functions. However, there are some people who ignore the *barazas* and do not bother to attend any school functions. They therefore miss this important information. It is therefore recommended that CDK should use the local media to pass their message as well as

posters which could be displayed in strategic areas such as, market areas, meeting places and at the entrances of areas frequented by people like churches, mosques, schools, and government offices among others.

3. Training on Parenting Skills

From the study, parents and caregivers disclosed challenges in parenting as a result of the changing society and effects of modemization. The findings from the research revealed that it could be beneficial for CDK to initiate training programme on parenting skills. This may assist parents and guardians to accept changes in society and decide how to respond to the different challenges and circumstances while bringing up their children.

4. Adoption of Child Protection Measures by all Churches in Kitui

The researcher established that churches have a role to play in protecting children from abuse and neglect. This is because, child abuse and neglect is on the rise and it is the responsibility of the church to ensure protection of its members. Thus, a challenge is posed to all other churches in Kitui to learn good practices from the Catholic Diocese of Kitui and initiate some children protection strategies. In conclusion, there are several churches in Kitui and if each of these churches includes the protection of children in their core mandates, then the vice of child abuse and neglect could be very minimal in the area.

5. Suggestions for Further Research

The researcher discovered that the Catholic Diocese of Kitui is enthusiastic in ensuring their children gain access to education. Since all the programmes analyzed in this study had some focus in education, the researcher therefore opines it is important to conduct a research on the role of CDK is raising the literacy level of Kitui County.

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APPENDIX I

LETTER OF TRANSMITTAL

Dear Respondent,

My name is Damaris Kinyua, a Master of Arts student at the University of Nairobi in the Department of Philosophy and Religious Studies. I am conducting a research on child abuse and neglect, a vice that is threatening the existence of children today in the society. The purpose of the study is to investigate the participation of the church in addressing child abuse and neglect, which has become a horrifying crime that need participation of all stakeholders in the society.

I kindly request you to receive the attached questionnaire and respond to it accordingly. The information received will be treated with utmost confidentiality as it will be used for academic purposes only.

Thank you.

Damaris Kinyua

APPENDIX II

QUESTIONNAIRE

SECTION A PERSONAL INFORMATION

(In the following questions, you are advised to tick where appropriate)

Gender Male () Female ()

Age () Below 20 () 21-29 () 30-39 () 40-49 () 50-59 () Above 60

Marital Status

- () Never married () Married () Widowed () Divorced
- () Separated

Education Level

- () Primary () Secondary () College Level () University
- () Post graduate

SECTION B: MAIN OUESTIONS

- 1. The following are some of the teachings from the Bible about children. In your opinion, which one is mostly portraying the importance of children in the Bible?
 - () Children are Blessings from God () Children prolonged family Lineage
 - () Children are Gifts from God () Children passed important information
- 2. In your opinion, what was the main importance of children in African Traditional Society?
 - () Prolonged the Family Lineage () Enhanced family Cohesion
 - () Raised the economic status of family () Raised Family social status
 - () Others.....(specify)
 - 3. In your opinion, which form of child abuse is mostly experienced in Kitui?
 - () Physical Abuse () Emotional Abuse
 - () Sexual Abuse () Neglect
 - () Others......(specify)

	4. How is the above chosen type of abuse meted on children in Kitui?
	Physical () Excessive punishment () Beating
	() Burning () Others
	Sexual () Defilement () Sodomy
	Others () Observing inappropriate behaviors
	Emotional () Shouting at, and threatening a child () Withholding love and affection () Discrimination () Others
	Neglect () Inadequate diet () inadequately dressed
	() Denied proper health care () Left unsupervised
	() Others
5.	In your opinion, which of the factors below contribute to Child Abuse & Neglect in Kitui?
	() Poverty () Retrogressive cultural practices
	() Family Violence () Ethnic Violence
	() Drug and Substance Abuse () Family Size
	() Family Structure () Poor Parenting Skills
6.	Which of the effects of child abuse and neglect below is mostly experienced in Kitui?
	() Low self-esteem () Stunted Growth
	() Juvenile Delinquency () Truancy
	() Poor mental and emotional health () Drugs & substance
	() Injuries and disabilities () Depression and anxiety
	() Others
7.	In which ways is the Catholic Diocese of Kitui addressing child abuse and neglect?
	() Creating awareness on child right () Economic Strengthening
	 () Stakeholders' capacity building () Encouraging child participation () Others
8.	List any five programmes relating to children that Catholic Diocese of Kitui is engaged in currently?
	i.
	ii.

		÷	
1	1	8	
		8	

iv.

V.

9. Write any four impacts of the Catholic Diocese of Kitui programmes to the community?

	i.
	ii.
	iii
	iv.
10.	Name any four challenges in addressing child abuse and neglect in Kitui?
	i
	ii
	iii.
	iv.
11.	List any three organizations that are engaged in protection of children in Kitui?

i.	
ii.	
iii.	
iv	

12. What other comments would you like to make in regard to children's issues in Kitui?

......

-END-THANK YOU

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APPENDIX III A MAP OF KITH COUNTY

MWINGI NORTH

MWINGI SOUTH

KITUI WEST

MUTTO

KITUI CENTRAL

KITUI SOUTH

DENSITY PEOPLE PER KM2

29

than 2000 people

Urban centres with population of

14

59

47